

**TOWN OF SPRINGFIELD
SELECTBOARD HALL – 96 MAIN STREET – THIRD FLOOR
BUDGET WORKSHOP #2
MONDAY, November 21, 2022**

APPROVED MINUTES

CALL MEETING TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair, Kristi Morris, called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

Selectboard Members: Chair Kristi Morris, Vice Chair Michael Martin, Everett Hammond, Walter Martone, and Crissy Webster were present in-person.

Administration: Town Manager Jeff Mobus, Police Chief Jeff Burnham, Fire Chief Paul Stagner, Police Department Administrative Assistant Richard Stillings, and Senior Center Director Lori Johnson were present in-person. Town Clerk Barbara Courchesne joined via Zoom.

School Board Liaison: Steve Karaffa was not in attendance

Budget Advisory Committee: Doug Johnston, Scott Richardson, and Corky Bond were in-person. Tara Chase and Tre Ayer joined via Zoom. Jim Fog joined late via Zoom.

A. Budget Workshop – Senior Center – Fire – Police – Administration-Fixed Costs

Town Manager Jeff Mobus reminded everyone that the salary numbers were put in by Finance and noted there are a couple of changes in the Police budget. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that there's a half time position that Jeff (Burnham) will explain, but also this year we budgeted for 11 positions in the Union for Patrol and Detective Positions, so they have asked to go up to 13, noting the full complement is 15. Town Manager Jeff Mobus further added that we are currently at 7 and we have 4 applications that we're already working on, noting we are working in that direction. Town Manager Jeff Mobus noted that the only additional staff is the half time position that was not previously in our allotment.

Chair Kristi Morris made people aware at the meeting that the microphones are very sensitive, and they do pickup voices from participants even when they are whispering and wanted participants to keep that in mind. Chair Kristi Morris requested participants via Zoom to mute themselves and remain mute until the Selectboard calls on them.

Senior Center

Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that Lori (Johnson) has asked for no increases in her operations and the only thing is a step increase in the COLA on Page 34, line 43. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that the seniors will always make up the difference between what's budgeted and if they need extra things, the seniors have always made up the difference themselves.

Senior Center Director Lori Johnson discussed that the temp pay is their ceramics instructor who is minimum wage, so in January that will increase to \$13.18 which will increase that a little. Lori Johnson added that the other equipment maintenance, the 252 is to tune our pianos, noting they haven't used them for a couple of years, but have started using them. Lori Johnson further added that office equipment maintenance 300 will keep that, noting they had to get a printer last year. Lori Johnson then added the telephone use does go up, noting it seems to go up every other month through

VTel. Lori Johnson then discussed postage and office supplies they will keep the same and then other supplies 225 miscellaneous.

Michael Martin inquired how much do the seniors contribute on their own throughout the year, monetarily or donation. Lori Johnson replied they have a wish list and can bring a box of tissues to a roll of paper towels. Lori Johnson added that if someone passes away (like a member) they always put that on the board and sometimes will come in \$5 in memory of, and if they get \$25 then they will put their name on the board. Lori Johnson described they just needed a bunch of chair feet protectors so one member came in with \$100 to give the money for them. Lori Johnson noted that you really can't count on that as much, because you never know as they're all on fixed incomes. Lori Johnson further added that they haven't tuned the pianos for a couple of years but has kept watering them so they are in good shape, but this year they probably should get them tuned.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus confirmed that Lori (Johnson) was okay with the Budget Advisory Committee reaching out to her directly if they had further question or wanted to tour the facility.

Fire

Town Manager Jeff Mobus noted that there is one significant accounting change, it doesn't change the bottom number, but it does change how we're how appropriately accounting for the revenue in the in the ambulance department. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that the ambulance revenues were up \$150,000 but that is offset with the bad dept expense of \$150,000.00, noting historically it has been shown net as a total revenue but that doesn't tell the whole story of what is going on and we want to show the revenue and expenses correctly now. Town Manager Jeff Mobus further added that the other item is there is a plan to replace a fire engine, which is probably 25-26 years old, noting the total price of \$460,000.00 which is what we've got our capital plan. Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that right now with \$120,000 we're at, \$120,000 in this year's budget, and they are requesting another \$120,000.00 for next year's budget which will bring us up to \$560,000, which is enough to cover the cost of replacing the fire engine if the price is \$460,000. Town Manager Jeff Mobus noted that he was hearing and seeing in our other departments the equipment is going up pretty steep.

Fire Chief Paul Stagner discussed on page 16 Ambulance and Fire Revenue that was the change of \$150,000 that Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed, and the only other change would be the change in the paramedic intercept we're looking at least an additional \$3,700 there for increased revenue for paramedic intercepts. Chair Kristi Morris inquired if Fire Chief Paul Stagner could briefly summarize what a paramedic intercept was and why a revenue item. Fire Chief Paul Stagner summarized that a paramedic intercept is when surrounding community that we have agreements with asks for our paramedics to respond to one of their emergency medical scenes, they call us and ask for a medic for whatever reason we respond and meet that ambulance service somewhere between here and their point the origin, our paramedic then gets on their ambulance, performs those interventions, and then transports that patient in their ambulance to the hospital. Fire Chief Paul Stagner added that is a service that they ask for that our department is trained to provide and is a billable service, noting we charge everyone that asks for it. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that you can see a few years ago we brought in almost \$45,000 but that was before Charlestown went with another service and it was expected to go down. Walter Martone commented that our actual and the budget everything for the non-emergency transport are tracking very nicely and we are finally seeing it come to alignment and fruition. Fire Chief Paul Stagner agreed, noting that you can see that the revenue that we did based on the revenue and our expenses the backside of this budget is the fire budget and can see that it is moving in the right direction. Walter Martone commented it's doing what he (Paul Stagner) anticipated, and it is the reflection of his (Paul Stagner) objective in his (Paul Stagner) business plan. Fire Chief Paul Stagner

noted that for lack of a better term it's still a little rough around the edges being it is a new business, and he is hoping to fine tune that for the next year and continue to fine tune it because it is a dynamic industry.

Wes Marshal SAPA TV in-person inquired if there was a certain radius that they would respond to for paramedic intercepts. Fire Chief Paul Stagner stated that we have met ambulances coming from Walpole, Bellows Falls, Chester, and Ludlow is most of the business noting it's probably 99% of the business but does not believe we have anyone further from that. Wes Marshal then inquired if when the paramedic goes to do the service do they bring them back to the Fire Station. Fire Chief Paul Stagner described that when the paramedic is done with the service our vehicle that brought the paramedic or met the requesting ambulance, we follow them to the hospital, and we bring our people back to the station, adding that it is a service that we do bill for because it's obvious the cost incurred and we have to get called back to cover out town and all the costs involved with that process. Town Manager Jeff Mobus clarified that our Town is traditionally when an ambulance goes out, we call in two people we do have two ambulance so if there are two emergencies hopefully people can respond to the callbacks, but that is a challenge and we aren't always was able to staff callbacks either but wanted people to be aware that is why we have two ambulances and that's why we also call back in when people go out.

Corky Bond in-person inquired how many on the force were paramedics. Fire Chief Paul Stagner responded five and six including himself. Corky Bond followed-up inquiring if they send out a paramedic if one of those two people that comes in to cover is also a paramedic. Fire Chief Paul Stagner when we do call back the minimum level of EMS service, we provide is an advanced EMT, so we always have at least an advanced EMT on duty, but we don't always have a paramedic on duty. Fire Chief Paul Stagner noted he was not that fortunate enough yet to have everybody paramedics and fully staffed with all paramedics, noting that Nick Skrocki is currently in medical school now and should be done in 10 months.

Fire Chief Paul Stagner discussed page 17 fire administration regular pay as stated has been given from the Finance Department and is an increase of \$8,392.00 and temp pay, he did decrease by \$500 due to the low membership in our call department right now so this year we will be able to incur a savings because of lack of the resources, but as far as actually pay for that line item he thinks that reducing it is warranted. Fire Chief Paul Stagner added the next line increase is the electronic equipment \$41,544 increase of \$500, this is for radios, labor for keeping the coms units up and running and cost of everything is just rising. Fire Chief Paul Stagner further added that utilities, is the same story, utilities costs are rising, and \$2,000 with talking with utility companies that's a good number to use. Fire Chief Paul Stagner further discussed he did raise the social expenses \$100, primarily based on the history of how much we spent in the previous years, noting that sometimes when somebody retires or something you've got to spend a little money on coffee and donuts.

Fire Chief Paul Stagner discussed after social expensive we have office supplies and again due to history and costs warranted an increase of \$600. Chair Kristi Morris requested under office supplies 5611 there isn't an explanation as to what that goes to if he could just mention some of the things that would be covered under office supplies. Fire Chief Paul Stagner responded they are just basic office supplies everything from printer stuff, paper, to writing utensils, added that it is everything we would get from Staples. Fire Chief Paul Stagner added line item 41619 heating fuel was increase \$3,500, based on recommendations and contractual prices. Fire Chief Paul Stagner further added the last item change has to do with the building maintenance fund in the next year, our building was built in 77 and we are pushing that 50-year mark and maintenance for that building is going to increase, noting the \$12,000 that we did budget previously had to do with a specific project. Fire Chief Paul Stagner further added that \$6,000 this year to maintain that contribution to this, and noted that he was sure it's going to go to a number of things especially the locks on the exterior doors, added that half the guys that responded to the fire last night were not able to get in and they had to go to front of the building to get in. Fire Chief Paul Stagner explained he wanted to start with \$6,000, and once he has more time under his belt to do a good evaluation of building and facilities a building maintenance fund is going to be something he will request in the future.

Everett Hammond requested they try to develop something to show the numbers per gallon of heating fuel and propane used. Further discussion ensued regarding how Finance Director Cathy Sohngen figured out the usage over the last two

years for each building and our rate is \$3.613 this year and she multiplied it out. Michael Martin observed that going through the budgets that the percent increase for the heating fuel in each department is a different number, noting they range anywhere from 29% to 60%. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that it was done based on the usage and before we had not done the usage. Michael Martin asked to confirm that these numbers that they are looking at here to disregard previous budget numbers and the percent increase and now it is really trying to get it back in line with the actual usage. Town Manager Jeff Mobus confirmed and added that she (Cathy Sohngen) did a two-year average.

Fire Chief Paul Stagner discussed page 18 fire loss prevention the first item is regular pay, and the number was provided by the Finance Department and that brings us down to gasoline, the prices and usage have gone up, so he increased that \$1,500. Fire Chief Paul Stagner added that auto maintenance parts a \$2,000 increase in that line and he is hoping it is going to be enough, noting that just with the maintenance recently maintenance costs are crazy for ambulance and fire trucks right now. Fire Chief Paul Stagner further added other equipment line item 42642, just regular standard fire equipment that we use he increased that \$1,000 primarily because past history of the spending in that line item has always been overspent, so he is just trying to budget to where we are actually at and he only raised it by \$1,000 and is hoping to make that more accurate, noting all those materials are also becoming more expensive such as nozzles, adapters, firefighter equipment. Fire Chief Paul Stagner noted those are the only changes in that line item except for reduction in the equipment fund for the purchase of new trucks, but that's in our capitals as well, adding that instead of \$125,400, we reduced it back to the even \$125,000.

Crissy Webster inquired for line items, 5620, 5631, and 5642 why there is such a significant increase in actual between 20-21 and 21-22. Fire Chief Paul Stagner asked which one they wanted to talk about first. Crissy Webster responded gasoline and Fire Chief Paul Stagner confirmed that's really gas and diesel. Crissy Webster inquired why we are not budgeting for even close to that. Further discussion ensued regarding the past budgets and uncertainty of what the anomaly was in 21-22 but Fire Chief Paul Stagner will confirm that. Crissy Webster followed up that it seems to be the same thing with the 5631 auto parts and then the 5642 for other equipment. Fire Chief Paul Stagner confirmed and added that one of his goals is to separate the transfer business line items more specific to that task, or more specific to that budget section, noting to almost treat it like a separate business unit of the department and doing that is going to allow him to make the appropriate tweaking with a better data and be more accurate with that. Michael Martine inquired if we know where we are year to date on those same three line items. Discussion ensued that year to date for first quarter or period three, on line item 620 loss and prevention we are at almost \$5,300, 631 we are at \$8,400, and 642 we are at \$3,100. Michael Martin added that he knows that you can't just multiply these numbers times four necessarily, especially for repairs and equipment, but noted that gasoline was probably something you could multiply by four and project so it could be a \$21,200 on that and in our current budget year it is \$18,000 for that. Chair Kristi Morris noted it was \$19,500 as proposed. Michael Martin noted that other challenge is we don't have the 21-22 actual for this fiscal year. Further discussion ensued regarding the challenges of budgeting for the next fiscal year when we don't have actuals for the current fiscal year and that Town Manager Jeff Mobus did provide them with the year-to-date audit which in most cases would be pretty accurate. Fire Chief Paul Stagner noted that we've also tried to come up with a better way to track our gasoline per vehicle adding that it is difficult to challenge but he is hoping to come up with a better way of doing that. Crissy Webster inquired if they have assigned cards for each vehicle. Fire Chief Paul Stagner confirmed and added that some of the vehicles breakdown for an extended time and the gas cards get switched around or if we have a fire and a row of trucks to gas up they use one card, adding that some policy changes and some practices to better track where gasoline or diesel fuel is used his intention is to implement that, he just needs to come up with some solutions.

Everett Hammond expressed concerns on the three line items as he believed we will be very tight on them and possibly way under especially the equipment one. Fire Chief Paul Stagner agreed and added that he really avoided making huge increases at this time around, noting that recommendations are going to be wonderful because he hasn't had the opportunity to really divulge and evaluate all these issues and the next time, he does this he thinks his estimates are going

to be a little more accurate. Fire Chief Paul Stagner further added he's tried to make just simple increases where he believes they are going to need some increases and he is sure some of them are not 100% accurate but is hoping what he did is I'm going to make it less painful. Scott Richardson in-person inquired about other equipment the 642 account, if there any grants coming up or turnout gear that the Fire Chief knows of. Fire Chief Paul Stagner responded that one of the things he did was to ask people for some ideas on grants when they're hearing about grants and he has done his own research on grants, noting that the unfortunate result of that is he's gotten so many grants that he has to pick and choose and do proper research to determine what grants will work best for them. Scott Richardson noted that the 21-22 actual 31,000 is just a couple sets of turnout gear that need to be bought and the proposed \$11,000 in that line item that is 3 sets of turnout gear and the line item is gone and that does not include hose, nozzles, or spanners.

Scott Richardson added that the auto maintenance parts that he knows the 21-22 actual of \$27,600 was because the transmission blew in car 2, which is a passenger vehicle that is 10 years old, noting it is not a service vehicle and added that car 1 is 8 years old and should be replaced. Fire Chief Paul Stagner added that car 2 was being replaced this year. Further discussion ensued regarding car 2 funding and car 1 maintenance, and it will become car 2. Chair Kristi Morris inquired about the capital plan as they had not received it yet. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that he was unable to get that before the meeting as the Finance Director was out of the office, but he would get that to them, but he noted that what the Chief said was there was a \$30,000 expense this year, we are putting in \$120,000 this year and \$125,000 next year assuming we buy the car this year and we don't change the contribution we'll have \$560,000 with an expected expense for the year 24 for the fire truck for \$460,000 okay, so we will have a balance of \$100,000 towards the next fire truck.

Crissy Webster inquired how often the turnout gear needs to be turned out and getting new turnout gear, and if they are all on the same schedule. Fire Chief Paul Stagner replied it is a different schedule and the typical life of the turnout gear is 10 years, noting that we push that time frame, and it has been piecemeal over the last few years, adding that doing a grant is probably the best way to resolve some of that the other things they will be looking at grants for SCBAs as well. Doug Johnston inquired that in the future for the turnout gear for an example, grants are nice when you can replace the whole thing, but then you run into the same problem down the road, so wouldn't be wise to start putting some money aside like they are doing on their equipment fund specifically for that, for the replacement down the road and having a schedule to replace a third one annually to stretch it out so it's not a big, huge expense at once. Fire Chief Paul Stagner agreed and noted that on the surface it makes sense but, in his experience, it has always been when we make these large purchases whether its gear or SCBAs it's always been the AFG grant or something similar to a federal grant that replaces all of that equipment and there hasn't been a contribution fund for personal equipment. Doug Johnston noted his concerns about that was that grants are going to run out at some point in time, and then it will be the taxpayer's responsibility to fund that. Fire Chief Paul Stagner added that it was certainly something he was willing to consider.

Wes Marshall SAPA TV inquired if they thought about going gas or electric for the new vehicle for the fire department. Fire Chief Paul Stagner responded that he had, noting that for a command vehicle the issues are anything in emergency response for electric vehicles is the amount of idle time adding that there are some cities in the country that have mandated electric fire trucks and vehicles, and the issue is they have about 2 hour idle time with the lights on an emergency scene Fire Chief Paul Stagner added that last night they spent 6 hours on the scene, and the largest issue right now is towing electric vehicles back from emergency scenes until they can have a longer life of idling and runtime, noting that when we bring them to a scene we do not shut the lights off but they have been looked at. Further Discussion ensued regarding that they were looked at but they're working on a lot of bugs right now and long term that mandate is going to trickle down to the smaller communities.

Fire Chief Paul Stagner discussed page 19 fire ambulance, besides the pay there's only 2 items that they have increased one being the other equipment line item 4345 due to rising costs and what we have spent over the previous years, noting you can see actual 20-21 is \$6,400 and it was raised \$500. Fire Chief Paul Stagner added that the postage was also

increased \$450, that is line item at 43555, noting that their postage has gone up dramatically because of their new billing practices adding that this past year they took with their Medical and EMS billing is he, Sarah their biller, and the Finance Director Kathy Sohngen worked together to create an actual billing policy for all EMS services not just the non-emergency transfers, adding that hopefully, we'll see the fruits of that within a year. Crissy Webster inquired if it was in hopes to decrease the bad debt expenses or if that was out of our control. Town Manager Jeff Mobus responded that It's all the right offs and anything that we bill that we don't collect. Fire Chief Paul Stagner added that the billing policy itself is created to create more revenue, a consistent way of following up and to find out where we're not following up, noting it will also truly determine when we receive money for different types of calls because that varies greatly. Fire Chief Paul Stagner further added that sometimes we get paid within a couple of weeks and other times we don't get paid for 180 days, so to write-off something that's 180 days old could be premature and this is all stuff we're trying to figure out.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that the equipment fund contribution of \$80,000 this year, next year \$80,000, and \$80,000 for FY25 year will bring us up to \$347,000 and we are budgeting in FY25 for an ambulance, noting that may be light also because we are seeing expense costs going up. Chair Kristi Morris added that he noticed a typo error on the line for postage it says it's 10-41-5 and it should be 43, noting it is correct on the actual funds that they get printed out. Further discussion ensued regarding the schedule of the equipment purchases and potential delays. Scott Richardson noted that where you can actually see 21-22 actuals the entire ambulance budget including the equipment fund contribution was \$793,600 and the revenue was \$680,000 so that is a pretty good offset of almost the entire budget, and it is almost self-sufficient.

Fire Chief Paul Stagner discussed page 20 non-emergency transports the first two items regular pay and temp pay 4411 and 4419, they increased the regular pay \$495 but decreased the temp pay \$40 because we did get that second full-time position, so the money just went from the temp pay to regular pay. Fire Chief Paul Stagner added that ambulance agency assessment dropped \$5,000 and that is a state assessment. Fire Chief Paul Stagner further added that for non-durable goods based on history of what we purchased in the past he decreased that \$2,000, however, the durables, he increased \$2,000 because of purchasing in the past. Fire Chief Paul Stagner further discussed vehicle maintenance 4461 he increased that \$2,000 to try to survive the cost increase of parts and labor. Crissy Webster noted on the same line item that the 20-21 actual was \$47,180, then 21-22 actual was zero, and then the budgeted is 10 and 12, and inquired is it was not accurately tracked. Fire Chief Paul Stagner responded that we had some initial purchases for the transfer of ambulance, we had to purchase a monitor and we had to purchase some heavier priced items. Crissy Webster then noted that she was seeing approximate \$1465 for revenue so it's actually a money maker. Fire Chief Paul Stagner confirmed. Everett Hammond inquired why the first line item regular pay if something was going on with the formula there as it showed 0.0%. Town Manager Jeff Mobus confirmed the percentage was not correct.

Police

Police Chief Jeff Burnham discussed page 11 police revenue and we do have a summary this evening or covered last which did not show any increases or decreases and added that they had discussed this at a round table with Finance Director Cathy Sohngen and they decided that they were going to leave everything alone because we don't have an accurate reflection of what that is from past history, noting that Rich Stillings was partially involved with that by providing input and they will zero in the next year. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that because last year with the lower numbers last year, because it was during COVID and they had fewer people, so we weren't doing contractual services, so the contractual service number, for example, the \$4,000 doesn't matter because if we don't send somebody out there's no expense on the other side, so it sort of that zeros itself out, noting that he did not think we're looking at big problems. Town Manager Jeff Mobus further added that he agreed with the Chief to not make changes. Corky Bond in-person understood that John Fertini was retiring as a part-time traffic control person, and he is not being replaced at this time. Police Chief Jeff Burnham

confirmed. Corky Bond inquired what is that going to do to parking fines or is his salary off setting that in some way. Town Manager Jeff Mobus responded that Cathy Sohngen looked into that and last year the parking fines the total revenue was \$13,600 last year, of that over \$12,000 was actually rentals, and the fines were around \$1,500 and his salary line is around \$15,000, so it's certainly costs money to have to fill that position, adding that at this point you're not looking at a huge transition, because 90% of that revenue in that line is for rental is not for parking enforcement.

Police Chief Jeff Burnham discussed page 12 police administration and one item on page 13, with the regular pay we use that number from finance and moving down to temporary pay this is the one that's going to cause sticker shock which he apologizes for is going from \$1,500 to \$20,000, adding that is because he is looking to add on a part time, position for an evidence officer, noting that the evidence room has been overlooked and or neglected for a significant period of time. Police Chief Jeff Burnham added the other problem is we have a brand-new evidence system that we can't use yet, because we have to reload every piece of evidence from one system to the other manually. Police Chief Jeff Burnham further added there isn't an electronic computer program that makes it happen and he can almost articulate this a full time position and in discussion that with the time manager what do we do when the evidence room is back up to speed maybe a full time position isn't the best option, noting that part time certainly with the increase in staff that he anticipates and the rotation of the evidence that comes in that has to get processed and then eventually is removed that could justify part time position for the number of hours that he's anticipating which is just in a ballpark of 20 hours a week. Michael Martin inquired if that doesn't require a certified officer. Police Chief Jeff Burnham confirmed.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that Chief Burnham had looked into what other departments were doing and noted Brattleboro as an example. Police Chief Jeff Burnham confirmed he met with the Brattleboro Chief who is doing something similar except theirs is a full-time position and it is a non-certified person, adding that they will be going through the same vetting process, because we put great value in the security and integrity of the system, but it won't be a sworn position and that that takes out some of the requirements and maintenance for training, etc. to maintain the certifications that takes it out as a as a civilian position. Walter Martone restated what he heard to make sure he understands a half-time position will allow them to keep up with current and increasing demand and to start making a dent in the backlog, but it won't wipe out the backlog. Police Chief Jeff Burnham confirmed and added that his goal is to wipe out the backlog.

Police Chief Jeff Burnham discussed the next one that has a certain level of increase is office equipment, adding this is to accommodate the cost associated with our Equature audio recording device and they were here not too long ago about getting it, because ours was failing and now we have a new, so this is to accommodate the increase of expenditures for that. Police Chief Jeff Burnham added that moving on the next level that is fairly large is utilities they did this at a projection and Rich Stillings did this with gallons being used, approximately cost, and as other departments have, we're just try to keep up with the rising costs. Police Chief Jeff Burhan further added that postage they had a less of a need, so it was again Rich's input on this that said they don't think they need as much as they had, so they decreased it to \$1,000 from \$1,500.

Police Chief Jeff Burnham discussed training, the current training procedures basically are remnants of the Covid policy where we can't go anywhere, do anything, so everything that we do for online training is online and while that was helping us get by they want to take the next step, noting that most recently he just sent someone to that self-defense class he was talking about can't be done online but because it's in-person there's additional cost associated with it, adding that he increased cost of classes going in-person and the increase staff that he anticipates to have he asked to double it. Police Chief Jeff Burnham added that social expenses was a discussion, because having it outlined in a social expenses was foreign to him, it was always attached to a training or another line item so this one was a little tough to narrow down and after discussing it with Cathy Sohngen she asked if he would host trainings or meeting's regionally, noting he would like to do that when they have enough staff so they are going to invite people in to help with our firearms which is mandatory every year and he would like to express our gratitude or be a courteous host by having something for the instructors or for the group, and that would fit under that social plan so that seemed to make sense to increase it.

Police Chief Jeff Burnham discussed moving down to heating fuel these are projections given by Cathy Sohngen and input from Rich. Police Chief Jeff Burnham added that the equipment building fund is a significant increase for where he would like to address our mobile data terminals (the MDTs), which are basically the in car computers, noting that ours are in various levels of operation more than half are not operational, and the ones that we do have are not well, so it would be as expensive to try and maintain all that by having a tech in there and having them overhaul those or starting fresh, he opted to start fresh, and that's where the quote came in at, adding he has it there if they need the actual numbers and specifics. Further discussion ensued regarding the MDTs would be capital. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that the number he's looking at for that is around \$40,000 and there is another \$25,000 in here, \$10,000 is to help fix the building down there, especially where you can park right to the right side of entrance the eaves have dropped and it's eating away at the building and there's another \$15,000 to replace the car radios in FY25, so they are building up towards that so you don't get hit with car radios all \$50,000 in one year.

Crissy Webster inquired about line item 215-562 there was a decrease of \$7,200 and if we are we not doing contractor incentives. Town Manager Jeff Mobus replied it was in the salary line. Further discussion ensued why they split it out last year for the sign-on bonus for the Chief. Scott Richardson inquired how many computers they were getting for the cruisers. Police Chief Jeff Burnham responded they are getting five. Scott Richardson follow-up asking if that was enough. Police Chief Jeff Burnham responded that is what we have and the other vehicles that we have operational are support vehicles and administrative, detectives, his car, which he does not have need for it, and it would be unnecessary, noting he could use it, but he just wouldn't use it enough to justify the cost.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed page 14 field services noting that they do have the overnight differential because we're budgeting for 13 people and Chief Jeff Burnham expects to be up to that number and after that we'll be running overnight so there will be shift differential. Town Manager Jeff Mobus further noted that shift differential starts at 3 pm. Police Chief Jeff Burnham discussed overtime they are hoping that being sufficiently staffed, they will eliminate some of the need, noting that overtime is absolutely part of the necessary operating expenditures. Police Chief Jeff Burnham added that night differential was just previously explained. Police Chief Jeff Burnham further added that travel he has tied it to the training aspect where he expects people to go, per the Union contract they are allowed per diem and travel if they use their vehicles, where those expenses could be accounted for in this way.

Police Chief Jeff Burnham discussed moving down to the gas, oil, and antifreeze they are going with an estimation of an increase of \$3,000, noting they have 9 cars. Police Chief Jeff Burnham added that moving down to the vehicle replacement fund they are looking to get one car and that was the quote that he got for the car and the upfit associated with the car, which is the lights in the grill, siren, and cage in the backseat, he noted that he is working on getting competitive quotes. Further discussion ensued that this was a line item they did not fund last year and, in the material, provided at the time of the meeting is the current fleet, including the mileage. Everett Hammond inquired if it was just one car and Police Chief Jeff Burnham confirmed and noted it will be another Ford SUV. Chair Kristi Morris asked for further explanation the 535 should be a car and a half. Town Manager Jeff Mobus replied it used to be a car and a half but that prices are up and what has been happening, is that they have been eating up their carryover, the carryover in this line now is down to about \$6,700 because it just is costing more to do the cars.

Scott Richardson inquired for the capitals in the future are we going to go back to the one car then one and a half cars every year so you can get two in one year. Police Chief Jeff Burnham replied his goal is to get back there but knowing that they have been sitting for a long there is no urgency to get back there, as soon as we have sufficient staffing there will be a need, and the mileage and the wear and tear will start adding up, noting he has no issue not getting the car this year, because one or two have been parked, the majority of the time. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that we just got two in January because it took so long to get them. Police Chief Jeff Burnham added that when we get there he's already been informed when he got the quote it was going to take 11 months, so even when you order it you have to wait almost a year so he will order as soon as he possibly can. Doug Johnston inquired is they have enough cars if the officers are using those

vehicles to go to attend trainings or courts, etc., instead of paying mileage on their own personal vehicles. Police Chief Jeff Burnham replied they are except he won't have a dispatcher take a marked vehicle because then they're expected to act like a police officer, and he doesn't want that to happen, noting that's how he's getting the cars that are parked to get moved if they haven't been used in a while. Doug Johnston added that he knew there are some cars down there that are unmarked and dispatchers or other non-sworn could use in the meantime until you get up to full staff.

Wes Marshall inquired if when they get a new vehicle if the lights, sirens, and grills are exchangeable to the new vehicles. Police Chief Jeff Burnham responded he wants them to be, but they're often not, noting the rate at which we rotate vehicles it's just out of the model year where things can go from one car to the other. Police Chief Jeff Burnham added that the difference in transferring the lights versus buying new ones and having installed is pennies, so why put in stuff that may fail when a few more pennies give you brand new stuff, noting he does have the quote that would back up that statement because he was looking to save money. Doug Johnston inquired if he was getting any trade-in value for the lights that are being taken off or are being replaced. Police Chief Jeff Burnham added that he does have that factored into the quote and he would like to have this for the new stuff and does not think he's getting much value at all, so he is not getting much for trade-in value.

Police Chief Jeff Burnham discussed page 15 parking enforcement that this was prepared before he learned the part-time officer was retiring, noting that right now he doesn't need this line item. Chair Kristi Morris added we have plenty of time to make adjustments. Michael Martin noted that this is for not this current year but into 2024 and inquired if he didn't think he was going to be adding a parking enforcement officer in 24. Police Chief Jeff Burnham responded he was not likely going to add one and he is focusing on the parts that we are in desperate need of assistance, which would be dispatch, patrol, and evidence.

Administration- Fixed Costs

Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed the page 40 fixed costs the first big change is health insurance \$106,000, which is an 8.2, which we are actually looking at about a 12% increase however we have increased the premium copay for our employees, so that's helped offset that increase. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that retirement, with the dollars going up the retirement share has gone up as well, noting that is because in order to keep the retirement funds (VMERS) properly funded or better funded they're raising the increase about an eighth of a point each year, to help keep that up and that's the employer portion so that is going up \$10,000. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that street and traffic light maintenance as our lights get older it's costing us a little bit more, so Cathy Sohngen put in a number of \$95,000 to repair the streetlight as well as pay for the electricity, but mostly, it's the repairs of the lights.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed the debt interest as discussed before our bonding has gone down, and each time the bonding goes down our principal stays the same and as the overall principle goes down the interest goes down. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added liability insurance has been hopping around and after a little investigation we found the \$151,000 and the \$222,000 was because there was a month past year so \$151,000 was actually 11 months and the \$222,000 was actually 13 months total really should be \$190,000 based on the current data. Town Manager Jeff Mobus further added our bank fees have gone up, so we put \$1,000 into bank fees. Michael Martin inquired on the health insurance if it covers all town employees. Town Manager Jeff Mobus replied Water and Sewer were on their own and it is a different fund. Further discussion ensued clarifying that they are not all the same insurance plan. Town Manager Jeff Mobus noted that one of the things that they have talked about is actually breaking out the benefit costs into the departments because we have to do that anyway at the end of the year, we have to figure out the cost of each function.

Scott Richardson inquired about the debt interest being just the Police station. Town Manager Jeff Mobus clarified it was the only formal debt that we have for operations, we do have that superfund site where we pay \$35,000 a year, no matter

how much it costs to actually run, noting the monitoring used to be more some years we have \$100,000 for monitoring and we only pay \$35,000, adding that at one point he think we owe a few \$100,000 to EPA because we're only paying and the last several years it's gone down and Cathy Sohngen said we are down to about \$100,000 on that now and there is no interest on EPA. Walter Martone inquired that the interfund transfer is our contribution for the CSO bonds, so he (Town Manager) is not proposing any increase on that. Town Manager Jeff Mobus confirmed he did not propose an increase this year. Further discussion ensued that they increase that last year and we wanted to get to \$500,000 and we are now there. Michael Martin inquired if we resolved the issues with the two funds where there was an imbalance with the payments going back and forth. Town Manager Jeff Mobus responded we were transferring \$50,000 a year back from the water and sewer back to the general fund. Crissy Webster requested to get a breakout this year. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that it would be a future year, but we may be able to get something that may not be as accurate.

Walter Martone requested going back to page one, he didn't want to ask for additional work, he just wondered if this is something that was available, something that they can see in one page the whole budget and see department by department the current year budget, the proposed new budget, and the difference so we can see how everybody stacks up. Town Manager Jeff Mobus responded that was possible for him to do.

Doug Johnston requested to know what the intent of the Selectboard was as far as a bond is concerned, that would be paid for, and or special appropriations, noting it would be nice to have that information going through the process. Chair Kristi Morris responded that we do have a Selectboard summary of what we want to do going forward and what we actually contribute to that and what we put in or not depends on the budget where we are, so we have to look at those in unison, so that will be coming up more towards our workshops once we have the budget. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that it would be following the first meeting in December. Further discussion ensued that the packet did include a statement from the Town Manager that contained input from the Board. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that the appropriations for the other services, social services, he does not expect any changes, the one big thing is the special appropriation \$100,000 for the sidewalk and he expects that that is where we stay, but according to RSMS the plan is to raise the paving from \$700,000 to \$800,000 because the RSMS shows that we should really be at \$1.5 million between the \$300,000 in the budget and social appropriation. Town Manager Jeff Mobus further added we will be looking for a bond vote for the next section of the water project, which would probably be 90% paid for by water rate users, small amount because it's also for fire protection purposes on the town budget but he does not have the full amount of that yet but suspects it will be close to \$3 million and there's a \$1 million dollar loan forgiveness.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed he also talked with the Board on where we end on operations about having a mid-size bond about 5 million for paving, and perhaps to finally do this building, noting he was not sure we wanted to do two bond votes in one year or if it was something we would hold till next year. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added the idea for the bond vote if we pay it, it would be budget neutral, meaning that we'd be committing the \$300,000 in paving line to debt service and then reduce the amount of paving annually by that amount, and then there's \$50,000 in here for this building for repairs and maintenance, noting that the elevator has to be replaced and the heating system has to be all redone, and the parking lot and the ADA access entrance, that we could knock off quickly. Doug Johnston added that he believed it would be beneficial to educate the public on this to get their support. Further discussion ensued that if we only do one bond this year it has to be the water bond, or we lose our place.

Additional discussion ensued regarding past bonds and issues caused by over bonding, the length of time it takes to get projects done, and cost increases. Michael Martin discussed at our last regular meeting he (Town Manager) discussed the fact that the state has pushed the Riverside Culvert from 23 to 24, because they only got one bid and it was 5 million dollars and they had 2.2 million budgeted and we have a 10% share, if they get a bid for 24 that is for \$5 million dollars, and inquired if we budgeted properly for our 10% share of half \$1 million. Town Manager Jeff Mobus replied that budget line item is the bridges line we are putting \$175,000 into that line and they're looking at doing McDonald's bridge in FY24 or FY25, but he believes it will be FY25, noting it did make it onto the TAC's (Transportation Advisory Committee) list of 10

bridges, but there's a little bit of money there which is for the Park Street bridge which is not on the list yet and probably will be 7-8 years out if we keep doing \$175,000 there would be some margin for that for that culvert. Town Manager Jeff Mobus further added that it doesn't give you money for the other culverts and we have 2 more culverts on Eureka Road unless we did choose the bonding, so there's a lot of different pieces that we want to put together. Further discussion ensued regarding the solar retaining wall near the Plaza we need to come up with another half million for and the Riverside parking lot which would combine with another half million dollars to replace the water lines underneath it, noting we need to prioritize the projects and explore more grant options. Chair Kristi Morris added that he does not believe we have a master list of what we can put together, noting that obviously if we put the bond before the voters and multiple bonds before the voters may not be in our best interest and we have this list for these concepts in mind, and how we fund them and which ones we chose to go forth with hasn't been determined, and requested if we could get a list to look at that and offer some suggestions. Town Manager Jeff Mobus replied he would be happy to get that together for the Board and BAC. Chair Kristi Morris added that as to which ones we're going to select, that hasn't been determined and obviously a lot of it depends on what the final budget numbers are going to look like as to what we're going to present to the voters in March. Further discussion ensued regarding it being a tough year with inflation and rising costs and Contract H the Clinton Street project, from Ridge Street down to Severs Brook.

Further discussion ensued regarding bonding and paving in past years.

Future Agenda Request for Regular Selectboard Meeting

Town Manager Jeff Mobus requested to have an executive session at the next Selectboard meeting on Monday November 28th and inquired if a 6:30 meeting time to have the executive session before the meeting as they will have an act for the item after. Further discussion ensued regarding the scheduling aspect and how the meeting would run. Chair Kristi Morris reconfirmed we'll open up the board meeting, then the board will go into executive session and leave the Selectboard hall, once the executive session is completed, they will return to resume the meeting as normal.

The meeting adjourned at 7:38 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carrie M. Kellow, Recording Secretary