

BUDGET HEARING –February 3, 2020

Present: Margo Connors, John Strasser
Jennifer Gaudette, Peter Carbonneau, Chief Clark, OIC Chicoine, Road Agent Glover,
Brenda Aldrich, Judy Weisenberger, Jason Tors, Irene & Doug Amsbary, Terry
Schofield, Francis Reisinger, Betsy Fraser, Claire & Fred Von Karls, Greg Connors,
Kevin Johnson, Marilyn Monsein, Nancy & Carl Martland

The board presented the 2020 Budget and invited questions from the audience.

Mr. Strasser read the budget and comparison pages and took questions.

Kevin Johnson was present representing the Franconia Notch Chamber Commerce is there were any questions and thanked the town for the continuing support of the Chamber.

Brenda Aldrich asked if the town was going to have additional lighting for the parking lot during evening events. Possibly something that could be turned on and off and not a continuous light. It was thought we might be able to angle the current light so it is on the parking lot.

Jennifer explained the FEMA line and that funds previously carried over from FEMA and also roadwork non lapsing funds were used for the Lafayette and Grandview projects. Some of General Highway funds were also used.

Chief Clark noted that he will be meeting with the Director next week and hopefully will be able to get the paperwork complete for the 100,000 owed for the Lafayette and Grandview Road Projects.

Chief Clark stated that the SHFD increase included raises for the firemen.

Road Agent Glover discussed the town going to a lease option to buy the new 10-wheel truck for the highway department. It will be a three-year lease with an escape clause. He was asked if this was something that would be done in the future for other equipment and he responded that it would be looked at. It is felt this is a more affordable way for the town to purchase the larger ticket items. Area towns are doing this and are satisfied with the process.

It was explained that the Boys & Girls request had increased by \$1,000 from \$1500 to \$2500 so it will be put as a warrant article. It is believed there are approximately 8 children from Sugar hill signed up for the program.

The streetlight appropriation now reflects the new LED lights being installed. The annual cost drops from around 6500 to 3500.

Margo explained that we would still put something in the Energy CRF as they regional energy committee is still working on a Tri Town Solar project for the future.

It was asked that we provide an accounting of the CR Funds as there are usually questions at Town Meeting about current balances.

The Warrant Article to return \$24,097 to the Transfer Station CRF from unassigned fund balance is due to Franconia voting against the improvements that Sugar Hill and Easton had voted in favor of. The board feels the additional funds received from Franconia should return to the Transfer Stations CRF.

Irene Amsbary spoke to the Warrant Article for the library to raise \$6,000 for automation and that \$3,000 would come from the Library Trust Fund. It was hoped the automation could be completed in 2020.

Jennifer explained the cost savings because of Tri County Cap providing fuel, electric and weatherization assistance to Sugar Hill residents. The town gives TCC \$950.00 and over \$31,000 in assistance was given to our residents.

Carl Martland made a motion to increase the warrant article for the non-lapsing roadwork fund from \$75,000 to \$125,000, seconded by Greg Connors. Discussion centered on the highway department getting behind because of the FEMA projects and also the funding not received in a timely manner from FEMA. Doug has had to use his regular budget funds on these projects and the regular scheduled roadwork has not been done. Pearl Lake Road is in very bad condition and with over two miles of road it will be expensive to catch up. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer P. Gaudette
Administrative Assistant