

Town of Bakersfield Regular and Special Budget Meeting  
January 8, 2024  
6:00/7:00pm

The meeting was called to order at 6:02pm by Josh Goss.

Members present: Josh Goss (chair), Lance Lawyer, John West, Terri Gates, Todd Cosgrove

Residents/Guest attending: Gary and Alice Foote, Pat and Sharon Evans, Sue Sonski, Linda McCall, Nicki Cribb, Mac Newitt, Brian Westcom, Carolyn Bronz, Julie Hill, Vera Lawyer, Tom Jamison, Bill Irwin, Alex Barkley, Cory Gratton

Josh called the meeting to order for budgetary purposes. The board had the updated amount for the Dispatch contract to \$17,728.00 and the Ambulance contract is \$41,247.79.

Pat Evans gave the board a proposed budget for the BCC with a possible request for a land acquisition fund for a town forest. Josh said that at town meeting, the BCC could request a possible amendment to add a land acquisition fund for the BCC budget.

Josh asked Linda if she remembered where the monument fee for engraving was paid to. Linda said that it was paid to Steve Ploof but he has sold his business. The expense came out of the General fund. The board budgeted \$250.00 for monument expense.

Gary Foote gave the board a purposed budget for the Historical Society.

Linda McCall said that the Cemetery Commission was asking for \$15,000.00, the same as last year. John said that he recalled that the CC was asking for less and that it was voted on the floor for the amount to be bumped up to \$15,000.00. Linda said that she believed that was the previous year.

Pat Evans gave the board the proposed lister's budget. Josh said that this year the lister's salary will be part of the budget to be voted on instead of using the money the state gives the town to go toward reappraisal costs, to pay the lister's salaries. Vera gave the board a note stating that the state money has been transferred to the reappraisal fund. Sharon said she wanted the board to remember payroll, as there are now three listers, and mileage has gone up from .56/mile to .67/mile. Josh said that number is set by Federal regulation. Sue said that the reappraisal firm that was supposed to start the town reappraisal this summer, has said that they can't do it, so she will have to explore other options. John said that the lister's payroll for 2023 was \$14,900.00 which was up \$3,000.00. Sue said we have a third lister, Pat, who started in September.

Sharon asked if everything was being voted by Australian ballot this year and if we were still having a town meeting. Josh said that the General Fund and the

Road budget will be voted by Australian ballot, but everything else will be voted off the floor as before. There will be a town meeting. Sharon said that we need to put something on the town website to get the word out because a lot of people think that there will be no town meeting. The Historical Society is not even planning a luncheon this year. Lance said to refer to last year's town report. He said that they will be following last year's agenda except the General Fund and the Road account will not be items, but the rest will be the same.

Nicki Cribb met with the board to let them know that the library board was meeting tonight to discuss and vote on their budget and that she would get the results to the board right after that was done. She told the board that the library was not expecting any major increase since they have nothing major planned for the next year. She did say that the library had no funds to carry over this year and they were actually \$400.00 in the hole budget wise from last year. Nicky asked the board what they were anticipating for fuel prices this coming year. Josh said that he thought since it's an election year that he would expect fuel prices to go down. The board said that they budgeted \$5,000.00 in the General Fund for fuel, the same as they did last year. Josh said they only spent \$2,700.00 on fuel this year but that the furnace hadn't worked a few times, and this was a mild winter, so they were sticking to the \$5,000.00, just in case.

Sue asked when items needed to be in for the warning. The board said by January 22. Sue said that the East Fairfield water supply reservoir is in Bakersfield for the Fire District #1, and 10 years ago, residents voted to exempt them from taxes. She said this year we are going to need to re-vote that. Sue said she would contact Paul Stanley as they will need to submit a warning.

John asked the listers about their anticipated budget for education. He said they had budgeted \$250.00 last year and the listers had spent \$294.00 and had asked for \$300.00 this year, but he thought that might not be enough to cover what they need. Sharon said that they wanted to attend classes as the annual town fair again this year and that the new software program may need some education. John still thought they may be cutting it too thin, but they decided on \$400.00. John said that this would make the lister's budget, \$19,040.00.

Brian Westcom told the board that he does not have a budget to propose for zoning expense. The board said they budgeted \$500.00 last year and the 2023 expense was \$203.00. They discussed zoning legal and decided on \$5,000.00. The board said that in the past, before Brian's time, there were some legal expenses for things that weren't handled in a timely manner. John said a couple bumps with an attorney, and you've already spent that much. The board said that if they need legal advice about something, they would hate to be scrambling.

The Historical Society budget was given to the board. This item will be voted off the floor.

Lance told those in attendance that for a small community, each and every one of them play a very important role in making a community run smoothly and that he wanted to thank them all very much.

The board met with Mac regarding the road budget.

-Advertising -2023 expense was \$60.00 for advertising the road crew position. The board decided to budget \$500.00 for advertising for 2024, since advertising is going up.

-ATV stickers- 2023 budget was \$100.00, expense was \$50.00, the board kept the 2024 budget at \$100.00.

-CDL renewal- the expense for 2023 was \$90.00 for one renewal, and Mark's will need to be renewed in 2024 and they weren't sure about Al. Terri asked the board if the town pays for that. Josh said that his CDL renewal is paid for by his employer. Josh said that he didn't think that \$200.00 was out of line. Mac said that renewal fees went up 15% this year.

-Contracted labor- 2023 budget was \$20,000.00 and we spent none. The board cut this line item to \$5,000.00 and use that for mowing equipment.

-Culverts- 2023 budget was \$5,000.00 and we spent none of it. The board to keep it 2024 budget at \$5,000.00.

-Dental and Vision Ins.- 2023 Expense was \$1,576.00. Mac said that Alan has insurance through his wife. The board decided to budget \$1,500.00 for 2024.

-Disability Expense/Insurance- 2023 budget was 252.00, actual expense was \$217.00. The board budgeted \$300.00 for 2024.

-Ditch/Draining supplies- 2023 budget was \$10,000.00, actual expense was \$13,000.00. The board budgeted \$15,000.00 for 2024.

-Electricity- 2023 budget was \$1,800.00, \$600.00 for north station and \$1,200.00 for the south station. Actual expense was \$408.00 for the north station and \$1,106.00 for the south station. Terri said that electricity was probably going up. 2024 budget set for \$2,100.00.

-Equipment chains- the board didn't budget any money in 2023 and we didn't buy any this year. The board removed this line item and chains will be covered under shop expense or equipment repair.

-Equipment gas- 2023 budget was \$100.00. This is for gas for the chloride sprayer and the chainsaw. The board left the budget at \$100.00 for 2024.

-Equipment rental- 2023 budget was \$10,000.00. The board to leave this item and remove Roadside mowing.

-Excavator expense- since we have now purchased an excavator, any excavator expense will now be under repairs. Mac said the excavator is now back. There were some electrical connections that were not quite crimped. All was under warrantee.

-FEMA Work Expense, FEMA Principal/Interest paid, FEMA LOC Interest- The board will be budgeting nothing under FEMA as there should be nothing

coming out of it and money should be going in, but they will leave the line item just in case but not going to budget anything.

-Gates- the board budgeted nothing for this line item for 2023, but in anticipation of reclassifying Class IV roads to trails, we may be in need of purchasing gates. The board budgeted \$500.00.

-Gravel Pit- change this item from a loan since the gravel pit is paid off. The money in this item will be for Act 250 permit application to update so we can extend our digging. Mac said that he was told that the permit fee could be anywhere from \$2,000.00 to \$15,000.00. Mac said he has no idea. The board budgeted \$15,000.00 for 2024. This would be down from the \$40,000.00 from previous years for loan payments.

-Gravel Pit Expense- this is for the storm water permit for the gravel pit. 2023 budget was \$500.00, and the board kept it the same for 2024.

-Guardrails- nothing budgeted for this in 2023 or spent. Mac said the guardrails on the little bridge between Tyrones's and Cahill's are really bad. He said they were used when we put them up. The board budgeted \$5,000.00 for 2024.

Vera and Tom, our new treasurer, met with the board about finances. Tom and Vera said that things are going well. Vera said she has been doing end of year stuff and showing him everything that she can. She said I'm creating folders and files with page numbers so Tom can easily find direction if he has questions about certain line items. Vera said that tomorrow we will do the checks. Tom said that it's been baptism by fire. He said he's seeing everything, end of the month, end of the quarter, and end of the year. Josh said that the board had questions for Vera about certain line items. Vera said that total salaries are the salaries multiplied by 7.65% for FICA and Medicare. Direct tax will depend on what is voted in. Vera said that the money comes in for that and then we pay it out.

The board said that budgeted \$500.00 for the electricity for the cemetery as we paid \$458.21 for 2023 for the lights out there. The board said that this will now be the BCC. Terri said that she would like to see more money put into the set up over there. She said it needs some serious work.

Vera said that the library pays for their share of quick books. Vera said they get a monthly bill based on the number of employees which ends up being about \$500.00/year. And the library gives you this back.

Vera and Tom spoke with the board about updating Quick Books. The present version will no longer be supported in May. For updating, there is the online version and the desktop version. Tom said that he was very familiar with the desktop version. He said he knows some people who are using the online version and it's very different. Tom said that to keep a program that he is familiar with, at this time when he has so much to learn about the treasurer position, would be good. John said that you have more security if you keep it

within these four walls and don't put it in the cloud. He said the laptop is fairly new and should be able to run it. Josh said Tom has told us he's more comfortable and John says its more secure, then even if it cost a little more, he said he thought we should get the desktop version. Vera said that we pay \$50.00 or \$60.00/month for the payroll service and we don't use the payroll service. Vera said that Kathy figures the taxes to be put on the warrant for the board to sign and then the amount you approve is fixed. Quick books calculations are pennies off from the tax tables, so they don't match up. If we can drop the payroll part, we'll cancel it. John wanted to know why we are still getting paper copies for invoices instead of electronically. He said that we pay Consolidated \$5.00/month just for a paper copy of the invoice.

Tom discussed a previous booked vacation, already planned, plane tickets booked, before he applied for the treasurer job. Tom said that he hasn't signed his contract yet, but he will sign it if he can get that week off. Vera said that the checks can be written out manually by a second signer. The board said to talk with the second signer before you go. Tom said he wants to make sure that it can be done. Vera said that for this time, even though she won't be second signer, she can write the checks and John can sign if it's ok with the board. The board voted 5-0, that they were ok with Vera writing the checks at the assistant treasurer's wage. John said we will get it done.

John made the motion to accept the previous minutes from the 12/28/23 meeting and from the January 4, 2024, meeting, as written. Todd seconded the motion and the motion carried with a vote of 3-0, with Lance and Terri abstaining since they were not in attendance.

Cory Gratton asked the board if Bakersfield had a culvert policy. The board said they don't have one in writing. Josh said that the understanding has always been that the initial culvert was paid by the landowner, who needs a permit. Mac does a site visit and can evaluate what is needed and then Mac inspects the finished culvert to make sure that it is up to standards. And then any repairs or replacements are done by the town since they are in the town's right of way. Corey asked the board if they ever thought about changing that so that all the expense is on the landowner. He said that he would like to see all the expense and care of the culverts be the landowner's expense for the reason that you should be responsible to upkeep the access to you house. He said that we are taking away from small businesses that make a living by replacing culverts. Josh said let's say you have a culvert and it's on a hill and the culvert gets plugged because you can't keep it up and it washes out a town road. Who should bear the expense? Corey said that if it's plugged then the town has the right to dig it up to protect the road. He said that he worked for 13 years where they didn't have a culvert policy and we spend 2 years replacing culverts and we got backed up on our road maintenance. He said it cost so much money that it wasn't funny, and the roads went to crap. Corey said he was all for the town selling culverts to taxpayers at town cost. Corey asked if the town used

plastic culverts on roads too. Josh said for the most part, they have been reverting back to steel. Corey said that we have the fire dept blast out the culverts to clean them out in the spring. It's stream bed material anyhow. Corey asked if each piece of equipment has its own plan for replacement. The board said that the only replacement plan is on the trucks. The other equipment is pretty much how much we can get out of it and then we start looking. They said that they try to aim to replace the trucks just under 10 years old, but Mac's truck was 13 years old when we replaced it. Lance said that you can plan as much as you can, but things sneak up. Corey asked if equipment replacement needed to be voted on by the town. The board told him that every year we vote to put \$15,000.00 into the new equipment fund. They said our last acquisition of the grader and excavator was bought with ARPA funds and the new equipment fund. Lance said it used to be voted by the town but now it comes out of the equipment fund. Corey asked why an excavator instead of a backhoe. The board said you can do ditching quicker with an excavator and culvert replacement and we were currently renting an excavator every year. Corey asked how they moved it. Josh said they were looking for a trailer. He said right now, it cost us about \$300.00 each time we move it, but that's a whole lot less than a trailer. Corey asked if they had thought of keeping it in a garage. He said it's nice to see it underneath a roof to make it last longer. Josh said they did look into something by the pit and on the land next to the Fire Dept but at this point we are not ready to bring a million-dollar building to the voters. Corey asked why we have two graders. Josh said this is the first summer we've had two graders. He said we kept the old one this summer because it had the wing to blow back banks. We are looking for a wing for the new one. He said that we have been pricing them. He said that they offered to trade it but they were offering us practically nothing so we decided to sell it ourselves, but he said the worse time to try to sell a grader is in the winter. Corey said it still says Town of Johnson on it. A hairdryer and a credit card can take that off. We have to take pride in the equipment we have and put our name on it. He said that this is the worse year that he has seen branches on the road especially Egypt road. He said you have to move over if you meet a car. He said his truck costs \$60,000.00 and he doesn't want to scrap it against branches on the side of the road. He said that he noticed it more since his daughter has started driving. He said the Road dept is for public safety and if you are forcing traffic into another lane because of branches trimmed and left in the road, it isn't safe. Lance said we've had a problem the last few years getting someone to mow. Corey said that he has stopped and picked up branches. He said it's not the stuff on the trees, it's just on the ground. When the road crew is driving by, just stop and pick up the cut branches. Corey said that the handicap ramp at the town hall is not shoveled, and the snow is plowed to it. Josh said that handicap ramp is the secondary handicap access to the Town Office. He said that ramp was put there to ensure access to the Town Hall's back room when the Town office is locked. The primary access is on the front porch.

Julie Hill and Carolyn Bronz gave the board the BCC's proposed budget and asked about the budget year. Josh explained that you are currently budgeting for this year, 2024. He told them that you are budgeting for money that you could already be spending. He said that we have tried to adjust that by going to an 18-month budget but that didn't go over well. Josh read their budget proposal and confirmed that they are asking for ½ penny of the total grand list. Julie said that we have someone who is interested in donating land to the town for a town forest. This money would be used to maintain this town forest. This property is 68 acres on Kings Hill Rd and currently owned by Mr. Dickman. Mr. Dickman has contacted Nancy Patch and is proposing to donate that land to the town as he has no heirs. John asked if this would be managed by the commission. Julie said that Enosburg did this since 2010 and set it up to sunset after 5 years. She said that it might have been reallocated for 5 more years, but they aren't paying for it anymore. This would be the proposed Conservation Reserve fund.

The BCC proposed budget for operating expenses for 2024 is \$2,275.00. This would be for dues/fees, trails, pollinator garden, town park and town common.

Bill Irwin met with the board as the Chair of the Planning Commission to give information about their budget. He said that the board has cleared up a confusion about when we'll spend money relative to this budget, it sounds like we run a little behind. Josh said yes, it is 3 month wait until the vote and a 10 month wait until funds are collected. Bill said he could share the PC calendar of activities and you can decide whether we need to do something now, later or not at all, and Bill said that he is reasonably comfortable with all three of those decisions. Bill said that there are two primary documents that are our responsibility: The Town Plan, which the legislator requires to be revised every 7 years, it used to be 5. It was done in 2018 and will need to be completed for 2025. Then the revised Town Plan is approved by vote by the town at Town meeting, so that will need to be on the ballot for Town Meeting in March 2025. The second document is the Town By-laws. There is no deadline and can be changed when felt appropriate for changes in regulation. We've had the tendency to change the bylaws the following year after a town plan update because of changes in the plan. That only needs Select board approval. Bill said that the current topic is the Town Plan, and the Town Plan can be done best by enlisting professional planners with the NWRPC, which is what we have done the last few times. We have already been meeting with the planner who is assigned to us, and we believe it would be useful to get a municipal planning grant to pay for it and that requires a 10% match from the town. The total cost for a more complicated town plan is roughly \$20,000.00, and for a simple town plan, for \$5,000.00. Bill said that he thought it was best to consider the complicated Town Plan, so the obligation to the town would be \$2,000.00 as a match. He told the SB that they would have to complete paperwork needed for that application and you've done that in the past and it has never been a problem. Bill said the total in the Planning Commission account as of Dec 31, 2022, in the town report was \$6,533.00, so we have

enough to cover the \$2,000.00 match. He said that our expenses and income are very modest, it's mostly postage for notifying various parties for a hearing. We receive income from fees for each of the applications, so I don't see any significant changes for the needs of the PC this coming year. We do have an obligation that we bring to the SB, since the revision is a process that will take time, specifically what we would like to do is to announce to everyone at Town Meeting that it is a Town Plan Revision year so that everyone can come to our meetings to talk about issues and thoughts that they have about problems they consider need to be addressed in the plan, and also to discuss some things that are happening at the Regional level and State level that are to be factored into the Town revisions. Those currently look like more housing and additional work in energy and climate, so those things will likely cause changes in the Town Plan. We will start meeting from March through the end of the year to work in revisions with the planning revisor from NWRPC. We will apply for a grant to pay that person, so as much as I would like to ask for more money, I would have a hard time justifying it. Josh said what we budgeted \$250.00 for 2023 for the PC and you spent \$381.00 and have an estimated cost of \$2,000.00 for 2024. Josh said he would recommend budgeting \$2,500.00 for 2024 which covers the matching cost and leaves your \$6,000.00 alone for operating costs and if something unforeseen happens and needs to be taken care of. Lance said that the only other expense you might incur would be litigation. Lance asked Bill who was working with them on the plan. Bill told him Emily Kloft. John said that he had to agree with Josh because the amount would probably just cover 1 ½ times consulting a lawyer and we've learned a couple of things in 2023 that the money goes very fast. I agree with Josh. Lance said that he agreed with Josh too. Josh said that he may have spoken out of turn as he is looking at the reports and the PC is actually making money. Bill said they earn application fees and plat fees. Josh noted that the PC is making about \$500.00/year and if you took the \$2000.00 needed for the match out of the PC fund 2023 balance, that would leave them with about \$5,000.00. Terri said they don't need it. John said that we don't have legal counsel built into any of our budget for our groups, unless we make one large legal needs budget for the collective town groups. Todd said how about we budget \$500.00 for their expenses for now. Terri said they don't need it. John said he is concerned that if they get a lawyer, that what we have budgeted doesn't cover any legal hours and we don't budget for it. Terri said that she didn't believe that we've had any planning issues. John said that we have been very fortunate, the team works well and runs a tight ship. Josh said he can see where he is coming from. What if we split it in half and budget \$600.00. Terri said she doesn't, but she is only one vote. He's just told us that he doesn't need any more money so why are we trying to convince him that he does. Bill said that he thought John's argument from the prospective of a town resident, that as we don't have a legal fund, that one way to build one is to look at any of your functions where you might have contention and there is a possibility of contention with planning and zoning. And John added the Select Board. John said he thought we should have a General legal fund. Todd said that he



thought that we had one. John said we should make it for one large legal fund instead of zoning here and planning there. Josh asked the board if they wanted to do that this year because right now, we are in the middle of the budget. That way fund Planning \$500.00 and create a bigger legal fund to cover town wide legal expenses. Josh asked Bill if that sounded good. Bill said that speaking as a town officer, and also as a town resident, that you might have difficulty getting the funds from zoning and planning earnings to cover any legal expenses without a separate legal fund. You would have to justify that a legal expense was a genuine planning cost or a genuine zoning cost, so it makes more sense for you to set up a separate legal fund. Josh said, as for planning, we will budget \$500.00, and we will take into consideration any legal costs when we build the Town legal fund budget because that is what we worry about with our budget.

Alex Barkley met with the board about his grant writing proposal. The board did not have a copy and John asked Alex to give an overview of what he sent. Alex said that he has been particularly appreciative to have had a couple of opportunities for grant writing for the town. He said that as a result of the MERP grant work with John, he has formed his own LLC and decided to freelance as a small business. He said that he has gotten to do some work with the Conservation Committee and would love to do more with the town. He said that he's been listening to a lot of needs talked about on behalf of several groups and would like to be more proactive as he thinks there is money being left on the table. I sent John a draft of the contract for an overarching annual service and would love to develop a longer-term relationship with the town, be more proactive, search things out for them and bring it to the town and not have to pull it out of the General Fund...a new town garage...the town forest being donated. Alex said he brings 10 years of experience. He said he was the main fundraiser for a 3.2-million-dollar community center before he moved here. He said that he would give the board a chance to look over the contract in their own time. He said it's not set in stone and is negotiable. I'd love to help my hometown. He said he's so excited if we would be able to get the grant for the barn on the green and what that would do for the town center, and he would love to continue working on projects like that. Alex said he generally charges \$60.00/hour to cover his own business expenses, taxes, etc., but we could also talk about if you've got x amount of dollars for grant writing services that we could put that limit on the contract so that I don't go over that amount. We can also put parameters in there as how much I go searching for grants as opposed to writing grants. He said he would always want some sort of approval before going after any grants. Josh asked Alex if the contract that he sent to John was a blanket contract with standard terms so that you don't have to write up an individual contract for each town entity that wants to use your services. Todd said that way Alex would know his boundaries. Alex said yes, it's a draft right now for you to consider and John can get back to me. Josh said this may not get tackled until after Town Meeting Day, which after that it could be a different board. Alex said that he had wanted to talk to the board while

they were building the budget in case they wanted to include funds for a certain number of hours for grant writing. John said that we do have ARPA funds set aside for grant writing. Terri said she would rather see that than the legal fees. John said maybe we can get a grant for legal fees. Josh said he thinks that's called bankrupt :)

Terri said she got a couple of complaints about the grader driving too fast down the Avenue. Josh said the grader tops out at 25mph.

-Ballot clerks- We will need them since it's an election year...Primary and General. Josh said the last election year was 2020 and we paid \$465.00. Josh said that he thought the BCA went from 20.00 to 25.00, from \$1,500.00 to \$2,000.00. The board to budget the Ballot clerks and BCA together this year a \$2,000.00 per election. 2024 budget \$4,000.00.

-Court tax- this will be sent to us

-Direct tax- we don't set this

-Cemetery Electricity- 2023 was set at \$500.00 and the 2023 expense was \$458.21. Advised that electricity was going to go up, the board considered budgeting \$750.00. Josh asked Terri what she meant when she said that the electricity on the Town Common needed work. Terr said we should upgrade at least to a pedestal instead of just a pole and have your outlets on that pedestal and have that protected. Josh asked any idea of what that would cost. Two pressure treated poles and labor, breakers, box for at least \$250.00, redo the wiring. Josh guessed between \$2,500 and \$3,000.00. Terri said that she will get a better estimate and have John Richards write me up an estimate.

Vera told the board that there was a Select board meeting on Nov. 13, 2023, and there was a motion made to give \$600.00 to the BCC. Vera asked if that was to go into their fund before the end of December. Josh said yes, that was to go in for flower expense as Lisa had to order flowers this winter. Josh said that they intended to deplete the flower line item of \$350.00 and the rest from the General fund. Vera said that for the next treasurer, when the SB makes a decision you should notify the treasurer of what you have decided and want done.

-Health Ins- Mac said that Mark is the only employee taking the insurance. Mac is under his wife's and Alan is too. Insurance expense should be around \$1,100.00/month. For the 2024 budget, the board set \$20,000.00 for Health insurance with \$2,500.00 for the stipend for those who don't take the insurance.

-Heating Fuel for the South and North stations. 2023 budget was \$5,000.00 and expense was \$4,100.00 for the south and \$1,100.00 for the north, spending a total of \$5,111.54. Budget to stay at \$5,000.00.

-Hydro seeder- 2023 budget was \$2,500.00 and \$187.62 was spent. Mac said that they would start using this more this summer. Mac also said we need to get a trailer for that, so would that go under Hydro seeder expense or under

new equipment expense. Mac thought that \$2,000.00 would be enough for a trailer. Josh thought it might be more expensive. Mac said it doesn't have to be new. The board left the budget for 2024 at \$2,500.00...\$500.00 for supplies and \$2,000.00 for a trailer.

-Loan payback to our accounts- this was for when we used the Bridge account to pay off Goat Path until FEMA reimbursement came through and this line item paid back the Bridge account after the FEMA payment came in.

-Mileage- 2023 budget was \$1,500.00 and expense was \$1,340.16. John said that the IRS regulations raised the national mileage rate from .56/mile to .67/mile, issued as of 1/1/2024. John said that would raise this line item \$268.00 higher if they don't increase their mileage. 2024 budget to be \$1,750.00.

-Misc.- No budget in this item for 2023 and no budget money in this item for 2024.

-Office expense- 2023 expense was \$319.00 for computer and internet. Mac foresees nothing new so no budget for this item in 2024.

-Pagers- 2023 budget was \$615.60, expense was \$615.60. Mac said he thought we could scrap the pagers if we have the internet at the office. He said that his never went off last year and hasn't been used. Josh said that the pager is for the Road Commissioner but what if the Road Foreman is not the Road Commissioner. Mac said that he reaches Mark by calling him and Al by texting him. He said the pager can reach you if you're out in the woods. Josh said that the road commissioner is really the only one needing the pager then. Terri said we should look into the difference in price before we get rid of the other two pagers as sometimes that doesn't make much difference for one or three. The board to have Tami check into that.

-Paving- This is done with grants and the matching funds for the grant are voted in by the town so we don't budget for that. Mac said that Academy Lane is bad and should be repaved.

-Radio license-2023 Budget was \$600.00, and the board left it at \$600.00 for 2024.

-Reimbursement- expense was \$574.20. Mac thought this was to reimburse for clothing from the clothing allowance. No budgeting for this line.

-Repairs for North Station- Mac said there is a leak in the roof. Todd said that the skin needs to come off and it needs all new underlayment. He said that is the original roof from 1966. Mac said that Mark went up in the attic and it looks like there is nails and plywood. We can try to coat the flat roof, but we should put some screws in it first to see if we hit anything good to screw the roof back down to before we coat it. Mac said it also needs a new front door and the double pane glass broke. He said it was last replaced in 1985. Josh suggested budgeting \$15,000.00 to put a new roof on. Todd agreed. He said we've never done anything to it. This is not included in the MERP grant as that is just the town hall and library. Josh said \$15,000.00 and we get an estimate. He said if that's not enough, it's a good chunk towards it. Lance said that we are not paying \$40,000.00 for the gravel pit payment this year so we're still saving some.

- Road Erosion Renewal Fee- Expense was \$640.00 for the State Registry. This is thought to have gone up, so the board budgeted \$1,000.00 for 2024.
- Road signs- 2023 budget was \$500.00. Actual expense was \$3,838.36. Mac said that was mostly for posts. The board budgeted \$1,000.00 for 2024.
- Rental Equipment- 2024 budget \$10,000.00.
- Salt/Chloride/Cold Patch- 2023 budget was \$25,000.00, actual expense was \$28,208.98. The board budgeted \$30,000.00 for 2024.
- Shop Expense-2023 Budget was \$5,000.00, actual expense was \$7,314.00. the budget for 2024 to be \$5,000.00. Mac said this is for misc. things that we need, like metal, and the board approved Mac to buy a new air compressor.
- Simple IRA- Vera will have to give us that. It is 3% match of their gross contribution.
- Storm Water- 2023 expense was \$1,500.00. 2024 budget to be \$1,500.00.
- Street Lights- 2023 budget was \$175.00, actual expense was \$166.00.
- TAN- Tax Anticipation Note- This is for when we have had to borrow money from the bank if the town falls short before we actually collect taxes in the fall. We haven't done this for the last two years. This year the State has already forwarded us our first two payments so we should be ok.no budget on this line item for 2024.
- Telephone/Internet-2023 budget was \$750.00, actual expense was \$1,002.85. 2024 Budget \$1,500.00.
- Truck Payment- 2023 budget was \$55,832.84, actual expense was \$55,832.84. This covered two truck payments. There will only be one truck payment due in 2024, but the board will keep this budget item at \$55,000.00 in anticipation of the first truck payment when the new truck comes in.
- Water- 2023 budget was \$360.00, actual expense was \$280.00. \$140.00 each for the North and the South station. 2024 budget to remain at \$360.00.

Todd made the motion to enter Executive Session to discuss paid personnel salaries. John seconded the motion, with the request that Mac stays, and the motion carried with a vote of 5-0.

The board entered Executive Session at 9:28pm.

Todd made the motion to exit Executive Session. Lance seconded the motion and the motion carried with a vote of 5-0.

The board exited Executive Session at 10:05pm.

Todd made the motion to provide a 3% increase to the Road Crew of their hourly rate for cost of living. Lance seconded the motion and the motion carried with a vote of 5-0.

John made the motion to acknowledge and institute the IRS increase per mile to .67/mile for town purposes. Lance seconded the motion and the motion carried with a vote of 5-0.

Brigham Update- Lance said that he had a meeting with Kathy Lavoie at 9:00am this past Wednesday to finalize some requests for grant reimbursements.

Josh said the board received two request letters for Town Meeting in the mail. One from the Lucas James Memorial Fund, and the other from Cat Crusaders.

John made the motion to adjourn. Todd seconded the motion and the motion carried with a vote of 5-0.

Meeting adjourned at 10:25pm.

Meeting minutes recorded by Tami Brennan.