

Bakersfield Select Board Road Budget Planning Meeting
Monday, Nov. 25, 2019

Meeting called to order by Lance Lawyer at 6:04pm.

Members in attendance: Lance Lawyer (chair), Sam Cribb, Josh Goss, David Houston

Members absent: Gary Denton

Public residents/guest present: Abby Miller (town treasurer), Kathy Westcom, Mac Newitt, Tami Brennan

During previous discussions with Abby, at recent Select Board meetings, it's become apparent that the town has shown the need for a more realistic road budget to ensure all is provided for, regarding equipment and materials, and preparedness in unexpected events, to keep the town roads accessible and safe.

Abby presented a rough draft of a proposed budget for 2020 Town meeting, including the following to discuss and consider: Equipment repair and maintenance, New Equipment, Salaries and Insurance, State aid, Dirt work, Summer work, Winter work, truck payments etc. One concern is the need to replace Mac's 13-year old truck, since repair costs are increasing and vehicle reliability decreasing. Mac's truck is paid for and the final payment on Dan's truck will be paid in March. Mark's truck has 4 years left on the loan. If the town purchases a new truck for Mac in May, the first payment wouldn't be due until 2021. Estimated trade in would be about 20-23,000.00 and an automatic truck with much better equipment and a 7-year extended warranty runs about 205,000.00. With the purchase of a new truck for Mac, that would give the town two trucks still under warranty. Discussion also included growing concern over the town's aging grader, 30+ years old, in the event of a break down at a time of demand, when the repairs needed can take a significant amount of time to complete. Abby presented this year's repair receipts to date of 42,000.00, exceeding our current repair budget, creating the need to borrow from bridge budget and general road fund to keep things running, creating shortfalls in these other areas and demonstrating the need to refigure our budget to meet town needs.

Some research was presented as to how other towns organize their budget to reliably meet town needs. Johnson's budget plan includes an itemized equipment replacement schedule, tracking salvage costs and replacement value in order to prevent equipment growing too old to be economically viable.

Mac also reported the extra gravel purchase needed last spring, when our gravel screens were down, that was immediately placed on trouble spots. The town now has different screens and there is still gravel in the pit for us to access.

After much discussion, initial proposal of 300,00.00 for Direct Tax, which goes for Dirt work, summer and winter work, and to include first payment on Mac's new truck; equipment repair-30,000.00, with the possibility of transferring any amount not used during the year to the new equipment fund or the option of

asking for less in the budget the following year to keep this amount stable and available in the event of a needed repair; Annual truck payments-54,000.00; and 15,000.00 for New Equipment fund. Some discussion was made to reduce six separate road bank accounts into two or three if feasible, allowing a little more flexibility in the event of emergency expenses. Abby to rework an updated proposal to discuss at the continuation meeting for budget plans at the next meeting scheduled for Monday, Dec. 9, at 6:00pm. She and the Selectmen, also plan to have informational meetings for residents prior to town meeting to explain the need for the proposed budget and answer any questions residents may have.

Lance also noted the need to re-evaluate the town mowing contract as the current arrangement, mowing with a single track, is not meeting town needs. He would like to find someone with a tractor at least 80-100, preferably 120 horse power to handle it.

Also, Abby reported that her pursuit of new accounting software through Nemrick, met a dead end. They cannot give us a quote or any assistance since they are understaffed to meet current demands. Therefore, she recommends that we begin the new year with Quick books on Jan 1, 2020. She said that she is very familiar with quick books, it's inexpensive and can be a temporary solution if she runs into problems. Lance made a motion to approve the implementation of Quick books, seconded by David, and approved by a vote of 4-0.

The Meeting was adjourned at 7:00pm and the next budget meeting scheduled at 6:00pm, Monday, Dec. 9.

Meeting Minutes submitted by Tami Brennan.