

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

## Effingham Budget Committee Minutes

68 School St, Effingham

November 9, 2022

**Members present:** Dave Strauss (chair), Leo Racine (Vice Chair), Jim Giguere, Steve Regal, Rosemarie Wissenbach, David Garceau, Vicki Kirkwood (Selectman's Representative).

**Members Absent:** None

**Others present:** Fire Chief JT Harmon, Police Chief Duchesne, Police Sergeant Welch, Selectman Lenny Espie, Selectman Chuck Fuller.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm

A roll call confirmed those present.

### Minutes:

Dave Strauss made a motion to approve as written. The motion was seconded by Leo Racine.

It was noted several of the approved motions had Mr. Garceau as Nay vice Aye. Additionally last page for Transfer station update it references David Garceau and it should be David Strauss. The noted errors were corrected.

**Initial Motion Vote: Leo Racine-nay, Chair Strauss-nay, Jim Giguere-nay, Rosemarie Wissenbach-nay, David Garceau-nay, Steve Regal – aye and Vicki Kirkwood-nay (failed 0-0-7).**

Dave Strauss made a motion to approve as amended. The motion was seconded by Leo Racine.

**Motion Vote: Leo Racine-aye, Chair Strauss-aye, Jim Giguere-aye, Rosemarie Wissenbach-aye, David Garceau-aye, Steve Regal – aye and Vicki Kirkwood-aye (passed 7-0-0).**

### Board Business:

Chair covered the unassigned fund balance to date which is projected just over \$832,000. He gave an estimate of the expected budget increase in the range of \$0.48/thousand for the estimated town side increase this year. He detailed how the motion vote was to be taken.

### **4414 Dog Officer budget:**

Dave Strauss made a motion to approve the budget of \$10,050. Seconded by Leo.

Chief Duchesne explained that the budget for equipment supplies dropped, and that Tucker Wentworth leaves his usual job to answer calls needing him for dog officer duties, so he is on 24/7.

Steve then asked about what happens if budget for mileage ends up coming under, Chief Duchesne explained that it goes back into the general budget.

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**Motion vote: Leo Racine-aye, Chair Strauss-aye, Jim Giguere-aye, Rosemarie Wissenbach-aye, David Garceau - aye, Steve Regal – aye, Vikki Kirkwood-aye. Motion passed 7-0-0.**

### **4210 Police Budget:**

Dave Strauss made a motion to approve the \$234,267 budget. Leo seconded.

Dave Strauss asked about the cruisers. Chief Duchesne explained that the cruisers should be good to go for a while due to his being brand new, Tyler's not needing to be replaced for a couple of years and is in good shape.

Steve asked if there are any part time patrolmen, Chief Duchesne said that on the book there are, but he doesn't use them out in the field.

Dave Strauss asked what major problems there are in town. Chief Duchesne explained that it's mostly drugs and they are doing their best to take care of it.

Chief Duchesne explained Fuel budget was upped due to cost of fuel going up, details line item was removed, budget for software will be removed for next year, budget for uniforms was decreased.

**Motion vote: Leo Racine-aye, Chair Strauss-aye, Jim Giguere-aye, Rosemarie Wissenbach-aye, David Garceau - aye, Steve Regal – aye, Vikki Kirkwood-aye. Motion passed 7-0-0.**

### **4290 Emergency Mgmt:**

Dave Strauss made a motion to approve the budget of \$2,500. Rosemarie Seconded.

Chief detailed that the main station generator needed to have a vent installed and that was the increase.

**Motion vote: Leo Racine-aye, Chair Strauss-aye, Jim Giguere-aye, Rosemarie Wissenbach-aye, David Garceau - aye, Steve Regal – aye, Vikki Kirkwood-aye. Motion passed 7-0-0.**

### **4290 Forest Fire Warden:**

Dave Strauss made a motion to approve the budget of \$2,000. Seconded by Leo.

There was some discussion about equipment and training, but it was decided that could both stay as they are on the budget sheet. Fire chief Harmon explained they got a forestry grant and will use it for pumping equipment.

**Motion vote: Leo Racine-aye, Chair Strauss-aye, Jim Giguere-aye, Rosemarie Wissenbach-aye, David Garceau - aye, Steve Regal – aye, Vikki Kirkwood-aye. Motion passed 7-0-0.**

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### **4220 Fire & Rescue:**

Dave Strauss made a motion to approve the budget of \$187,075. Seconded by Leo.

Steve asked what the daytime hours are, Chief Harmon said Monday-Friday 8am-6pm.

Dave Strauss asked why the truck is sent to Green Mountain Medical Center. Chief Harmon explained that whoever is closer goes to calls and also for legality and liability reasons. The Chief then explained that there is an act called duty to act in which if you are an emergency personnel you must help in the time of an emergency.

Dave Strauss asked what the status of the main building is; Chief said there aren't any major problems except the exhaust from the generator.

Dave Strauss asked about the suburban vehicle and how much it cost, Chief said it is a Ford Expedition and cost \$3,000 then went on to explain he got that vehicle because the utility van was vandalized.

Dave Strauss then asked why it was needed. The chief explained that due to it being smaller it saves on fuel, and he uses it day to day to respond to calls. The selectmen approved the purchase.

The chief explained that disease prevention was dropped; fuel was significantly increased to prepare for inflation. Medical supplies went up \$500 due to the cost of supplies increasing, Off duty member pay stays the same and there is no stipend included. Mileage was eliminated due to no reimbursement because of the hourly rate. The chief also said that the line for background check went up in preparation of the possibility of hiring new people. The radio got reduced because new radios were purchased with a grant although some money was kept there for repairs, secretary was dropped due to software will now be used.

Phone was increased due to updates that were done to phones and internet. An ipad request for purchased is to connect to the defibrillator which will send the info directly to the hospital.

Dave Strauss then asked what the monthly cost of the ipad is and how much it cost to buy it, to which the chief said it is \$40 per month and cost around \$200-\$300 to purchase.

The chief went on to explain that training stays the same, truck and equipment maintenance went up because engine three needs repairs. Daytime coverage has the chief's pay included and updated hourly wages.

Leo then asked what the pay range is; the chief said \$18.50 for the highest pay rate, and \$14.50 for the lowest.

The chief explained they need some competitive rates to keep people employed and wanting to be employed in Effingham, especially if they are certified and educated. He then said there are 2 people per shift and if people want more coverage, it will be more costly although the employees do get compensated more if they are certified.

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Dave Strauss presented facts that last year in December the unspent money was used for additional December compensation (from \$15/hr to \$25/hr). He noted that full 2 shift coverage could not be obtained. He also noted just after the town meeting the Chief requested the BoS to increase the top pay per hour to \$18.50. He reminded the committee they had approved \$82,000 for 2022 at \$15.77 per hour. It appeared to him the unspent funds are again being used to increase wages without getting full 2 man shift coverage. To date the salary was almost 40% unspent even with the extra pay the Chief had approved in March. He felt this was not getting the results the town approved.

The chief said software went up due to upgrading to a much better system and that the first year is the most expensive after that the yearly cost will decrease. The chief went on to explain all that the software does, it keeps records of calls, reports, inspections, mapping, even keeping notes of entry codes and key location in buildings, all the important data needing to keep everything running smoothly.

Dave called for a vote on the original motion.

**Motion vote: Leo Racine-nay, Chair Strauss- nay, Jim Giguere- nay, Rosemarie Wissenbach- nay, David Garceau -aye, Steve Regal – aye, Vikki Kirkwood-aye. Motion doesn't pass 3-0-4.**

Discussion then ensued over daytime coverage, concerning the estimated non-Chief hours were estimated at \$20/hr. The Chief detailed the pay scale currently used is top pay at \$18.50/hr. Chair Strauss noted this was the high end of the scale not the median. He detailed the hours should be adjusted using the \$18.50/hr at most.

Dave Strauss made a motion to decrease daytime salary from \$105,000 to \$100,100. Seconded by Leo.

**Motion vote: Leo Racine- aye, Chair Strauss- aye, Jim Giguere- aye, Rosemarie Wissenbach- aye, David Garceau -aye, Steve Regal – nay, Vikki Kirkwood- nay. Motion passes 5-0-2.**

Dave Strauss made a motion to approve the new overall budget of \$181,615. Seconded by Leo.

**Motion vote: Leo Racine- aye, Chair Strauss- aye, Jim Giguere- nay, Rosemarie Wissenbach- aye, David Garceau -aye, Steve Regal – aye, Vikki Kirkwood- aye. Motion passes 6-0-1.**

### **4195 Cemeteries:**

Dave Explained that a stipend of \$500 was added to the budget sheet and the total under cemeteries changed to \$1500. The overall budget total of \$2000 did not change. This was to clarify a stipend was given. Vikki said she doesn't understand what the stipend is for; Dave Strauss explained it's for the cemetery trustees who take care of the cemetery.

**Motion vote: Leo Racine-aye, Chair Strauss-aye, Jim Giguere-aye, Rosemarie Wissenbach-aye, David Garceau -aye, Steve Regal – aye, Vikki Kirkwood-aye. Motion passed 7-0-0.**

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### **4197 Advertising and Dues:**

Dave Strauss made a motion to approve the budget of \$3,500. Seconded by Leo

No discussion

**Motion vote: Leo Racine-aye, Chair Strauss-aye, Jim Giguere-aye, Rosemarie Wissenbach-aye, David Garceau -aye, Steve Regal – aye, Vikki Kirkwood-aye. Motion passed 7-0-0.**

### **4313 Bridges:**

Dave Strauss made a motion to approve the budget of \$1,000. Seconded by Jim.

Noted this is to repair minor issues and can be used for bridge wash.

**Motion vote: Leo Racine-aye, Chair Strauss-aye, Jim Giguere-aye, Rosemarie Wissenbach-aye, David Garceau -aye, Steve Regal – aye, Vikki Kirkwood-aye. Motion passed 7-0-0.**

### **4316 Street Lighting:**

Dave Strauss made a motion to approve the budget of \$4,500. Seconded by Leo.

Noted 13 current lights down from 26. It was stated the town has a flat rate for each pole light.

**Motion vote: Leo Racine-aye, Chair Strauss-aye, Jim Giguere-aye, Rosemarie Wissenbach-aye, David Garceau -aye, Steve Regal – aye, Vikki Kirkwood-aye. Motion passed 7-0-0.**

### **4442 General Assistance:**

Dave Strauss made a motion to approve the budget of \$12,000. Seconded by Leo.

Detailed this figure has been a good bench mark for the last few years and our officer does an excellent job.

**Motion vote: Leo Racine-aye, Chair Strauss-aye, Jim Giguere-aye, Rosemarie Wissenbach-aye, David Garceau -aye, Steve Regal – aye, Vikki Kirkwood-aye. Motion passed 7-0-0.**

### **4583 Patriotic Purposes:**

Dave Strauss made a motion to approve the budget of \$700. Seconded by Leo

Leo asked why the budget was increased; Lenny said it was due to buying flags at the town and fire station.

**Motion vote: Leo Racine-aye, Chair Strauss-aye, Jim Giguere-aye, Rosemarie Wissenbach-aye, David Garceau -aye, Steve Regal – aye, Vikki Kirkwood-aye. Motion passed 7-0-0.**

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### **4711 Debt Service:**

Dave Strauss made a motion to approve the budget of \$1. Seconded by Leo.

No discussion

**Motion vote: Leo Racine-aye, Chair Strauss-aye, Jim Giguere-aye, Rosemarie Wissenbach-aye, David Garceau -aye, Steve Regal – aye, Vikki Kirkwood-aye. Motion passed 7-0-0.**

### **4723 TAN Service:**

Dave Strauss made a motion to approve the budget of \$1. Seconded by Jim.

No Discussion

**Motion vote: Leo Racine-aye, Chair Strauss-aye, Jim Giguere-aye, Rosemarie Wissenbach-aye, David Garceau -aye, Steve Regal – aye, Vikki Kirkwood-aye. Motion passed 7-0-0.**

### **4150 Tax Collector Revisit:**

Dave Strauss explained he made a mistake with the assistant's salary at the last meeting. The total reduction had been reduced from both tax collector and town clerk vice half of the reduction for each. Additionally the hourly requested rate should have been \$13.50/hr not \$13/hr.

Dave Strauss made a motion to adjust 4150 Tax Collector salary assistant from \$1,344 to \$2,106 affecting the total budget from \$42,016 to \$42,778. Seconded by Rosemarie.

**Motion vote: Leo Racine-aye, Chair Strauss-aye, Jim Giguere-aye, Rosemarie Wissenbach-aye, David Garceau -aye, Steve Regal – aye, Vikki Kirkwood-aye. Motion passed 7-0-0.**

### **4140 Town Clerk Revisit:**

Dave Strauss explained he made a mistake with the assistant's salary at the last meeting. The total reduction had been reduced from both tax collector and town clerk vice half of the reduction for each. Additionally the hourly requested rate should have been \$13.50/hr not \$13/hr.

Dave Strauss made a motion to adjust 4140 town clerk salary assistant from \$1,344 to \$2,106 affecting the total budget from \$43,021 to \$43,783. Seconded by Leo.

**Motion vote: Leo Racine-aye, Chair Strauss-aye, Jim Giguere-aye, Rosemarie Wissenbach-aye, David Garceau -aye, Steve Regal – aye, Vikki Kirkwood-aye. Motion passed 7-0-0.**

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### **Public Comment:**

Chair noted no additional Comments

### **Budget to actual Review:**

Dave Strauss explained there are still a few items which are outstanding and on the sheet handed out. He noted just yesterday 5 additional questions were asked on the latest B2A which he will email to the Committee.

### **Next Meeting:**

The Next Budget Meeting is scheduled for November 22, 2022

### **Committee vote to adjourn**

Motion to adjourn made by Dave Strauss at 8:46 pm. Seconded by Leo Racine.

**Motion vote: Leo Racine-aye, Chair Strauss-aye, Jim Giguere-aye, Rosemarie Wissenbach-aye, David Garceau - aye, Steve Regal – aye, Vikki Kirkwood-aye. Motion passed 7-0-0.**