



Budget-Finance Committee
Joint Meeting with Select Board
Workshop Minutes

March 18, 2024, at 6:30pm
(postponed from March 12)

At Broadcast Studio & Via Zoom

Committee Members Present: Bob Gosselin, Karen Lockwood – Chair, Frank McDermott, Denis Morse, Deanna Lee, Shawn McKillop

Committee Members Absent: none

Select Board Members Present: Joe Bruno, Rolf Olsen, Teresa Sadak, Derek Ray

Select Board Members Absent: Sam Gifford

Town Staff Present:

Sue Look, Town Manager
Charisse Keach, Finance Director
Nathan White, Public Works Director
Bruce Tupper, Fire Chief
Alex Sirois, CEO
Richard Dowe, Librarian
Cathy Gosselin, Deputy Treasurer

1. **Called workshop to order** at 6:30pm by Chair Lockwood with a quorum present

Due to calling a workshop to order, rather than a meeting the minutes can not be approved. They will be moved to be approved at the next regular meeting of the Budget-Finance Committee.

- ~~2. Approval of Minutes~~
 - ~~a) February 28, 2024~~
 - ~~b) February 29, 2024~~

3. Town Manager & Finance Director Updates (if needed)

Town Manager Look has learned from the Town Attorney that the TIF program was updated to include Broadband and Town Office renovations. Also, most municipalities pay 10% of the Town Manager's salary from the TIF.

Town Attorney is in the process of figuring out if all or part of the broadband/fiber project could be funded through the TIF, if so it would be added to the warrant to amend the TIF and go before the Select Board. If the TIF funds are there, we may be able to fund the entire project. Still looking into this option.

Finance Director Keach gave a summary of the packet given to the committee and the Select Board and some changes that were made to the original documents. In response to the question on the status of where we are with the undesignated fund balance, it hasn't changed a lot since it was reported in February. We had one accounts payable warrant for \$140k and one payroll cycle of about \$70k. The only difference in the prior projection would be if one or two revenues had seen a significant increase over the last two weeks. Not all revenues are posted daily, some are done at month end. CEO fees for March 1st through the 18th are almost equal to what they collected for the month of February. They are on track to collect another \$13-14k over the next 4 months. Same with auto excise tax, on track with what we collect monthly. Currently through March 15th we have collected \$45k and we typically collect around \$90k. LD290 funds (payment for senior tax stabilization) should be given in the next 60 days according to a Maine Revenue Services representative.

Mr. Morse asked about the 2023 fund balance, the warrant last year was written for up to \$200k and \$100k was used at commitment.

Select Sadak asked to clarify a couple of comments made from the two prior Budget-Finance committee meetings. Legal fees – we can't take out the name and write discipline. The Town is small, and we cannot do that. A question also came up about the 1% retirement for non-union employees in last year's budget, that was supposed to be in the budget, and it was inadvertently taken out. When it was brought to the Select Boards attention, they took a vote in June to add it to the budget. Another comment was made about the \$75,000 for the Selectman, in the past, the monies have been used to pay for things such as Marine 1 engines and roof repair at Public Safety. Select Chair Bruno indicated that it was a contingency fund. Select Sadak also wanted to clarify about the 5 years for insurance, we have never been with Maine State Retirement, we tried MMA but it was too expensive, so we went back to a smaller group for insurance. The question regarding the salt shed money and the money left over...PW Director White indicated that there was \$26k left over from the \$600k for the new building that went toward paving the front of the parking lot. The new roof was paid for by monies set aside in CIP that was going to toward building a storage shed but they decided instead to repair the old building. Director White also talked about purchasing sand and salt and how we are a year ahead on purchasing as we buy sand in June and haul it ourselves. Salt is purchased as needed because we don't have space to store the excess. Director White also clarified that we do a lot of firetruck repairs in-house. Also talked about cemetery mowing bids that went to the lowest bidder as Matt Sanborn is no longer doing it.

Select Chair Bruno also made an announcement. Himself, Town Manager Look and CEO Sirois and Hanson had mediation with Drummond and Woodsum

regarding the Sebago Lake violations. They have reached a settlement that has been approved by all parties and will be presented to the Board of Selectman on April 4th. If approved, there will be a significant income by June 15th. That is all that can be said about it right now.

Resident Deb Tarr spoke for Age Friendly Raymond and plans for senior programming.

4. Budget Workshop

a) TIF

- TIF expires in 2030 – the reserve balance is \$237,000. The attorneys may ask to increase the TIF. If TIF monies are used to help fund the fiber project other items may need to be taken out of the TIF. The project will need to be bonded, but the bond payment could come out of the TIF. There is also the possibility of some of the garage being paid out of the TIF. Any updates to the TIF need to be done via a Town Meeting. IT Director Woodbrey has also been setting monies aside in CIP to put toward the project.

b) Assessing

- Mr. Morse asked where the money comes from if someone files for an abatement. Select Chair Bruno indicated it comes from the overlay. There will be a bump up in the overlay for the two years after the reval.

c) Code Enforcement

- Select Chair Bruno indicated that with the settlement on the violation, there will be total restoration.

d) Public Safety

- Animal Control
 - Select Sadak is not supportive of the ACO taking on a fourth town until the issues with the current three towns are resolved.
 - The part time animal control hire was only seasonal for the summer.
 - Each town is paying their own Animal Refuge fees
 - Discussion of installing a GPS tracker in the ACO vehicle
 - Not getting detailed information on call logs from the ACO
 - Casco is responsible for ACO employee performance, Raymond is responsible for the vehicle, and Naples tracks her finances.
- Fire Department
 - Chief Tupper talked about the crew doing maintenance, and the need for coveralls.
 - Working with the local regional group of fire departments on trying to bulk buy supplies and uniforms. Trying to get all departments wanting the same specifications for items can be difficult but they are trying to work through it because there can be significant savings.

- They did find an alternative to turnout gear that does not contain PFAS
- Discussed radio replacement. It would be about \$189,000 but it's quad band radio. The new tower and the fiber project will help tremendously with communication issues due to rural area.
- Discussed cost of utilities and possibly putting in solar panels.
- Discussed moving the purchasing of air packs to 26-27 FY
- Discussed reducing OT

e) Technology

- Select Chair Bruno wanted clarification on if another bond would be needed after the initial bond to expand the fiber services. Andrew Davis from Sebago Fiber indicated that the initial ring would reach more than half of Raymond and the rest depends on how many subscribers.

f) Administration / Compensation & Training

- The change in the proposed budget is because we hired an outside candidate instead of an internal candidate so there is a change in salary.
- The ClearGov budgeting software contract will be cancelled and going back to TRIO/Spreadsheet.
- Switching payroll companies
- Legal line going down to \$40k
- Selectman salaries will be reduced by 2 salaries.
- COLA is only for union employees. Merits will be up to 4% for non-union
- Discussed moving merit pool monies to each Department budget

g) General Assistance

- The \$15,000 has been expended through February. We will be reimbursed 70%. We are seeing a lot of rents and food coming from this as well as heat.
- We have some very generous residents who donate to the Community Assistance fund.

h) Town Insurances

- Insurance on Marine 1 went up \$400.
- Cumberland County contributes money to the use of the boat the summers that they use it.
- The line-item amount covers all insurances.
- Selectboard would like to see the insurances broken out by Department.

i) Employee Benefits

- Adjusted based on new hire from outside instead of internal.
- Health insurance is looked at every year to get the best price from the different carriers

j) Debt Service

- Select Sadak asked if we should consider setting money aside for JSMS

renovations and maintenance.

k) Provider Agencies

- Select Chair Bruno would like to add a discussion to the March 25th Select Board warrant meeting to talk about which agency gets what amount.
- Finance Director Keach will provide a list of agencies who asked for money and the amounts they asked for

l) Public Works

- Solid Waste
 - Contracted rates so there is not much we can do. PW White has asked for a 3-year extension on the current contract.
- Cemeteries
 - New contracted rate of just over \$39k for the cemeteries, municipal buildings, and the 302 corridor.
- Town Buildings
 - Discussion on heating costs

m) Parks & Recreation / Tassel Top

- The biggest question is the extra person

n) Raymond Village Library

- No questions

o) Revenues

- No discussion

p) Capital Improvements

- Mr. Leavitt stood up to talk about sidewalks. He doesn't see anything in the CIP account for it. A lot of the feedback from the Town's people at the Comp Plan events are asking for sidewalks and improved road safety.
- There is \$41,000 set aside for a sidewalk match

q) County Tax

- No comments

5. Public Comment
None

6. Budget-Finance Committee Comment
None

7. Select Board Comment
None

8. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 9:44pm by Mr McDermott. Seconded by Mr McKillop.
Unanimously approved

Respectfully submitted,

*Melissa McConkey
TM Admin*