

**Town of Sullivan, NH**  
**Budget Committee**  
**Approved Meeting Minutes, January 12, 2021**  
**Sullivan Town Hall**

Board members present: Al Merrifield, Chairman, John Bolles, Gary Patnode, William Thorndike (Note: Fire on Gilsum Road prevents members Paul Bolduc, and Michael Blanchard and presenter Alan Henry from attending.)

Representatives: Marsha Cook

Others: Chris Pratt, Leslie Casey

Alfred Merrifield called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Approval of the minutes from December 29, 2020 will be deferred until January 19, 2021.

Chairman Merrifield noted that without a quorum present, the Committee would only take testimony and defer from making any decisions.

Marsha presented updated Town budgets for the members; these represent expenses to December 31, 2020; the Town will continue to pay 2020 invoices through January 2021; final reports will be available at the end of January.

**BUDGETS**

**Library**: \$21,536 (+ \$259)

Chris Pratt presented the Library 2021 proposed budget. The overall budget is stable relative to 2020. Wages reflect a 1.03% increase as recommended by the Selectmen; fuel (propane) has been set at 700 gallons which should be sufficient for the year and telephone increases are driven by CCI's tax and fee increases, bringing the costs back up to 2019 levels. Maintenance line has decreased as the major projects have been completed.

Technology line increase (+\$800) represents the requested investment in the automated cataloging system that will allow the Library to better track its holdings and allow residents broader access to the State Library inventory. The Library will spend this appropriation on the necessary software (Library World) and barcodes for the books.

There will be an annual (\$500) licensing fee; Chairman Merrifield asked if this would be the anticipated future expense; Chris does not expect it to increase as this has been the cost since 2010.

Gary Patnode questioned if the time and effort necessary to barcode all of the books would be absorbed in the Librarian's salaries; Chris explained that the books would be barcoded as they were loaned, making this an ongoing part of the checkout procedure. As time allows, entire sections can also be barcoded, his experience at Keene State indicating that this is easily accomplished.

**Conservation**: \$2045 (+ \$100)

Marsha Cook explained that the Selectmen's Recommended Conservation budget is up \$100 from 2020 all of which is in the Youth/Town Education line to allow for potential Town programming in addition to the Nelson School programs currently presented for students.

Gary Patnode asked if the proposed budget for Town Cleanup and Recycling at \$1003 (addit'l \$53) was more realistic as the 2020 actual (\$916) reflects that we were unable to do a Town Cleanup in 2020 because of Covid-19. Marsha agreed \$1003 would better reflect the overall need for 2021.

William Thorndike questioned the placeholder for Mapping; Marsha explained that at one time the Commission completed a Conservation Mapping project; on completion the line has not been funded more recently. Marsha will ask the Conservation Commission to determine if this line is still necessary.

William Thorndike suggested that a \$10 allocation to the Mgmt of Town Property line would indicate that this placeholder would stay for future use.

**Planning Board** – \$1,715 (+\$283)

Leslie Casey presented the Planning Board budget, explain that the recent increase of land purchases and subdivisions is requiring more publication and abutter notification. Fees charged for these do cover postage so there will be no increase in that line, however Printing and Publishing will increase by \$175 to \$400.00.

Books & Periodicals has increased \$100. As new members come on to Planning Board, training is essential to ensure continuity. The majority of this is currently virtual.

**PB Capital Reserve – Master Plan:** \$5,000 (+ \$3500)

As required by the State, the Master Plan will need to be updated in 2024 for publication and adoption in 2025. Estimates indicate \$30m will be needed to complete this process; adding more annually for the next 3-4 years will reach necessary level of funding.

Chairman Merrifield added that this document is essential to maintaining the Community Development Plan.

William Thorndike asked if the \$30m was an arbitrary number or if Lesley knows that this will be the cost; Leslie responded that \$30 would be considered the minimum; prior funding was insufficient to meet this goal and it becomes prudent to increase the annual appropriation. As the date comes closer, the Planning Board will go out for an actual quote for the update.

**Cemetery:** \$7,400, decreased \$5,100

Marsha Cook presented the Cemetery budget. Contracted services for 2021 will include mowing, tree work and mowing, as well as the stabilizing of a number of stones that have fallen. Keene Monument has advised that fallen stones be stabilized in place.

John Bolles asked if they were more susceptible to acid rain if lying flat; Marsha said that Keene monument has found that these stones are so softened with time that standing them tends to more cracking and damage.

This budget line also includes the cleaning of the Civil War Monument and the WWII plaque on the Town Hall.

**Recreation:** \$1,000 no change

Marsha Cook presented the Recreation budget; this budget is used for the annual Christmas Party for the Town children.

**Fire Department/Emergency Management:** \$36,050 (+ \$2,758)

Alan Henry is currently at the scene of a fire in Gilsum; Marsha Cook presented the Fire Department budget.

The majority of this budget reflects 2020; the increase in the Vehicle Repair line (+2,000) is requested to fund the first year of a 2-year plan to replace tires on major vehicles.

Al has requested \$1000 in Radio Repair & Equipment to cover purchase of Fire Department pagers with updated technology.

Chairman Merrifield asked how many tires were going to be replaced; Marsha will talk with Al and provide an answer.

**Capital Reserves: Fire Department**

New:

Al has requested a new capital reserve account for funded by the sales of surplus equipment, allowing the department to use these funds for fire department purchases rather than having sales proceeds become part of the Town operating budget.

Chairman Merrifield asked if any of these proceeds would go into vehicle replacement; Marsha responded that Al has requested these monies go into the new capital reserve fund. Chief Henry feels that the money was originally spent by the Town for fire equipment and this would keep those monies for that purpose. He is concerned that this is not a typical manner of budgeting expense items.

Merrifield would like to see a copy of the warrant article before the Budget Committee will take any action.

Gary Patnode asked if this might set a precedent for other departments; this will be part of the Budget Committee's deliberations.

John Bolles asked if the tires will be state bid as in most cases there are savings in using that procedure. Marsha will speak with Al.

Forest Fire: this fund presently has \$18,252; there will be no funding request in 2021.

Fire Department Vehicle: \$20,000

Breathing Apparatus: \$2500

**Emergency Management** – \$400 (no change)

Chairman Merrifield adjourned the meeting at 7:30PM

Respectfully submitted,



Kathleen N. Rowe

Administrative Assistant