

## BUDGET HEARING– February 6, 2023

Present: Chris Ellms, Dick Bielefield, Margo Connors  
Jennifer Gaudette

Guests: Kathy Jablonski, Irene Amsbary, Larry Sawyer, Nick DeMayo, Brenda Aldrich, Chief Mike Ho-Sing-Loy, Joanna Santilli, Road Agent Doug Glover, Chief Allan Clark, Peter Carbonneau, Alice & Michael Claflin, Jason Tors, Greg Connors, Nancy & Carl Martland, Judith Weisenberger, Ed Hansalik, Kevin Johnson

The board started the hearing with the Pledge of Allegiance. The board reviewed the budget line by line and took questions.

**Executive:** The reason it was under in 2022 was that the Select Board does not take their salary which is budgeted. Also, monies set aside for a parttime employee not utilized. There will be an increase due to changes to meet security needs on all computers.

**Cemetery:** Trustees will not withdraw any funds this year and will hold a warrant article for paving until 2024.

**Police:** Increase in the Taser/Camera Contract. Question regarding use of tasers. Replacing one computer this year.

**Fire:** Call numbers have increased. Increased hourly rate for firefighters. Chief will be paid hourly. Forming a medical squad for Sugar Hill response with three members that will respond in place of Life Squad. Firefighters can take a 50-hour EMR course.

**Highway:** Increase in all basic products, salt, cutting edges, hot top.

**Transfer Station:** Tipping and hauling fees a major increase. New composting bin from Meadowstone now available.

**Health Agencies:** Question regarding how many Sugar Hill students use the Boys and Girls Club. Will have number for town meeting. Resident noted that Grafton County also donates to the club. Mr. Martland noted it was a regional donation to assist all children. Judy Weisenberger said it is a fabulous program for kids who cannot afford other options.

**Library:** Judy Weisenberger questioned the trustees regarding increasing payroll at the expense of resources. Jason Tors responded that it was a transition year with the trustees seeing how best the library works. The trustees looked at area libraries and based the pay increase to keep in line.

**Recreation:** Budget is estimate as not sure what the new director hire will be, part time or in conjunction with Lafayette School Laftercare Program.

**Long Term Notes:** Mr. Bielefield announced that 2023 would see the town paying off the note used to buy the Carolina Crapo Building. This will be five years early and was a good savings for the town.

**Warrant Articles** were reviewed:

**Bridge CRF** down to \$50,000 with the realization that actual construction of Crane Hill Bridge has qualified for 100% with the engineering and additional costs at 80/20. Additional funds will be needed for replacement of Indian Brook Bridge which the town is waiting on FEMA. 75/25

**Highway Department:** Doug would like to purchase a lift to be used for repair work.

**Fire Department:** Building costs will include a new replacement generator, compressor, and upgrade distribution fans.

Apparatus account is to build for when a truck needs to be replaced. Current tanker and rescue are 18 years old.

There are two warrant articles that will be returning funds to the Bridge and Transfer Station CRF.

There was a question if the board had thought about or addressed storage issues for groups using the town buildings. The board has not discussed this.

The board explained that North Country Council has contracted with an engineering firm and they will be putting Sugar Hill Main Street as the first project to be addressed. They will provide the town with some estimates and plans on how to improve the area from the Meetinghouse to the Community Church in regard to sidewalks, crosswalks and safety.

Respectfully submitted:

Jennifer Gaudette  
Administrative Assistant