

Readfield Budget Committee
Regular Meeting Minutes – Wednesday, February 1, 2023 – *Approved*

Present: Andy Tolman (Chair), Chris Sammons, Ellen Schneider, Ed Sims, Marty Hanish, Eric Dyer (Town Manager), Teresa Shaw (Finance Officer), Anjelica Pittman (Board Secretary), Grace Keene, Greg Durgin, Jack Comart, Rob Peale (Trails), Matt Lajoie (Recreation), Bruce Hunter (Conservation), Dennis Price, Kathryn Woodsum, Sean Keegan

Excused Absent: Carol Doorenbos, Steve DeAngelis

Call to Order

Communications - 10 min.

- Budget Committee Comments
- Town Staff Reporting

Public Comment

Review of Prior Meeting Minutes - 5 min.

Meeting Minutes of January 11, 2023

- Ellen **motioned** to approve, Ed **seconded**, **5-0 vote** in favor

Budget Review & Presentations - 45 min.

Departments II:

Recreation and Open Space (Beach, Conservation, Recreation Board, Heritage Days, Town Properties, Trails)

- Matt Lajoie presented on behalf of the Recreation Board, expenses stay relatively the same.
 - An increase for soccer to accommodate the incorporation of other towns into Readfield's program.
 - Basketball also sees an increase due to the price of jerseys and officials.
 - Revenue is positive from all sign ups in the district coming through Readfield Town Office.
 - No swim lessons last year due to a staffing shortage at the YMCA, hoping to get an instructor back for summer 2023.
 - Maintenance expenses have decreased at the beach because the money that wasn't being used is getting realigned
 - No change in Heritage Days line has a reserve still that will be used for 2023.
- Bruce Hunter presented for Conservation Commission
 - Trail maintenance/general maintenance is at \$1500, would like to build a new kiosk at the Torsey Nature Preserve to replace the old damaged one
 - Also requesting no hunting signs for Torsey Nature Preserve, Ethan Buuck said no one can hunt there and signs are needed every 300ft within a 1000ft perimeter.
 - There are some issues in the Town Forest with too many invasive plants and native plants and trees not coming back as quickly as the commission would like to see, Honey Suckle is taking

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Regular Meeting Minutes – Wednesday, February 1, 2023 – *Approved*

over so the Conservation Commission would like to spend \$1500 towards cutting trees and spraying round up on the invasive.

- Would like to also add plant pollinators on the landfill cover, however grass is currently very unhealthy, there are lots of weeds, they took 6 samples which cost \$150
- Total conservation cost for FY24 is \$4500
- Kennebec Land Trust was moved into Conservation, not as a donation but more of a membership, it had its own line but will be added to the Conservation Commission line in future years.
- Rob Peale presented for the Trails Committee
 - \$1200 was spent for blue stone for repairs at the Fairgrounds and repairs needed on the Library Trail
 - \$150 spent on printing for redoing maps
 - Usually do two workdays per year, volunteers and volunteer tractors are used to distribute blue stone
 - Trails would like to spend \$250 for a new wheelbarrow or cart as they usually borrow them, there is one in the basement at the Town Hall that belongs to Conservation that they are willing to share with Trails.
 - Trails will also need Blaze paint this year for painting new trails
- Beach Budget
 - Eric did a rough first pass on the Beach budget, would like to increase beach attendant wages for two full time attendants for 10 weeks in the summer.
 - Passes still free for residents, could clarify the rules better such as rules for grandkids of resident grandparents
 - Nonresidents do still pay for passes to use the beach which helps offset revenues, which are more than what was budgeted for.
 - Marty suggested record keeping for usage per day that the beach is open to see statistics and be able to evaluate changes made or needed
- Town Properties
 - Gained new trash cans, benches and amenities, dropped expense for FY24

Roads & Drainage (Roads & Drainage, Winter Maintenance)

- Roads
 - Engineering services expense was used from capital FY23, line since zeroed out due to no work being done FY24
 - Tools budget is sufficient according to Maintenance personnel
 - Contract services going up due to increase in cost of labor and supplies, inflation
 - Gravel and sand increased for the same reason, large increase also caused by Christmas Eve rain storm (\$38k)
 - Marty suggested helping protect town property with grant funding for weather related damage
- Winter Maintenance
 - Increase in service cost due to inflation and under budgeting by \$15k last FY
 - Increased prices for salt and usage
 - May need to further revise, Eric will look again in February
 - Current plow contract with Horne Construction is a 4 year contract, Scott is leaving the business at the end of the contract but is helping the town figure out a plan for when his contract ends

Readfield Budget Committee
Regular Meeting Minutes – Wednesday, February 1, 2023 – *Approved*

Budget Committee Meeting Adjournment by Andy at 7:01

Joint Budget Committee and Select Board Workshop - 1hr. 25 min.

Dennis called the Joint Budget Committee Meeting to order at 7:02

Capital Improvements (Roads, Equipment, Leases, Transfer Station, Cemetery, Etc.)

- Cemeteries - would like to purchase a new, noncommercial chipper shredder for work on roadsides and cemetery for brush and leaves, a total of \$24k, using revenues from both departments reserves, for in house use
 - Cemetery reserve is \$5k, considering a number of projects
 - Andy mentioned the Cemetery Committee has been putting money aside to repair two large stone walls that may need repaired in the future
- Library – Continuing saving for egress and interior work as well as painting and fixing wood rot
 - Expansion of the second floor to be used for staff space, storage. And reading areas. Marty expressed concern that if the second floor is to be invested in for use with government money that it should be required to be handicap accessible
 - Kathryn suggested a stair chair lift and Eric mentioned that this would be a future project and is not in the current budget; Marty would like to see the chair lift in the FY22-23 or FY23-34 budget, and not put off as an undefined future project.
 - Library paving will cost \$10k
- Fire Department – not as much focus on the Fire Station as the building is newer
 - RFP for the sprinkler system at the Fire Department going out at the end of the month and should be accomplished this spring
- Administration – currently healthy reserve balance, \$10k
 - Currently looking into a grant for windows and LED lighting, if successful will be part of the FY24 budget
 - The Boards discussed adding a digital billboard somewhere in town with high traffic in order to get information out to the public; however LED sign boards are not allowed in Readfield per our LUOs, would have to discuss with the Planning Board to see what is allowed, Eric will look into signage ideas and possibilities.
- Parks and Recreation
 - \$50k line for Open Space
 - Fairgrounds place holder for FY25
 - Expenditures upcoming for picnic activity shelter at the beach and building renovation
 - Kathryn asked about bathrooms being added to the beach and Eric responded that they would cost about \$40k, and that we are not quite there with the program just yet
- Roads and Infrastructure
 - \$275 reserved for paving Lane road and Wayne road (together) and looking at crack sealing Morrill Road. Part of the \$275k balance is from reserves
 - Full schedule of town roads with costs and maintenance timing went up \$25k due to inflation
 - Kathryn suggested putting aside \$25k now to go towards FY24 budget for P Ridge and Nickerson Hill roads maintenance, Going to put bids out this year to find out cost
 - Salt and sand shack is on the docket to be worked on this year

Readfield Budget Committee
Regular Meeting Minutes – Wednesday, February 1, 2023 – *Approved*

- Church Road sidewalk - \$80k for engineering, will spend about \$50k of that FY23; looking at FY24, remainder \$37500 expenditures, \$30k going in for construction phase. What was put in years ago will not meet target, still need another \$60k over the next two years. 80/20 – full cost projection (net expenditure for this FY) will be reimbursed 80%
- Transfer Station
 - Multi town reserve – full expenditure, all towns total – Readfield 52% share
 - Trash compactor lease at \$8k
 - Last year backhoe lease to own
 - Recycling compactor – need assessment, possibly next budget cycle but may be able to push out a few more years
 - Salt and Sand shelter coming this spring – current building showing signs of failure – using a modular block for walls and galvanized frame with a vinyl hoop house
- Fire Department
 - Eric spoke with Lee Mank and looked over plans from March of 2022 about a new firetruck, have added an increase in cost as a place holder, due to inflation, estimated 4% interest rate over 10 years
 - Frame on the current firetruck is cracked but Lee would like to repair at a \$10k-\$20k cost, keep in inventory as a secondary vehicle
 - Ellen mentioned it takes a year to get a firetruck; Kathryn suggested selling the old to put towards the cost of the new truck. Eric responded the truck is on the schedule and budget for this FY, get borrowing sorted in the Fall, vote on it, and pay upfront to save 10-15% for cash purchase discount, would have the firetruck by December 2024
 - The boards had questions about the next firetruck purchase on the schedule and Eric said he will clarify with Lee
 - Septic system replacement in FY25 listed incorrectly in the CIP, it was replaced when the fire station upgrades were done.
- Maintenance
 - Equipment reserve as a buffer for repairs
 - Pickup truck lease that was purchased in 2021
 - \$6k for sander replacement
 - Would like to purchase a chipper shredder
 - Potential replacement of John Deere mower, but Eric thinks it could be pushed out a year or two

Other Business - 5 min.

- **Motion** to adjourn made at 8:22pm by Kathryn, **seconded** by Sean, **3-0 vote** in favor

Adjourn

Minutes submitted by Anjelica Pittman, Board Secretary