

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Approved with changes: \_\_\_\_\_  
Unapproved: \_\_\_\_\_

**Effingham Budget Committee Minutes**  
**68 School Street, Effingham**  
**November 17, 2020**  
**Live and Conference Call**

**Members Present:** Dave Strauss (chair), Chuck Fuller (selectmen's rep), David Garceau, Theresa Swanick (via phone).

**Members Absent:** Leo Racine (vice chair), Tim Eldridge, Ben Eldridge.

**Others Present:** Nate Fogg (via phone), Mike Cahalane (selectman), Tom Hart (selectman) Erik Jones (via Phone), Kristin Kaichen (via phone).

The meeting was called to order at 6:03pm.

**Minutes**

The Budget Committee (BC) reviewed the minutes from the November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020 meeting.

**A motion was made by Dave Strauss to approve the November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020 minutes as printed. The motion was seconded by Chuck Fuller. Roll call vote: David Strauss- Aye, Chuck Fuller- Aye, David Garceau- Aye, Theresa Swanick- Aye. The motion passed (4-0).**

**Outstanding Taxes**

The BC looked at the outstanding taxes to date. The total unpaid taxes as of 11/17/20 are \$361,226. This is within the normal range for this time of year. This number does not include interest or penalties owed.

**Budget Review (4153) Legal represented by the Board of Selectmen (BoS), Mike Cahalane, Chuck Fuller, & Tom Hart**

There have several issues requiring legal assistance this year. A property that had numerous violations of policies and animal control required legal action and is still having ongoing legal action. There was a property assessment that was contested and ended up having to be arbitrated. There was a business in town that had expanded beyond reasonable limits for his neighborhood. These were some of the issues that required legal assistance this year. There is also the normal legal opinion requested from the Bos and Land Use boards.

**A motion was made by Dave Strauss to approve the 4153 budget line at \$30,000. The motion was seconded by Chuck Fuller. Roll call vote: David Strauss- Aye, Chuck Fuller- Aye, David Garceau- Aye, Theresa Swanick- Aye. The motion passed (4-0).**

**Budget Review (4195) Cemeteries represented by the BoS**

No discussion.

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**A motion was made by Dave Strauss to approve the 4195 budget line at \$2,000. The motion was seconded by Chuck Fuller. Roll call vote: David Strauss- Aye, Chuck Fuller- Aye, David Garceau- Aye, Theresa Swanick- Aye. The motion passed (4-0).**

**The Chair informed those present via phone of the fact that** The Bos have presented the full year requested budget total, as presented this will provide a reduction of approximately \$44,000 for the coming year. This has been extremely helpful for the BC.

**Budget Review (4313) Bridges represented by the BoS**

This is a maintenance item and seeing the deterioration of Elm Street Bridge it was felt it needed to be funded and work done every year to maintain the bridges. This funding is just the start of that effort and it is expected next year it will increase.

**A motion was made by Dave Strauss to approve the 4313 budget line at \$1,000. The motion was seconded by Chuck Fuller. Roll call vote: David Strauss- Aye, Chuck Fuller- Aye, David Garceau- Aye, Theresa Swanick- Aye. The motion passed (4-0).**

**Budget Review (4323) Solid Waste Collection represented by the BoS**

Theresa Swanick asked if there was sufficient money available in the Certification line to cover ongoing certification and certifying the new attendant. The Zoom Video Training/Certification seminars have proved efficient and less costly for the town. The BoS feel this amount will cover all required certifications. Theresa Swanick asked about the salary line. The BoS are bringing the Transfer Station attendants to wages in line with other departments in town. The \$84,565 will cover all 4 attendants.

The BoS noted \$15,000 has been raised in the special fund from transfer station fees and this is less than a full year of fees.

**A motion was made by Dave Strauss to approve the 4323 budget line at \$92,965. The motion was seconded by Chuck Fuller. Roll call vote: David Strauss- Aye, Chuck Fuller- Aye, David Garceau- Aye, Theresa Swanick- Aye. The motion passed (4-0).**

**Budget Review (4324) Solid Waste Disposal represented by the BoS**

A noticeable reduction from last year and it is felt this is due to the pay system.

**A motion was made by Dave Strauss to approve the 4324 budget line at \$73,200. The motion was seconded by Chuck Fuller. Roll call vote: David Strauss- Aye, Chuck Fuller- Aye, David Garceau- Aye, Theresa Swanick- Aye. The motion passed (4-0).**

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**Budget Review (4325) Solid Waste Cleanup represented by the BoS**

Dave Garceau asked why we were over budget this year and not raising the budget. The BoS noted that landfill monitoring and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) testing caused the overage. Changes in allowed limits created an overage for our tests last year and additional testing and additional wells had to be tested. Every fifth year requires additional monitoring and offsite testing, which adds cost. Mike Cahalane found that a 2019 PFAS testing bill for \$1,731.75 was paid out of the 2020 budget.

**A motion was made by Dave Strauss to approve the 4325 budget line at \$7,000. The motion was seconded by Chuck Fuller. Roll call vote: David Strauss- Aye, Chuck Fuller- Aye, David Garceau- Aye, Theresa Swanick- Aye. The motion passed (4-0).**

**Budget Review (4442) General Assistance represented by the BoS**

General Assistance is required by the state. Whatever is not spent goes back to the general fund. One family can make a big difference in this line. Due to other budget meetings over the years it was felt this was the lowest budgeted amount the committee was comfortable with. The General Assistance line and Legal line are the only two line items which the State allows to be overspent in the budget.

**A motion was made by Dave Strauss to approve the 4442 budget line at \$12,000. The motion was seconded by Chuck Fuller. Roll call vote: David Strauss- Aye, Chuck Fuller- Aye, David Garceau- Aye, Theresa Swanick- Aye. The motion passed (4-0).**

**Board Business**

Dave Strauss noted that Tim Eldridge and Ben Eldridge are excused and Leo Racine is absent this evening.

**Budget Review (4520) Parks & Recreation represented by the BoS**

The Parks & recreation programs are run out of Ossipee. The BoS gave only \$2,000 this year because of the lack of programs due to the pandemic. Ossipee is unsure of next year's programs at this point. Ossipee is relooking at their costs and how to share the cost with Effingham. It is good to have recreation and sports activities for our children. Ossipee offers an 8-week summer program. They have stated in 2018 data that 119 Effingham children use the program. Data from Ossipee on Effingham's usage is scattered and does not provide the full picture on how much cost we cover and how much we use.

Theresa Swanick asked what do other small towns do for parks and recreation activities.

Tim Eldridge may have additional information that the BC may find helpful.

Any budget line can be changed up until the budget hearing in February.

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Mike Cahalane noted that he would reach out to Ossipee to find out where they are headed for next year.

**A motion was made by Dave Strauss to approve the 4520 budget line at \$10,000. The motion was seconded by Chuck Fuller. Roll call vote: David Strauss- Aye, Chuck Fuller- Aye, David Garceau- Aye, Theresa Swanick- Aye. The motion passed (4-0).**

**Budget Review (4583) Patriotic Purposes represented by the BoS**

The budget was raised for 2020 because the group that places flags at the cemeteries charged for their time the previous year. Going back to \$700 because they were not charged this year. The unused budget line is returned to the General Fund.

**A motion was made by Dave Strauss to approve the 4583 budget line at \$700. The motion was seconded by Chuck Fuller. Roll call vote: David Strauss- Aye, Chuck Fuller- Aye, David Garceau- Aye, Theresa Swanick- Aye. The motion passed (4-0).**

**Budget Review (4711) Debt Service represented by the BoS**

The town currently has no debt and therefore there is no debt service amount needed. This is a place holder.

**A motion was made by Dave Strauss to approve the 4711 budget line at \$1. The motion was seconded by Chuck Fuller. Roll call vote: David Strauss- Aye, Chuck Fuller- Aye, David Garceau- Aye, Theresa Swanick- Aye. The motion passed (4-0).**

**Budget Review (4723) TAN Interest represented by the BoS**

The town has not used a Tax Anticipation Note since 2001 and has been able to pay their bills without borrowing money. This is a place holder. Theresa Swanick noted that a TAN must be repaid by the end of the year (Dec 31).

**A motion was made by Dave Strauss to approve the 4723 budget line at \$1. The motion was seconded by Chuck Fuller. Roll call vote: David Strauss- Aye, Chuck Fuller- Aye, David Garceau- Aye, Theresa Swanick- Aye. The motion passed (4-0).**

**Board Business**

Dave Strauss checked the conference line and email several times during the meeting for any questions or input.

Erik Jones submitted two comments/questions. First he suggested that someone from the BC reach out to Paul Potter and see if the Center Effingham Baptist Church was available in February for the budget hearing. The BC thought this was an excellent suggestion and Dave

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Strauss will reach out to Paul Potter about the possibility. An in-person meeting would be preferred to a call-in or video conference hearing.

Mr Jones also asked if the total amount of taxes due included tax liens. Mike Cahalane confirmed that the tax liens were included in the outstanding amount of taxes owed and reiterated that interest due was not included.

The updated Budget to Actual (B2A) was sent to all members, which included Dave Strauss's notes.

The BoS have used savings in the current year's budget to reduce taxes for next year.

The B2A and total budget worksheet is proving extremely useful to the BC.

Next week's meeting will be to review the Non-Profit requests. 5 groups will attend in person or by phone to present their budget requests. The meeting will begin at 6:00 pm and the presentation by non-profits will commence at 6:15pm.

Chairman Strauss feels that we may be able to combine the December 1<sup>st</sup> and December 8<sup>th</sup> budget meetings into one, however is not comfortable doing that with three members missing. Will take it up at the next meeting.

**Important Budget Dates**

**February 2<sup>nd</sup>** is the last date to file a petitioned warrant article.

**February 12<sup>th</sup>** is scheduled for the public hearing of the proposed 2021 budget.

**February 17<sup>th</sup>** is the last date for the BC to present the budget to the BoS and Town Administrator.

**February 22<sup>nd</sup>** is the last date to post the proposed 2021 budget.

The MS-737 must be filled out by February 16<sup>th</sup>. There is a snow date of February 19<sup>th</sup>. It is a very tight timeframe between warrant articles being presented and posting the final budget.

**Next Budget Committee Meeting**

The next BC meeting is scheduled for November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020 beginning at 6:00pm.

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**Adjournment**

**A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Dave Strauss. The motion was seconded by Chuck Fuller. Roll call vote: David Strauss- Aye, Chuck Fuller- Aye, David Garceau- Aye, Theresa Swanick- Aye. The motion passed (4-0).**

The meeting adjourned at 7:18pm.