

**TOWN OF SPRINGFIELD
SELECTBOARD HALL – 96 MAIN STREET – THIRD FLOOR
BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING
MONDAY, December 18, 2023**

APPROVED MINUTES

A. CALL MEETING TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND ROLL CALL

Chair, Kristi Morris, called the meeting to order at 7:16 pm. Roll Call was taken at the Regular Selectboard meeting prior to the Budget Workshop.

Selectboard Members: Chair Kristi Morris, Vice Chair Michael Martin, Walter Martone, and Heather Frahm were present in-person. Everett Hammond joined via Zoom.

Administration: Town Manager Jeff Mobus, Water System Superintendent Roy Farrar, and Wastewater Treatment Facility Superintendent Nate Fraser were present in-person. Fire Chief Paul Stagner joined via Zoom.

Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) Members: Doug Johnston, Scott Richardson, and John Bond were present in-person. Jim Fog, Tara Chase, and Tre Ayer were present via Zoom.

School Board Liaison: Steve Karaffa was not in attendance due to School Board commitment.

B. Budget Workshop: Discuss Budget with Proposed Adjustments

Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that he distributed a new budget book that includes items that have been discussed with department heads and is consistent with the board's 4% balance. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that he has not met with the Budget Advisory Committee since they visited Public Works, the Police Station, and fire station last week, noting they may have further recommendations in those areas that they will want to discuss. Town Manager Jeff Mobus continued that the budget he is presenting with a 4%

increase is a reference point so people can see what kind of decisions need to be made to get to 4% if that's still the Selectboard guidance.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that on page 3, an increase to economic development from \$85,000 to \$130,000. Town Manager Jeff Mobus continued that is the addition of \$25,000 for marketing and \$20,000 for the Park Street support for the BRIC program. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added on page 10, reducing the police equipment building fund from \$90,000 to \$50,000, noting that this level funds the account and requires deferral of some projects. Town Manager Jeff Mobus further added on page 14 to reduce the fire equipment from \$150,000 which was in the original budget down to \$125,000, noting this level funds the account. Town Manager Jeff Mobus further discussed that the cost of fire trucks is increasing, and the Town is eligible for \$50,000 grant from USDA that will help with the purchase, and we'll be submitting the application in April for that with a delivery time currently for fire trucks of two years.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that on page 16 to reduce the non-emergency transport line item from \$50,000 to \$10,000. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that last year, there was a lot of overtime because regulars were performing this service, and they now have two full time EMS staff. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that on page 18 to reduce the paving from \$350,000 to \$325,000. Town Manager Jeff Mobus further added to reduce the equipment contribution from the \$450,000 to \$425,000 which is still an increase of \$25,000 over the prior year. Town Manager Jeff Mobus further discussed on page 21 to reduce retaining walls from \$100,000 to \$75,000.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed on page 24 is where it starts to get into an operational question. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added they reduced the temporary line to 10,000 from \$43,000, noting this could happen with the proposed agreement with the Edgar May Health and Recreational Center for the pool usage in summer 2024. Town Manager Jeff Mobus continued the rental line would increase to \$20,000 from zero to fund the agreement with the Edgar May Health and Recreational Center.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus noted the agreement that would be \$2,000 a week for 10 weeks. Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that if they go with the agreement on page 25, they will not need any pool chemicals, so that would add

\$1,000 back into the budget. Town Manager Jeff Mobus noted that the agreement is on a trial basis that gives the Town a year to decide what to do with the Town Pool and Edgar May Health Center a year to determine if this agreement fits with their program schedule.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed a reduction in the building repair fund from \$80,000 to \$50,000, noting this will defer some projects but some projects should be deferred as they discuss what to do with the property in the future. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that on page 30, a reduction to social security from \$486,000 to \$455,000. Town Manager Jeff Mobus continued on page 35 a reduction of the interest to zero for the Cemetery Investment Fund, because we've agreed to not take the interest for the next three years so that the fund can rebuild after being used for the removal of trees.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed on page 37 an increase to transfer station tickets from \$60,000 to \$70,000. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added on page 39 an increase to ambulance revenue by \$35,000 due to the increased rates that were adopted by the Board three weeks ago. Town Manager Jeff Mobus continued on page 39 an increase to the non-emergency transport revenue by \$40,000, from \$260,000 up to \$300,000.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that he handed out a perspective paving list for this coming summer at the time of the meeting. Town Manager Jeff Mobus continued that the perspective list includes Brockway Mills Road from South Street to the Town Line for 2.83 miles, Eureka Road from Route 143 the first 4,000 feet, Spencer Hollow Road from Paddock Road up to the top of the hill for .4 miles, Highland Circle for .16 miles, and then Pleasant Valley Road for 2.028 miles, and then the neighborhood in North Springfield of Edgewood Drive, Russell Road, and Overlook Drive. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that to do all of this paving it is expected to cost about \$1.35 million. Town Manager Jeff Mobus further added that in the budget there is \$325,000 right now, a Special Appropriation we've asked for \$125,000, and last year they approved \$750,000 even though the request was for \$800,000 last year. Town Manager Jeff Mobus further discussed that there is also a \$200,000 grant from State Class 2 highway funds that we are eligible for every two years. Town Manager Jeff Mobus noted that the RSMS recommends \$1.5 million being budgeted per year for paving.

Further discussion ensued regarding generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) and having to show the projected revenue and projected losses or expenses when creating budgets.

Further discussion ensued regarding the grant opportunities that may be used to repair the retaining wall on Eaton Avenue and the inability to regrade that is due to infrastructure underground. Additional discussion ensued that special appropriations current policy is that if the special appropriation is approved one year and they do not ask for an increase in the amount of the appropriation they do not need to repetition, to change this would require the Town Charter to be rewritten.

Further discussion ensued regarding the Road Surface Management System (RSMS). Continued discussion ensued regarding the difference in requesting special appropriations for certain things can only be used on what it was appropriated for vs adding them to the budget where they are considered operational funds and may be used for other items that may come up as priorities.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that the next meeting is January 8th, 2024, and the BAC will be providing their recommendations for the budget.

Further discussion ensued regarding the Town commitment to helping the 60 Park Street project allows them additional funding opportunities. Town Manager Jeff Mobus disclosed that Heather Frahm was on the Board for BRIC. Town Manager Jeff Mobus reminded the Board and BAC that they can still consider the Local Option Tax that can be an extra revenue generator or way to reduce the tax base, noting that cannabis is under the sales tax option and not the alcohol tax option.

The meeting adjourned at 8:07 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carrie M. Kellow, Recording Secretary