

Lyndeborough Budget Committee

Meeting Minutes

November 30, 2021

Citizens' Hall

Draft 1

Vice called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

Members present: Chairman Karen Grybko, Arnie Byam, Walter Holland, John Pomer, Allysa Lavoie, Geoff Allen, Fran Bujak, Selectmen's Rep. Bob Howe, and Backup Selectmen's Rep. Mark Chamberlain

Present: Town Administrator Russ Boland and Road Agent Mark Chase

Election of Officers:

VOTE: Geoff Allen made the motion, Alyssa Lavoie seconded to nominate Karen Grybko as chairperson. Motion passed unanimously.

VOTE: John Pomer volunteered and nominated himself as vice chairman, Walter Holland seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Appointment of New Member

Two residents volunteered to be on the Budget Committee. They are both involved in the community, have experience and would be good additions to the Committee therefore their names were put into a hat to make a selection. Kevin Boette's name was pulled out. Mr. Boette was a former Budget Committee and School Budget Committee member as well as a former Selectman.

4311 and 4312: HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

Road Agent Mark Chase was present. *See the budget worksheet for details.*

Administration:

4311-01-110 Wages: Full Time

T/A Boland explained that in 2010 they started a new Step Program which is out-of-date now because many employees have exceeded Step 10. Due to inflation, many towns are giving 5% raises. The office looked at the percentages between the steps, which are about 4%. If an employee was at Step 10 they got pulled back a bit. In essence they eliminated the first 3 steps and added three steps to the top. There is a full percent at each step. For example, last year Mark Chase was at step 10. He would have gone off the step chart but now he is pulled back to Step 7 because Step 10 became Step 7. His wages were adjusted to 7%.

Social Security increase is at 5.9%. Consumer Product Index is 4%.

The new steps are fixed at 4%. They have not revised this program since 2015. It is not adjusted by a COLA. (Cost of Living Adjustment)

4311-01-111 Wages: Part Time

Alyssa Lavoie asked why it is higher. T/A Boland provided the history of overtime schedules the last few years. Currently on Monday and Friday's there are two employees on staggered shifts allowing for coverage early morning and later in the evening. All four highway employees work Tuesday through Thursday.

Fran Bujak asked how much a major snowstorm cost. The answer was it would depend on if it's a weekend, weekday or combination of days. He rephrased the question to be 24-hours storm on a weekend. The answer is about \$3,300. Typically, there are 18-20 events per year. Ten events would cost over \$30,000.

4211-01-112: Training and Mileage Reimbursement

All department members take training. This year the classes were held remotely but they anticipate returning to in-person classes in 2022. There are addition classes the department would like to take for professional development.

411-01-560: Dues & Associations

The department belongs to various associations. The New Hampshire Public Works Association is a new one which Mr. Chase explained, "It is a good tool because we are all online and talk together."

4311-01-610: Uniforms/Safety

This line is for jackets, vests, all chain saw chaps, boots and more.

4311-01-620: Office Expenses

This line is for printer paper, pencils, erasers, cartridges and so forth.

4311-01-680: Radios

This line is for two-way radio communication. They talk to the dispatch center in Milford. The department purchased a radio this year for the new trucks. \$600 is the cost of a radio and an antenna. The department is getting away from using low band radios and have high band radios. The Town of Mont Vernon spent about \$12,000 on communication in which Lyndeborough is privileges to use, at no cost.

This section is up 7.15%

Building Expense

4311-02-410: Electricity

Since Mark Chase has been the Road Agent, there have been a dramatic decrease of electric used because he instituted an extensive conservation program, which cut the cost in half. That is why there is a reduction in this line by \$500. The Highway staff has done a lot of effort to reduce the costs and improve the building.

4311-02-411: Heating Fuel

The heating is propane. They have three furnaces which are set to 50 degrees, which feels comfortable. The crew chooses to conserve fuel but if they have to turn up the heat, they do. They have a propane mushroom tank and a generator.

4311-02-411: Building Maintenance & Supplies

Garage door maintenance included fixing two doors with new trim and paint.

The total proposed amount for Building Expenses is **\$11,254.**

4312-01-630: Chainsaws/Blades/Edges

This line is for all truck chains, backhoe, grader including all drop down chains.

4312-01-635: Fuel

Diesel fuel is estimated at \$24,000 and gas at \$8,001. The department had one vehicle that is gas and everything else takes diesel fuel. This line includes chain saws and mowers for cemetery.

John Pomer felt the price for diesel and gas doesn't reflect the current rate. T/A Boland answered that it reflects the current rates the town pays because we don't pay the tax.

4312-01-635: Vehicle Cost/Vendor

The department does not have time to work on vehicle repairs because it takes them off the roads. Geoff Allen asked if the vendor maintenance plan working still. The Road Agent answered, "Yes".

This year the grader had a hefty repair bill. The budget line probably will be over because of the radiator issues on the grader.

T/A Boland explained that about five-years ago they started this program due to a lot of maintenance issues and expenses. The employees don't have expertise to do the repairs on newer vehicles and when they did, they would have two less people on the roads doing road maintenance. The maintenance program provided more reliability for the fleet. They crew is out working on the roads instead of doing vehicle maintenance. The program provided more consistence repair budget. They try to use local vendors. This line has been flat the past few years.

Geoff Allen asked about the grader's radiator. He was informed it is 20-years old. The vehicle has 4-5 radiators, which all have to come out for repairs and that work costs a lot due to the time. Mr. Allen asked if we had a fund for the grader. Mark Chamberlain said that had been extended that because the vehicle was in good shape.

4312-01-661: Equipment cost, In-House Repairs.

This line is for items such as light bulbs, nuts and bolts. A company provides a rack stocked with supplies. If they need a bolt, they get it from that rack instead of having to run out to the County Stores. It's cheap money. Time is money.

4312-01-661: Tires

The Freightliner needs tires and \$3,000 is requested. They try to have a spare.

This section's total is **\$81,500.**

SUPPLIES

4312-02-445: Bridge Maintenance

The Bridge Maintenance line is \$1.00. They received the product for free. Yearly, the department sprays the two bridges in town that have concrete under them.

The Committee reviewed Welding and Tools.

4312-02-682 – Culverts/Grates

Mark Chase explained plant issues resulting in a supply and demand crisis. The cost has increased 35%. The line is \$3,500.

4312-02-683 – Signs

The department has spent a lot in this line due to adding signage on all Class VI roads, which was authorized by the Selectmen. Not all the signs have arrived yet.

4312-02-685 – Sand

The Town is purchasing sand at a pretty good rate, \$5.00 per yard. Local papers are reporting cost up to \$15-16/yard. The Town shifts the remaining sand themselves and leave some on their Schoolhouse Road location pit.

Alyssa Lavoie asked if the Town will still offer sand to residents. The answer was yes but the sand site will be moved to the Goeding property on Cemetery Road.

4312-02-685 – Salt

There has been a dramatic increase from \$56 per ton to \$78 per ton. There is also a salt shortage. The Town still reserved their usual 600 tons. The salt bins are $\frac{3}{4}$ full. This line budget increased to \$46,800 from \$33,390.

4312-02-685 – Gravel & Other Aggregates

This line is \$15,200 from \$11,400 in 2021. It is used for gravel, calcium, stone. Roads that will be impact are New Road, Mountain Road, Old Temple Road, Curtis Brook Road and Crooked S Road.

4312-02-688 – Crack Seal &/or Pavement Preservation

This line is \$15,200. Four days of crack seal work is planned for 2022. It makes sense to save the pavement on the roads. The recently paved Mountain Road is sealed every year. The goal is to bring other roads up-to-standard.

This section increased 14.61% to \$116,951.

4312-03-390 – Line Striping

This year the 2nd NH Turnpike, Center Road and Cemetery Road will have the work. The line is \$3,850.

Highway Admin Other 4311 and 4312

Roadside Mowing, Guard Rails and Paving were reviewed.

The Highway Department has a contract for weather forecasting which helps for snowstorms information/predictions.

179 **4312-03-394 – Equipment Rental/Contracted Services**

180 This line is \$22,000. They are asking for money to rent a 40-foot storage container,
181 which will go on top of a pad at the highway garage to help store lawn tractors, tires and
182 so forth. They had an incident 2-years ago when items were stolen. A new storage
183 container is \$5,999 and a lease is \$3,000. The Committee discussed if it's better to
184 purchase it and suggested doing some research. The approved security cameras have
185 not been installed yet due to difficulties getting the products. The Town's IT department
186 will be involved with this.

187 The guardrails will be installed tomorrow on Center Road and Pettingill Hill Road. The
188 town encumbered \$9,000 last year. The mobilization cost for guardrails and paving was
189 discussed.

190 Encumbered items were discussed.

191 **4312-03-688 - Paving**

192 This line is \$200,000. Paving was discussed and block grants. The Block Grant is the
193 same about \$84,000. \$50,000 is to pave Mountain Road (Whytemere Hill). Block
194 Grants are based on gas taxes and with COVID last year, gas taxes were down.

195 **The total Highways & Streets is \$689,584.**

196 Meals & Rooms are way up. The Town anticipated \$70,000 but we were awarded
197 \$127,000.

198 The last payment was made on the 2016 Freightliner, and we received the title.

199 The American Rescue Plan Act was discussed. This could help with the broadband
200 issues in Town or to help offset revenue. The total is \$182,000 in funds.

201 The NH DOT Ten-Year Plan includes repairs to the trestles on Glass Factory Road.
202 There has been a discussion regarding removing the trestles and making the railroad
203 crossing at street level. The State thinks this is a good idea. Currently there is \$1.6
204 million in funds available to repair the trestles. The department would like to have this
205 plan ready to go when the funds are available. It will take a lot for coordination. They
206 also want to realign the intersection at the other end of the road of Glass Factory and
207 Forest Road.

208 Chairperson Karen Grybko thanked Road Agent Chase for the great work the Highway
209 Department has done and for keeping us on the roads.

210 **Adjournment:**

211 **VOTE: Arnie Byam made a motion, Fran Bujak seconded to adjourn at 8:03 p.m.**
212 **Motion passed unanimously.**

213
214 Respectfully Submitted,

215
216 Kathleen Humphreys
217 Minute Taker