

Approved: _____
Approved with changes: _11/7/23 D.S. ____
Unapproved: _____

Effingham Budget Committee Minutes
68 School Street, Effingham
October 24, 2023

Members Present: Dave Strauss (Chair), Vicki Kirkwood, Steve Regal, Rosemarie Wissenbach, Jim Giguere, Scott Hilsman, and Leo Racine (Selectman Representative).

Members Absent: None

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm and a roll call confirmed all present.

Others Present: Chuck Fuller, Lenny Espie (Selectman), Erik Jones, and Lauren Amonavich.

Minutes

Chair Strauss directed the board to pg. 3 and stated the amount of \$1378.00 should be changed to \$1377. 00.

Chair Strauss made a motion to approve the meeting minutes as corrected for September 12, 2023. The motion was seconded by Steve.

Motion Vote: Chair Strauss-aye, Leo Racine-aye, Steve Regal-aye, Vicki Kirkwood-abstain, Jim Giguere-aye, Scott Hilsman-aye, and Rosemarie Wissenbach-aye (Passed 6-0-1).

Budget Process

The Chair went over the steps and process the committee will follow, and only allowing for one motion to be handled at a time. Dave also went over the sheets/packages needed in the packet. The Chair also explained that changes can be made with the final review prior to the public hearing or during the public hearing.

Projected Increase

The Chair directed the board to pg. 6 of the packet and stated that the current projected increase amount is at .46 cents per thousand.

4191 Zoning Officer

Chair Strauss made a motion to approve 4191 Zoning for \$27,131.00 as approved by the BoS and the motion was seconded by Rosemarie.

Chair Strauss went over the zoning budget sheet stating the salary decrease is due to a change in hours that went from 12hrs to 11hrs weekly. The Chair asked Rebecca if there were any questions or questions from the board on the zoning budget. Steve questioned the postage amount and Chair Strauss explained that per the email sent you will see certain budgets will have a line under postage and that will stay under that department as negotiated where others showing zero will be moved to 4130 Executive.

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Motion Vote: Chair Strauss-aye, Leo Racine-aye, Steve Regal-aye, Vicki Kirkwood- aye, Jim Giguere-aye, Scott Hilsman-aye, and Rosemarie Wissenbach-aye (Passed 7-0-0).

4151 Budget Committee

The Chair directed the board to the budget committee budget. The Chair made a motion to approve the budget as approved by the BoS for \$1,377.00 and the motion was seconded by Steve.

Motion Vote: Chair Strauss-aye, Leo Racine-aye, Steve Regal-aye, Vicki Kirkwood- aye, Jim Giguere-aye, Scott Hilsman-aye, and Rosemarie Wissenbach-aye (Passed 7-0-0).

4611 Conservation

The Chair made a motion to approve the budget as approved by the BoS for \$4,405.00 and the motion was seconded by Steve.

The Chair pointed out that the line item for office/stationary supplies will stay due to reimbursement of printing on a private printer. The Chair asked Evelyn if she had any questions. The Chair questioned the amount the Conservation had in the savings account and Evelyn stated roughly \$14,000. The chair mentioned that the conservation works on the “clean up day”, water testing. Evelyn went over the water testing and quality done by Green Mountain Conservation and the cost is around \$7,000.00 in volunteer time and the amount contributed by the town is \$1,100.00. The Chair explained that if Conservation does not use the funds approved it will go into the conservations savings account. Public question from Erik Jones asking what the savings account balance is and the answer is roughly \$14,000.

Motion Vote: Chair Strauss-aye, Leo Racine-aye, Steve Regal-aye, Vicki Kirkwood- aye, Jim Giguere-aye, Scott Hilsman-aye, and Rosemarie Wissenbach-aye (Passed 7-0-0).

4150 Tax Collector/Town Clerk

The Chair made a motion to approve the amount of \$47,417.00 as approved by the BoS and Steve seconded the motion. The Chair pointed out that the salary will not be approved until the town meeting votes. The BoS and Budget go by the 13/39 rule and the chair explained how that works. The pay year is from April-to-April which Scott questioned if the software line was a licensing fee and Alan explained that everything comes through Avatar and his understating is yes. Alan questioned the 10% increase, and the Chair explained the 3% increase.

Motion Vote: Chair Strauss-nay, Leo Racine-nay, Steve Regal-nay, Vicki Kirkwood- nay, Jim Giguere-nay, Scott Hilsman-nay, and Rosemarie Wissenbach-nay (Failed 0-7-0).

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4150 Tax Collector/Town Clerk Adjusted

The Chair made a motion to approve the budget adjusted at \$46,319.00 and the motion was seconded by Steve.

This makes the deputy clerk pay \$14,577.00, Tax collector at \$18,707.00 for a total of \$46,319.00 to meet the 13/39 rule.

Motion Vote: Chair Strauss-aye, Leo Racine-aye, Steve Regal-aye, Vicki Kirkwood- aye, Jim Giguere-aye, Scott Hilsman-aye, and Rosemarie Wissenbach-aye (Passed 7-0-0).

4140 Town Clerk

The Chair made a motion to approve the budget at \$49,422.40 and the motion was seconded by Leo.

The Chair pointed out that the Salary and Ballot clerks line amount increased due to there being four elections this year and the office/equipment line would be charged to this department and not removed.

Motion Vote: Chair Strauss-nay, Leo Racine-nay, Steve Regal-nay, Vicki Kirkwood- nay, Jim Giguere-nay, Scott Hilsman-nay, and Rosemarie Wissenbach-nay (Failed 0-7-0).

4140 Town Clerk Adjusted

The Chair made a motion to approve the adjusted amount of \$48,324.00 and the motion was seconded by Jim. The adjustment is due to the ~~13/30~~ 13/39 rule.

Motion Vote: Chair Strauss-aye, Leo Racine-aye, Steve Regal-aye, Vicki Kirkwood- aye, Jim Giguere-aye, Scott Hilsman-aye, and Rosemarie Wissenbach-aye (Passed 7-0-0).

4619.1 Other Conservation

The Chair made a motion to approve the amount of \$3,000.00 as approved by the BoS and the motion was seconded by Steve.

The Chair explained this amount helps fund the Province Lake Association in combating the milfoil weed. Steve questioned if the Maine side contributes, and The Chair stated everyone on the lake is in the association and Leo stated that Maine does contribute.

Motion Vote: Chair Strauss-aye, Leo Racine-aye, Steve Regal-aye, Vicki Kirkwood- aye, Jim Giguere-aye, Scott Hilsman-aye, and Rosemarie Wissenbach-aye (Passed 7-0-0).

4619 Town Forester

The Chair made a motion to approve the amount of \$1,000.00 as approved by the BoS and seconded by Steve.

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The Chair stated that the forester is very beneficial for the town.

Motion Vote: Chair Strauss-aye, Leo Racine-aye, Steve Regal-aye, Vicki Kirkwood- aye, Jim Giguere-aye, Scott Hilsman-aye, and Rosemarie Wissenbach-aye (Passed 7-0-0).

4152 Assessing

The Chair made a motion to approve the amount of \$39,250.00 as approved by the BoS and the motion was seconded by Steve.

The Chair explained that this is a 5yr contract with the assessor and the fifth year is not guaranteed and the town would need to agree to assess the whole town in 2025. The Chair explained how the money carries over each year to pay for the 5th year of assessing the whole town and a warrant article for bids would need to be done next year.

A public question from Erik Jones questioning where the assessing clerk shows up and the Chair answered under 4130 and Erik questioned why it is not split up to show the different departments. The Chair stated he will take note and look into that information. Scott questioned the amount and if that is for full time and the Chair answered they do partial assessments and a brief explanation of the carryover.

Motion Vote: Chair Strauss-aye, Leo Racine-aye, Steve Regal-aye, Vicki Kirkwood- aye, Jim Giguere-aye, Scott Hilsman-aye, and Rosemarie Wissenbach-aye (Passed 7-0-0).

4150 Auditing

The Chair made a motion to approve the amount of \$11,400.00 as approved by the BoS and the motion was seconded by Steve.

The Chair explained that this is a contracted amount to have the books audited yearly.

Motion Vote: Chair Strauss-aye, Leo Racine-aye, Steve Regal-aye, Vicki Kirkwood- aye, Jim Giguere-aye, Scott Hilsman-aye, and Rosemarie Wissenbach-aye (Passed 7-0-0).

4141 Supervisor of the Checklist

The Chair made a motion to approve the amount of \$3,130.00 as approved by the BoS and the motion was seconded by Rosemarie.

The Chair stated that there is an increase due to four elections this year. Leo had a question for Carol Pfister about not seeing any money used on seminars/workshops and Carol explained due to Covid they were only doing webinars. Carol also explained that there is a new supervisor signed on and looking for another supervisor to run so that is why that amount was left in there. Jim questioned if there were any webinars available and she stated she has not seen any currently. Carol asked if the stipend check could be paid every six months to save on postage. The Chair said you could ask to not mail it. Carol stated she was fine to leave it as it. The Chair

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also asked for the new board member knowledge that the supervisor of the checklist also covers school elections and Cheryl Feirick said yes, they do.

Motion Vote: Chair Strauss-aye, Leo Racine-aye, Steve Regal-aye, Vicki Kirkwood- aye, Jim Giguere-aye, Scott Hilsman-aye, and Rosemarie Wissenbach-aye (Passed 7-0-0).

Unassigned Fund Balance

The Chair directed the board to the unassigned fund balance packet page 2 showing the MS-535 Sheet with the information the board had been waiting for. The Chair went over the sheets and how to read the information and how liens and taxes owed show in the unassigned fund balance. The Chairs asked the board to look over the spreadsheets, check the information and ask any questions.

4150 ~~Treasure~~ Treasurer

The Chair welcomed Elaine Chick and stated that the chair is also the Deputy ~~Treasure~~ Treasurer.

The Chair made a motion to approve the amount of \$4,650.00 as approved by the BoS and the motion was seconded by Leo.

The Chair went over the amount of work the treasurer does and if the board has any questions for Elaine. There were no questions. Jim commented that the budget increase of \$150.00 was very responsible.

Motion Vote: Chair Strauss-abstain, Leo Racine-aye, Steve Regal-aye, Vicki Kirkwood-aye, Jim Giguere-aye, Scott Hilsman-aye, and Rosemarie Wissenbach-aye (Passed 6-0-1).

Agenda Package Sheets 7 & 8

The Chair went over the non-profit packages and the only packet not received yet is from the VNA. The Chair explained the rating sheet and to bring the packets when the nonprofits are scheduled to present. The Chair explained there are two new nonprofits petitioning for funds. Rosemarie questioned if there is information showing whom receives from other agencies. Steve stated that if you signed up for the Freedom Food Pantry you cannot go to another pantry to double dip.

4191 Historic District

The Chair made a motion to approve the amount of \$410.00 as approved by the BoS and Leo seconded the motion.

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The Chair explained that the postage was moved to 4130 Executive. Susan Slack explained that she would like to change the line for public hearings to add \$50.00 and she was remiss and put zero but would like to change the amount per chance a tree cutting needs to be done on Hobbs Rd per Scenic Road Ordinance that was adopted by the town in the Historic District. The board discussed adding \$50.00 to the public hearing line. The Chair asked Susan to explain a little about the Historic District for the new board member. Susan explained the town adopted regulations for two historic districts “Lord’s Hill” and “Ctr. Effingham” and has regulations that apply to what the building looks like from the public road, a permit is required and decided upon with no public meeting.

Motion Vote: Chair Strauss-nay, Leo Racine-nay, Steve Regal-nay, Vicki Kirkwood-nay, Jim Giguere-nay, Scott Hilsman-nay, and Rosemarie Wissenbach-nay (Failed 0-7-0).

4191 Historic District Adjusted

The Chair made a motion to approve the adjusted amount of \$460.00 and Vicki seconded the motion.

Susan questioned how to classify funds for printing in the future.

A public question from Erik on procedurally removing the line amount for postage and that as stated earlier if money was on the line it would stay. The Chair explained the BoS removed it and that it could be a negotiated amount that can be put back in at any time.

Motion Vote: Chair Strauss-aye, Leo Racine-aye, Steve Regal-aye, Vicki Kirkwood-aye, Jim Giguere-aye, Scott Hilsman-aye, and Rosemarie Wissenbach-aye (Passed 7-0-0).

4550 Library

The Chair introduces Grace Fuller and Sara Newell.

The Chair made a motion to approve the amount of \$66,213.00 as approved by the BoS and the motion was seconded by Steve.

The Chair passed the floor to Grace, and she explained about the library and the relationship with the townspeople, with building projects and growth updates. Sara, the new director since June, gave a little more information on groups and activities happening at the library. Grace also gave credit to the amount of volunteers giving time to the library and Sara mentioned a new website, media sites rolling out soon. Vicki asked the average age of children and homeschool participants and Sara explained that during the school year it is mainly the little’s from pre-school to six years and of course during summer it ranges from 2yrs to 6th grade. The homeschoolers are active in the Lego and reading club, and she has reached out to the homeschooling families to discuss other interests the library can help with in their education. Scott questioned if they are aware of how many from town and out of town that use the library. Grace stated most are from town with a few from local towns and the library tends to be of

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interest to out-of-towners due to its architectural design and uniqueness. The Chair stated that there is no amount for the assistant and Librarian salary and that would be needed for the budget to actual and to email that information to the Chair. The Chair explained to the new board member Scott that the town has a verbal agreement that they will handle the salary for the library and per an RSA any unused funds will come back to the town.

Motion Vote: Chair Strauss-aye, Leo Racine-aye, Steve Regal-aye, Vicki Kirkwood- aye, Jim Giguere-aye, Scott Hilsman-aye, and Rosemarie Wissenbach-aye (Passed 7-0-0).

4191 Planning

The Chair introduced George ~~Bull~~ Bull.

The Chair made a motion to approve the amount of \$11,873.00 as approved by the BoS and Rosemarie seconded the motion.

George explained the increase for the recording secretary is due to not being able to find one and so it was decided to have Nate (appointed by election) perform the duties, who has also helped fill out the 91A forms which saves the town on legal fees. George also went over the advertising and postage that will be reimbursed back to the town and the professional service amount fluctuates from year to year. The Chair confirmed the planning board monthly meetings and work sessions. George also explained how Nate is helpful with planning applications. Leo asked how the applications are received and George states they are received electronically. Jim asked what is Nate responsibilities are. George explained he checks over the applications for missing information, administrator duties, lot numbers and map research. Elaine Chick explained he puts information in the paper, sends certified letters and notifications that need to be sent. Jim asked what Nate's qualifications are and George explained he worked in Wakefield, NH for many years in the land use office. Jim's concern is that other boards have only asked for a 5% increase and planning is asking for three times the amount. George explained the board had a hard time finding anyone to do the minutes and Nate had been doing the work and not billing the town. He has been handling more responsibilities and Elaine explained the minutes are more sophisticated, needing someone with land use knowledge. The Chair explained that Nate has the qualifications and has taken over the duties for two positions that have been empty for a long time. The legality for the town is important as we have seen in the lawsuits, and we need to have the correct documentation. Vicki comments that you have a choice to go legal and pay more or get help from Nate. Jim questioned getting legal advice from someone who was not a member of the bar. George explained Nate is not giving legal advice but knows how to answer questions without putting the town in jeopardy, knowing what information can be given or not given. The Chair asked if there were any further questions.

Motion Vote: Chair Strauss-aye, Leo Racine-aye, Steve Regal-aye, Vicki Kirkwood- aye, Jim Giguere-nay, Scott Hilsman-aye, and Rosemarie Wissenbach-aye (Passed 6-1-0).

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4191 Zoning Board

The Chair made a motion to approve the amount of \$3,131.00 as approved by the BoS and Steve seconded the motion.

The Chair explained the ZBA only meets when they have a case, and they currently have one. The increase for the secretary was sufficient due to the number of times they meet and will be using Nate for the minutes.

Motion Vote: Chair Strauss-aye, Leo Racine-aye, Steve Regal-aye, Vicki Kirkwood- aye, Jim Giguere-aye, Scott Hilsman-aye, and Rosemarie Wissenbach-aye (Passed 7-0-0).

Budget to Actual

The Chair directed the board to the last page to update the bottom line of the operating budget line item to read ~~76.70~~ 76.70% expended, dated 10/18. The amount for the town approved budget line is ~~77.3~~ 77.3% spent. The Chair explained that from the 9/26 meeting discussion on the budget to actual that it should be referred to as an “estimated amount”. The Chair explained where they are at with the budget and working with Michelle on the budget to actual. Please email the Chair if you see anything missing on the sheet. Leo gave an update that the grant for Wilkinson Swamp Road and that it was approved for \$400,000.00.

Public Question/Comments

The chair asked if there were any questions from the public, there were none.

Next Budget Meeting

November 7^h, 2023 @ 6 pm.

Next BoS Meeting November 14, 2023 @ 4:00 pm.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Jim at 8:12 pm. The motion was seconded by Steve.

Motion Vote: Chair Strauss-aye, Leo Racine-aye, Steve Regal-aye, Vicki Kirkwood- aye, Jim Giguere-aye, Scott Hilsman-aye, and Rosemarie Wissenbach-aye (Passed 7-0-0).