

Town of Brentwood
Budget Committee Meeting at Brentwood Town Office
Meeting Minutes of October 24, 2022

Present: Jack Mitchell, Michelle Siudut, Lois DeYoung, Alina Arida, Andy Artimovich (selectboard rep), Letty Bedard (Swasey rep), Anthony Phillips (via phone)

Guests: Joyce Keegal

Jack called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. The pledge of allegiance was recited.

Motion by Lois, seconded by Letty to allow Anthony to attend remotely; Michelle- aye, Letty- abstain, Alina- aye, Andy- abstain, Lois- aye, Anthony- abstain; Jack- aye; passed 4-0-3.

Motion by Lois, seconded by Alina to approve the minutes of the October 17, 2022 meeting, as amended. Michelle- aye, Letty- abstain, Alina- aye, Andy- abstain, Lois- aye, Anthony- abstain; Jack- aye; passed 4-0-3.

Motion by Lois, seconded by Michelle to approve and seal the non-public minutes of the October 17, 2022 meeting, as amended; Michelle- aye, Letty- abstain, Alina- aye, Andy- abstain, Lois- aye, Anthony- abstain; Jack- aye; passed 4-0-3.

BOS Report

The health insurance committee was unable to present a solution; Karen will be presenting the BOS with some options. The current insurance plan will see a 12% increase. Town currently pays 100% for single; 75%/25% for couples or families. Anthony gave Jack an overview of plan options, which had been provided by Karen.

Jack asked about the Police Building Committee; Andy said it is not currently active as the Chief did not want to proceed with the building this year. We do have plans created by Norwich University students, for the location behind the fire department.

Swasey Report

SAU Joint Board voted to approve SAU admin budget of \$3,183,401, which is a 15.47% increase. They will be using the ending fund balance of the last 3 years to lower the tax impact to 5.10%. The proposed budget includes a \$200,000 place holder for the new superintendent. The total budget amount does not include \$4 million they receive from grants. Letty will find out what those grants are for.

The search for a new Superintendent will be done internally first, if necessary they will go outside the district. There are 7 qualified people in district.

Final SAU financial summary for Jul 2021-Jun 2022 total \$6.2 million was approved; all but \$176,668 or 2.84% was spent.

Budgets

Cemetery. Motion by Andy, seconded by Alina to discuss; Michelle- aye, Letty- aye, Alina- aye, Andy- aye, Lois- aye, Anthony- aye; Jack- aye. Budget is an increase of \$657. Wage line is for Joyce, except \$600, which is held for the clerk. Joyce is president of state cemetery association and has taught gravestone cleaning around the state; and to several residents in town. Motion by Lois, seconded by Alina to approve \$13,670, a 5.05% increase; Michelle- aye, Letty- aye, Alina- aye, Andy- aye, Lois- aye, Anthony- aye; Jack- aye; approved unanimously.

Conservation. Motion by Andy, seconded by Alina to discuss; Michelle- aye, Letty- aye, Alina- aye, Andy- aye, Lois- aye, Anthony- aye; Jack- aye. This budget is level funded. The Conservation Chair is trying to use volunteers to do easement monitoring to save funds.

Question as to what the audit expense is: used to pay SELT for audit of easements.

Question as to what the annual appropriation is: to build up the Conservation Fund (a non-lapsing revolving account) to the ideal amount of \$75K; it is currently around \$69K.

Motion by Lois, seconded by Andy to approve the \$13,652 budget as presented. Michelle- aye, Letty- aye, Alina- aye, Andy- aye, Lois- aye, Anthony- nay; Jack- aye; passed 6-1-0

Information Systems. Motion by Andy, seconded by Lois to discuss; Michelle- aye, Letty- aye, Alina- aye, Andy- aye, Lois- aye, Anthony- aye; Jack- aye. Biggest increase is software support. We are in year 2 of 5 year contract with Block5; Planning & Zoning board members asked for their own email addresses; accounting/payroll/tax software; moving from google drive to Onedrive; reduction in General Supplies no longer use Vimeo, now just use free YouTube. Motion by Letty, seconded by Andy to approve budget of \$72,470, a 5.97% increase. Michelle- aye, Letty- aye, Alina- aye, Andy- aye, Lois- aye, Anthony- aye; Jack- aye; approved unanimously.

Regional Associations. Motion by Andy, seconded by Lois to discuss; Michelle- aye, Letty- aye, Alina- aye, Andy- aye, Lois- aye, Anthony- aye; Jack- aye. This budget is level funded. Last year the committee approved and spent \$12,797. Committee felt requests were low due to COVID funds, but expect more requests this year. Michelle discussed the process used to approve recipients. Request by Letty to see the minutes of the Committee to know who was funded. Andy suggested a report from the Committee be included in the Town Report.

Motion by Andy, seconded by Lois to approve \$17,500; Michelle- aye, Letty- aye, Alina- aye, Andy- aye, Lois- aye, Anthony- aye; Jack- aye; approved unanimously.

Assessing. Motion by Andy, seconded by Lois to discuss; Michelle- aye, Letty- aye, Alina- aye, Andy- aye, Lois- aye, Anthony- aye; Jack- aye. Our town assessor Jim Michaud asked for an increase. We currently pay \$1.22/parcel. Karen has compared what we pay to what other towns are paying. Question as to how often property cards get updated - every 3 years or when a building permit is pulled. Motion by Lois, seconded by Andy to approve \$47,781, a 8.64% increase; Michelle- aye, Letty- aye, Alina- aye, Andy- aye, Lois- aye, Anthony- aye; Jack- aye.

Legal. Motion by Andy, seconded by Lois to discuss; Michelle- aye, Letty- aye, Alina- aye, Andy- aye, Lois- aye, Anthony- aye; Jack- aye. This budget was tabled last week for a question on preambulations. These must be done with a selectmen from each border town. Motion by Lois, seconded by Andy to approve \$37,127, a 29.69% increase; Michelle- aye, Letty- aye, Alina- aye, Andy- aye, Lois- aye, Anthony- abstain; Jack- aye; passed 6-0-1.

New Business

Letty asked if the Town budget could be changed to fiscal; Andy said technically yes but it would be complicated.

Motion by Letty, seconded by Lois to livestream our meetings; Michelle- aye, Letty- aye, Alina- aye, Andy- aye, Lois- aye, Anthony- aye; Jack- aye; passed unanimously. Andy will do this, or train his replacement to do it when he is not available.

Future Meetings

(Schedule of budgets to discuss is tentative and subject to change)

November 14 at 6 pm - Town Clerk, Tax Collector, Town Meeting, Election & Registration, Town Admin, Finance

November 21 at 6 pm - Planning Board & ZBA, Budget Committee, Code Enforcement, Debt Service, Recreation, JLMC

November 28 at 6 pm - Highway, General Government, Government Buildings

December 5 at 6 pm - Fire, Library

December 12 at 6 pm - Police, Animal Control, Insurance

Motion to adjourn made by Lois; seconded by Letty. Michelle- aye, Letty- aye, Alina- aye, Andy- aye, Lois- aye, Anthony- aye; Jack- aye. Meeting adjourned at 7:31 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Michelle Siudut