

Pownal Budget Committee

February 4, 2021 Public Proceeding Minutes Approved

Members Present:

Bo Chesney, Gennifer Giuliano, John Green, Matthew Roy, Brian Stornelli, Andy Wyatt

Guests:

Heidi Curry and Andy O'Brien of the Select Board, Fire Chief Jesse Peters

1. A quorum was established (all committee members logged in). The meeting was called to order by Chairman Green at 6:33 PM.
2. Mr. Wyatt provided draft minutes of the January 18, 2021 meeting. Mr. Chesney moved to approve them as written. Mr. Roy seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
3. The Public Comment period was skipped as no members of the public were in attendance.
4. The Select Board Comments period was skipped as the Select Board members in attendance did not have any comments.
5. Chairman Green initiated a discussion for this committee to set its budget goal for the upcoming fiscal year. He provided a view of mil rates and budget outlays over the past five years. Of note, and triggering significant discussion was the 'Overlay' line for the current fiscal year. Selectman O'Brien defined Overlay for the committee and indicated that the Select Board set it to a higher value for the current year, to cover unforeseen situations that may arise, since the Capital Projects line was funded at \$1.

Mr. Wyatt moved that this committee set its budget goal at the fiscal 2019/2020 level, plus 1.4 percent. Chairman Green seconded. The motion passed with five members voting in favor (Mr. Chesney's internet connection failed and he did not participate in the rest of the meeting).

6. Fire Chief Peters led the committee through a review of his proposed Public Safety budget. Most notable was the \$10,000 increase for the EMS transport line (ambulance service provided by the Town of Freeport). In recent years, Freeport has charged \$254 per call. In an effort to fully cover their costs, Freeport is increasing the fee to \$350 per call, with intent to increase incrementally in succeeding years to \$650-\$700 per call. There have been 83 calls for Freeport EMS in the past year, compared to 71 in the prior year. In response to a question about other options, Chief Peters said that the Town of Yarmouth is the only reasonable alternative.

Other notable items:

- Admin is up \$242, due to increased costs for professional membership dues.
- Compensation is up \$2800, due to a \$200 raise for the Deputy Chief, a \$1000 raise for the Chief, and an additional \$1600 in call pay for the membership.
- Apparatus Maintenance is up \$2072, driven primarily by increased labor rates and aging of the fleet. The newest vehicle is nine years old.
- The hose testing line is up \$117, due to a price increase for this service.

Bottom line: Public Safety budget increase of \$14,750 (11.35%)

* Bo Chesney * Gennifer Giuliano * John Green *
* Matthew Roy * Brian Stornelli * Andy Wyatt *

7. Selectman O'Brien reported that he proposes no change to the Pownal Center Water Association budget. He requests that this be funded at the same level as the current fiscal year (\$3200).
8. Chairman Green sought clarification from the Select Board members with regard to the expected completion date of this committee's work. This committee will proceed with a March 25 completion target, instead of the March 15 date indicated in minutes of a recent Select Board meeting.
9. Chairman Green led a discussion on a subparagraph of 30-A MRSA 2528, 5.2.B, which suggests that the budget committee may or should provide recommendations to the Town on School Budget items. The committee decided to not pursue this further.
10. Based on his discussion with MMA legal services, chairman Green initiated a discussion on bylaws for this committee and whether creation or maintenance of the bylaws should be owned by this committee or the Select Board. The committee decided to table this discussion and any review, and address it at a time when budget reviews are not pressing.
11. The next meeting is set for Thursday, February 11, 2021 at 6:30 pm. Road Commissioner Dick Clarke will present the proposed Public Works budget. Chairman Green will provide the agenda and a URL for the meeting.
12. Ms. Giuliano made a motion for adjournment. Mr. Wyatt seconded. The motion passed with all in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:22 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Andy Wyatt