

## Pownal Budget Committee

### Mallett Hall

#### APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

**February 26, 2019**

**7:00 PM**

**Members present:** Chairman Wyatt, Kim Best, John Green, Andrew O'Brien and Brian Stornelli

**Members absent:** none

Meeting called to order at 7:02 pm. All five committee members were present and a quorum was established.

**Minutes from previous meeting:** The minutes of January 29, 2019 were approved unanimously, with one change. Within the Pownal Center Water Association paragraph, the \$10,000 noted from the 2019 budget proceedings, was a one-time budget increase, rather than a "transfer" from some other account.

**Public comment:** None

**Selectmen comment:** Selectman Chairman Jonathan Morris was present, and commented on the Capital Improvement Planning budget (see below).

**Presentation of proposed budgets:** The following budgets were presented and significant discussion details noted:

CIP (**Capital Improvement Planning**) Committee member Paul Schumann presented the proposed CIP budget with Rodney Richard, Jan Peter van Voorst van Beest and Andy Wyatt, members of the CIP committee present for support. The committee provided an informative and professional visual presentation consisting of their excel spreadsheet with charts and graphs detailing past actual and future projected income and expenditures for the various capital purchases. The committee requested \$153,000 for the 2020 budget, or a 2% increase from 2019. Selectman Morris noted this would be somewhat higher than the 1.9% reasonable starting point guidance the committee had

determined on January 29 and wished that the CIP committee had known beforehand of that starting point percentage.

Road Commissioner Dick Clarke presented the proposed **Public Works** budget. The budget was accompanied with a detailed narrative of line items accounts where budget increases, and decreases, were requested. It's noted the budget did not contain the compensation component. The following comments are applicable:

060-002 Cable/Internet: Due to intermittent wireless connection from the town office, \$800 is requested to provide a direct connection to the public works office for fiscal year 2020. Dick was questioned whether a hard cabled connection, or other refinements could improve the connection. As no one in the room understood the nuances of internet connectivity, Dick will contact local provider Spectrum regarding less expensive options.

060-004 Heating: The \$300 was removed.

040-015 Salt: An additional \$2,000 is proposed for salt. An extended discussion centered on this winter's weather pattern, how much salt was used in previous years, how much more would be needed this winter and how come there was not a corresponding proposed increase in the sand account. Accordingly, the 2019 year-to-date expenditures for these accounts was questioned. Dick is new to Pownal's chart of account computer program/process and will work with the Town Administrator to provide us with updated information.

040-008 Equipment Maintenance: Discussion of this account, and other maintenance accounts centered on 2019 year-to-date expenditures and whether all invoices had been designated to the proper maintenance account. Dick will review and provide us an update.

040-009 Tires: The \$500 was removed.

030-021 Tree Work: Dick is a certified arborist and there are efficiencies of him supervising tree trimming/removal, rather than contracting with a private arborist to remove regulated trees. An additional \$1,000 is requested for the account.

030-055 Roadside Mowing: Rental cost for mowing equipment have increased by \$500 per week, as discovered last year. Increased costs and the multi week process may justify Pownal purchasing equipment, and sharing the yearly operating costs with other towns (as we do with the grader), ultimately lowering the cost of this summer road maintenance. Dick will investigate options further for future years.

Asphalt pad for dumping/treating/mixing salt and sand: The existing site has deteriorated with potholes, poor subsurface drainage and is in need of major repair or replacement. A proposed one-time expenditure to construct a structure of well drained subsurface material, 4 inch pavement and abutments to allow efficient processing of the salt mixture is under consideration. There is no current budget proposal and the committee suggested the project may meet the requirements overseen by the Capital Improvement Planning committee.

**Other Discussion:** There was a brief exchange among Committee members that possibly Town Administrator Melissa Henes could present the General Government budget with follow up information, as a result of questions/comments from our January 29 meeting.

**Next meeting:** Tuesday, March 5, 2019 at 7:00 PM for the proposed Planning Board, Compensation, Public Safety and Cemeteries budget presentations.

Meeting adjourned at 9:20 PM

Respectfully submitted,

John Green

Committee Secretary