

Town of Boscawen
Budget Committee Public Meeting
Boscawen Municipal Complex
January 27, 2022 at 6 p.m.

Present: Ed Cherian, Chair, Barbara Randall, Gary Tillman, Rhoda Hardy, Bruce Crawford, Lorrie Carey, Matthew Burdick, Paul Dickey, Katie Phelps, Kevin Wyman, Dean Hollins, Nicole Hoyt, Kellee Jo Easler, Sarah Gerlack, Tim Kenney, Jason Killary, Kate Merrill, Penny Sarcione, Bonny John, Shawn Brechtel, Rose Fife.

Barbara Randall, Chair started the meeting at 6:05 pm.

Roll Call was done.

Approve the Draft Minutes of 2.11.21 – A motion to approve the Minutes as amended was made by Gary Tillman, seconded by Rhoda Hardy and passed by a unanimous vote.

Nomination of Chair – A motion to nominate Ed Cherian as Chair was made by Barbara Randall, seconded by Gary Tillman (Third by Rhoda Hardy) and passed by a unanimous vote.

Ed Cherian gave an overview of how the meeting would run and what they would like to accomplish this evening. Lorrie Carey explained that the Select Board would give a broad overview of the budget and then go into more detail.

Acct #/Name	2022 Budget	Notable Changes for 2022
		5.9% Cost of Living Adjustment
4130 Executive	\$190,132 – Increase of 8% or \$14,048	The telephone budget line has increased 175%. In 2021 the Town switched to a Voice Over IP telephone system. The increase was due to the cost of programming including auto attendants, hunt groups, and call routing lines. This budget reflects all departments within the Town
4140 Town Clerk/Elections	\$106,577 – Increase of 28% or \$23,450	Brings in the most revenue for the Town of Boscawen. Added 10% of Sarah Gerlack’s time to this budget as Assistant Clerk. Moderators & Supervisors and Election Costs increased based on three elections planned for 2022.
4150 Financial Administration	\$93,929 – Increase of 1% or \$880	
4151 Tax Collector	\$77,232 – Decrease of 7% or (\$5,672)	Tax Deeded Properties budget line moved to Town Building budget.
4152 Assessing	\$77,242 – Increase of 12% or \$8,048	Assessing Software/Public Data Hosting per Agreement
4153 Legal Expenses	\$45,000 – No change from 2021	No notable Changes

4155 Personnel Administration	\$918,122 – Increase of 4% or \$36,239	<p>Vacation Buyout line for four Department Heads. Three Department Heads requested that theirs be removed.</p> <p>Staff Development & Training is a new line for CPR/AED and group training opportunities.</p>
4191 Planning & Community Development	\$136,280 – Increase of 15% or \$17,440	<p>Planning & Community Development Clerk moved from part-time 32hrs to full-time 40hrs in 2021.</p> <p>Meetings & Travel increased \$2,000 for Kellee Easler to attend management training.</p>
4193 Agricultural Commission	\$1,700 – No change from 2021	No notable Changes
4194 Town Buildings	\$202,927 – Increase of 84% or \$92,423	<p>Facilities Director hours from 24 to 30hrs a week</p> <p>Maintenance and Supplies Budget increased to pay for identified projects including a) a permanent attached roof ladder on the municipal building, b) painting at the police station, public library, and municipal building, c) refinishing floors at the municipal building.</p> <p>The utilities line increased due to new contract pricing.</p> <p>Tax Deeded Property line moved from Tax Collector budget.</p> <p>Vehicle Maintenance line moved from Emergency Management budget. The EMD truck will be the responsibility of the Facilities Department.</p> <p>Telephone & Software includes the Facilities Director cell phone and Adobe software.</p> <p>Tools & Equipment line is new and will allow the Town Buildings department to have access to basic tools and equipment such a ladder, saw, and drill to use for projects instead of borrowing from other departments or individuals. This line also includes a boom lift rental for painting.</p> <p>Contracts & Service Agreements includes items partially moved from the Executive Budget including for HVAC, Alarms, Sprinklers, Elevator, and Generator. It includes the addition of emergency equipment inspections and a snow shoveling contractor.</p>

		Boscawen Town Park utilities, maintenance costs, sanitation and equipment costs have moved from Parks & Recreation.
4195 Cemeteries	\$3,000 – No change from 2021	No notable changes
4196 Property Liability Insurance	\$39,021 – Decrease of 14% or (\$6,432)	
4210 Police Department	\$673,812 – Increase of 7% or \$41,932	Two open positions increased for certified officers. Overtime line increased per 2021 actuals.
4215 Ambulance	\$231,660 – Increase of 5% or \$11,034	Payroll increases due to advanced certifications and COLA
4220 Fire Department	\$209,417 – Increase of 6% or \$11,550	Added two positions back into the budget that were frozen in 2021.
4240 Life Safety Officer	\$3,600 – Decrease of 22% or (\$1,000)	Decrease per 2021 actuals
4290 Emergency Management	\$15,574 – Increase of 63% or \$6,000	Vehicle expenses moved to Town Building budget. Plan Updates added for Emergency Operations Plan and Hazard Mitigation Plan updates.
4312 Highways & Streets	\$599,354 – Increase of 6% or \$36,356	Increased utilities line per new contract. Salt budget increased due to price increase of 35.7% per ton. Gasoline budget increased due to price increase of \$1.35 from 2021.
4316 Street Lighting	\$24,000 – Increase of 14% or \$3,000	Increase per new contract.
4319 Other Highways & Streets	\$5,800 – No change from 2021	No notable changes.
4324 Solid Waste Disposal	\$235,853 – Increase of 4% or \$9,675	Increased utilities line per new contract. Increased tipping fees budget due to increase from \$71.14 to \$71.80.
4325 Solid Waste Cleanup	\$23,000 – Increase of 5% or \$1,000	Anticipate installing three new monitoring wells at the landfill in 2022.
4329 Other Sanitation	\$56,000 – No change from 2021	No notable changes
4410 Health Department	\$8,980 – Increase of 10% or \$781	Aside from Cola and Merit, no other notable changes
4441 Human Services Administration	\$56,376 – Decrease of 22% or (\$16,327)	Includes the addition of an overtime line for \$250 for hourly staff. The Select Board approved the use of ARPA dollars for the backpack program and welfare functions such as homelessness and affordable housing.
4520 Parks & Recreation	\$28,000 – Decrease of 23% or \$8,500	Utilities, Sanitation, Maintenance and Equipment expenses have moved to the Town Building budget.

		2022 Rates will increase to \$150 per child and \$300 per family.
4550 Public Library	\$106,603 – Increase of 29% or \$23,713	Budget increase reflects return to pre-Covid staffing levels as well as a 2.9% increase for all staff.
4583831 Old Home Day	\$5,000 – Increase of 25% or \$1,000	Old Home Day Committee’s request from the Town for a contribution towards Fireworks for Old Home Day.
4583803 Town Beautification	\$750 – No change from 2021	No notable changes.
4611 Conservation Commission	\$2,200 – No change from 2021	No notable changes.
4651 Economic Development	\$2,250 – Decrease of 55% or \$2,750	Prior year encumbrance of \$2,750, therefore only budgeting for \$2,250.
4700 Debt Service	\$150,850 – Decrease of 4\$ or (\$6,440)	Bond payment for Municipal Building (2022 Final Year) and the Gage Street/PWTF Improvements (Ends in 2031)

Overall Budget comments – Mr. Tillman noted that the Fire truck contribution is showing a 100% change, but there is no change in the line item. Lorrie Carey thanked him for the correction. Mr. Tillman said that the total capital reserve contribution shows a change of only \$14,000. Cherian noted that there is about a \$14,000 change from 2021 to 2022 in the Total Capital Reserve contribution. Katie Phelps will make the change.

Ed Cherian had a question regarding revenue. There is a big reduction in meals and rooms tax from \$270 this year to \$175 estimate for next year. Is there a change in formula with the State? It’s in the MS636 – line 3352 Means and Rooms Tax Distribution for 2021 \$294,000 and estimated for 2022 of \$175,000 – why did it decrease? Katie Phelps – there will be another time to review these in the fall before tax rate is set so they do not want to overstate. It is probably lower than what they will get and it should go up. Cherian – a conservative estimate? That is good.

Line 3379 from other governments \$500,000 – is that Covid payments? Cherian asked if that is what was received this year. Phelps – \$500,000 is for the commercial street grant. \$49,750 is for the generator. That is a Warrant Article this year. That would be the match for that.

Ed Cherian: State Support Line – Line 636 - \$436,000 this year and \$270,000 next year. Pilot payments have changed as well. \$163,000 estimated \$73,500, below the estimate for last year. Do we expect lower payments from Briar Hydro this year? Tab 4 line 3186. Katie – that portion is the estimate they chose. Ed Cherian – why did the estimate go down to \$75,000 given what actually came in? Kellee Easler stated that it is a year behind. Cherian is asking so he can get at how much new spending there is based on what they will lose with revenue, i.e. how much will they be losing i.e. Covid money. Trying to understand if there is a projected gap between revenues from last year to this year. If they are going to lose \$300,000 in revenue, it will impact the tax rate. Lorrie Carey explained that they do have a lot of new development in Boscawen and those new houses will hit the tax rate and will help. The Covid money supplemented the budget. There were things they got done during Covid they may not have been able to get done. They are at the end of the Covid money. They need to be mindful of anything they add into the budget. Ed Cherian asked if there were any positions funded by Covid now that will go away this year or next year. Lorrie Carey explained that it won’t go away in this year or next year but the year after it will. There are 2 positions; a public works position and a police department position. She would hope that during the interim their Economic Development Committee and Energy Committee would be hard at work.

General Government Budget: Telephones: Gary Tillman asked if they couldn't find a cheaper program. That's a huge difference for the new telephone. Katie Phelps explained that it was the additives after that cost. Matt Burdick explained it was the IT expense; the software that went into those phones. Katie Phelps said they will take a look at it and look to see what they don't need.

Town Clerk and Election Budget: Have they adjusted personnel in their office. Nicole Hoyt said yes.

COLA? Inflation is high. Ed Cherian asked what was their discussion regarding that? He asked them to speak to that issue. Lorrie Carey explained that personnel will receive a COLA of 5.9% based on Social Security Administration's recommendations. COLA is more like 7% but they went with 5.9% as it is conservative. Longevity is built into the structure for the town employees. They have lost employees to other towns as the other towns were able to offer about \$16,000 more than what they could offer. She stated that town employees do an incredible amount of work that they are not paid for and they are all on call. They are loyal and hard workers. You cannot assign a number to that. They want to create an environment where they feel they are valued. They try to be mindful to retain highly qualified employees. There is a greater cost in losing employees and having to re-train. Gary Tillman doesn't think anyone on the budget committee thinks the employees do not deserve more than what they receive.

Financial Administration is a 1% increase. Will they fill the Deputy Treasurer position? Lorrie Carey said they really would like to fill that position.

Tax Collector -7% decrease. The tax deeded properties line was removed. Katie Phelps explained that was moved into the town building budget. Barbara Randall asked about the 800 service. Is that something new? Nicole Hoyt explained that the 1-800 services they budgeted for 6 months. They will find out at town meeting if residents would like that kind of service. They have people that want to make payments over phone. This 800 service is part of that – it is part of what they do online in addition. That is at \$50/month. So instead of doing that, they want to hear from residents if they would use this service. This would give them the opportunity to do this day or night. Barbara Randall asked if at town meeting they don't want that it will be taken out. Nicole Hoyt – it's \$300.00.

Personnel Administration – retirement: Ed Cherian noted that NHRS had successful returns, he believes, so wouldn't that push their numbers down or are they behind a year. Kate Merrill thought it was a year behind or their fiscal year is different. Ed Cherian asked if they were banking more for vacation buyout. Kate Merrill said last year there was money encumbered for that but they can no longer do that. They have to have a legally binding contract. They did drop a few people out – they asked the employees in advance.

Town Buildings: Ed Cherian noted that there were a lot of things going on in this line item. Lorrie Carey asked if they would like her to go over everything as it is a new budget. The Facilities Director's hours range from 20-34 hours a week. Maintenance and supplies budget – they need a permanent attached roof ladder to the municipal building, painting at the Police Department, Library and Municipal building and refinishing floors. Utilities line was increased due to new contract pricing. Deeded properties was moved from tax collector. Vehicle maintenance line was moved from emergency management. Telephone and software increases the facility director's software and adobe software. Equipment: ladder, saw, drill, used for projects instead of borrowing from others. Also includes a boom lift rental as they are doing their painting themselves. Contracts and service agreements including HVAC, alarms, sprinklers, elevator and generator. Addition of emergency equipment inspections and a snow shoveling contractor. Boscawen Town Park costs have been moved into this budget from the Parks and Recreation budget. Gary Moore isn't here but she wanted to highlight what he accomplished in the 6 months he's been employed with them. He rebuilt the welfare office and cleaned the windows, installed a steel door at the Police Department, etc. Barbara Randall asked if the position posted for 24 hours. Lorrie Carey explained that it was posted as part time – 24 to 30 hours.

Planning & Community Development: There is an increase in the Planning and Community Development Clerk of 28%. Kellee Easler explained that the position changed from 32 hours to 40 hours. There has been an increase in building and development and they needed full time. Two years prior they had 3 full time positions and attempted to go part time one year but needed to change it back to full time. Cherian noted that Meetings & Travel will be going up from \$1,500 to \$3,500. In notes it says same as last year but that's not correct. Lorrie Carey explained that this was needed to have Kellee attend management training. Kellee Easler will update that. She took training recently and they encumbered last year and this is training starting this summer through the State of NH.

Police Department: Barbara Randall asked if one position filled recently. Kevin Wyman explained it had. Ed Cherian asked why they had so much Overtime last year. Kevin Wyman explained that they were an 8 person department down to 3 people. They were working past midnight. If the position were filled there will be less need for OT.

Fire Ambulance & Life Safety: Ed Cherian noted that the salary line stated that they added 2 new members. Two positions were subtracted last year and they were added this year. They have 22. At the end of next month they will have 24. Paid on call will be next year; for meetings, call-ins and training.

Emergency Management: nothing discussed.

Public Works: Dean Hollins said that they added gas for 2 pickups and lawn mowers etc. All other vehicles are diesel. So in that line items is also their diesel fuel as well as gas.

Parks & Recreation: It was asked if they would have a full program this year. Lorrie Carey explained that they are planning to. Barbara Randall asked how many kids they can take in. Lorrie Carey explained that it is fluid. Upwards to 67 plus kids in years past. Part of it is fluid as they are being mindful of Covid. If they can get through in a positive way to the summer then they should go back to previous model for the parks program. Rhoda Hardy believes it is well spent money. She asked if there was money for scholarships. Lorrie Carey noted that if there are children that want to attend, they will find a way to attend. The Thornton Fund has been helpful to the parks program.

Library: Gary Tillman noted that the technology line shows a 400% increase. Isn't it 500%? Kate Merrill said it is 400%.

Old Home Day: Ed Cherian asked about the golf tournament income. It sold out last year. Do we know why they expect that money to be decreased? Matt Burdick explained that originally they said it was due to breaking the sponsors out.

Human Services: Gary Tillman asked about the backpack program.

Ed Cherian asked about the EPA grant. Are they able to match it? Lorrie Carey stated it is a work in progress. She doesn't see any challenges.

Capital reserve questions: Gary Tillman asked about the landfill and the construction debris? Ed Cherian explained that there is a concrete pad at the transfer station. Do they accept C&D? Dean Hollins explained that they do, but they have to shut it down next year.

Fire – they are still responsible for their own, so they will have their own line item. Lorrie Carey stated they had a study done as to what it would cost to upgrade or replace the fire station. It would be over \$8,000,000 so they didn't take any action on it.

Warrant 9 – To Establish a Contingency Fund required by DRA. The Budget Committee shouldn't be reviewing that.

Warrant Article 16 – Town Hall Assessment Study. Ed Cherian stated that Town Hall hasn't been used in some time. This would get a feel for what it would cost, to bring this up to code. Ed Cherian asked why they put it as a Warrant Article vs. budget item. Lorrie Carey explained that they would like to know if the town people want to proceed with bringing the town hall up to code. It's not a lot of money and could be absorbed under facilities budget. Gary Tillman asked if Alan Hardy did an assessment. Lorrie Carey explained that they wanted an expert in the field to do an assessment.

Warrant Article 17 - Torrent Station Roof replacement – no questions.

Warrant Article 18 – Municipal Complex Generator – will this support the Police Department as well? This was attempted a couple of years ago. Matt Burdick said it would support both buildings. Lorrie Carey said there is a grant of \$49,750.

Warrant Article 19 - Municipal Complex Lightning Rods. Lorrie Carey explained that they had a lightning strike that took out everything in the town offices and it was costly and time consuming to get everything up and running. It was recommended by their insurer that lightning rods being installed on the roof of office building be done. They found one provider.

Warrant Article 20 - Repair & Resurface Tennis Court –

Warrant Article 21 - Repair & Resurface Basketball Court – The Facilities Director solicited bids for these items. The Select Board wanted them to secure 3. Very few companies do basketball courts and tennis courts. This would be for both be done simultaneously.

Warrant Article 22 - Contribution to CASA of NH – no questions.

Warrant Article 23 - Contributions to the American Red Cross – no questions.

Warrant Article 24 - Contribute to Penacook Community Center – Barbara Randall noted that it was no longer called Penacook Community Center. Cathy Furlong, Board President of Penacook Community Center explained that they were in talks to merge with the Boys and Girls Club of Central NH. They have a number of buildings needing significant repairs. Their Executive Director left. They would either need to shut down or do a merger. They will be a division of the Boys and Girls Club. They will still run their programs. Summer camp will be at Washington Street School. Staff and families will be taken care of. Barbara Randall asked if they would stay at their current building. Cathy explained that they had to shut one of their buildings down last June. Infants and school age programs are at Bradley Street in Concord. Toddlers and preschool are at Eastman at Exit 16. Barbara Randall asked if after all is said and done their hope is to come back to Penacook Community Center. Is there a time line. Cathy said there was. They have a report on the structure of their building. They are looking to find out if it is cheaper to renovate what they have or build new. They will stay on their current site. They are looking at grants and hope to get architectural designs being done for new building or renovations. Barbara Randall asked about the senior program. Cathy said that is at Rolfe House where they have been. They will be looking to have a gym, industrial kitchen and community room. Her hope is within a year but realistically it will be 2 years. Barbara Randall asked how this impacted enrollment. Cathy said she has 4 staff from Boscawen and the children haven't changed. Hours have stayed the same for the families. The price was going to be higher. But they are working to get grants to keep it the same. She thanked the town for their support.

Warrant Article 25 - Contribution to CAP – Beth Heyward, Community Services Director. She thanked the town for their support. The same services this past year. Boscawen received \$201,000 for rental assistance and fuel assistance, utilities, water. They will report on the numbers next year.

Warrant Article 26 - Contribution to Boscawen Historical Society –

Next Meeting

- Next Meeting: Budget Hearing 2/10/22 at 6pm at BES.

A motion to adjourn at 7:28 pm was made by Gary Tillman, seconded by Barbara Randall and passed by a unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted by Rose Fife