

Approved: __12/5/2023_
Approved with changes: _____
Unapproved: _____

Effingham Budget Committee Minutes
68 School Street, Effingham
November 21, 2023

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

Members Absent: Jim Giguere

Others Present: Lenny Espie (Selectman), Chris Seaman (Selectman) and members of the public; Garon Romanovic, Erik Jones, Maureen Hilsman and Chuck Fuller.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm. A roll call confirmed those present.

Minutes

Chair Strauss made a motion to approve the meeting minutes as written for November 7, 2023. The motion was seconded by Steve.

The Chair asked if there were any corrections to the minutes and Vicki stated that under 4210 Police, she felt it should be Chief Joe Duchesne and not Chief Joe. Chair Strauss stated that was fine and asked if anyone wanted to make the change to Chief Joe Duchesne, no others had an issue. Vicki also directed the board to 4414 Dog Officer in the 1st paragraph “and Jim” and thought it should be full name of Jim Giguere. Chair Strauss stated that was fine as just “Jim” because we only have one Jim. The next item Vicki stated was on pg. 4 under 4th paragraph and 1st sentence it states, “pull the shift” and should be “fill the shift”. Scott directed them to pg. 5 and thought it should be “we” not “you” under tie his hands. Rosemarie questioned pg. 6 for Cemetery and thought the vote was for the amount of \$2,000.00 not \$2,500.00. Chair Strauss stated it was \$2,000.00. The Chair noted corrections to change in the minutes.

The Chair made a motion to vote.

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

Minutes Amended

Chair Strauss made a motion to approve the meeting minutes as updated for November 7, 2023, and the motion was seconded by Vicki.

The Chair made a motion to vote to approve the amended meeting minutes.

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

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November 21, 2023

Board Business

The Chair directed the board to pg. 2 of the agenda package, the breakdown on the tax increase. The Chair explained the tax rate increase for the school will be \$.69 cents rather than the \$2.00 increase previously projected and with everything approved by the BoS this brings the increase to approximately \$.40 cents per thousand compared to last year not including the non-profits which will be done in December.

(4130) Executive

Chair Strauss made a motion to accept the amount of \$168,809.00 as approved by the BoS and Steve seconded the motion.

The Chair went over the budget and explained the budget line change for support staff was rolled into the bookkeeper line with bookkeeper at 24hr's weekly. The Chair explained the budget needs to be adjusted due to the 13/39 rule.

The Chair made a motion to vote.

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

(4130) Executive Adjusted

The Chair made a note that the adjustment due to the 13/39 rule brings the salary for the administrative assistant to \$54,760.00, bookkeeper to \$28,642.00 and assessing to \$18,973.00 with total of \$167,875.00.

Chair Strauss made a motion to accept the adjusted amount of \$167,875.00 and Leo seconded the motion.

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

(4191) Reopened ZEO

The Chair made a motion to reopen 4191 Zoning Officer for \$27,131.00 and the motion was seconded by Steve.

The Chair explained that the hourly pay rate is the same for Assessing and ZEO assistant because the position splits their time between the two. In order to adjust to the 13/39 rule, the pay was adjusted to the same pay rate being received for Assessing, which brings the pay rate from

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68 School Street, Effingham
November 21, 2023

\$20.00 hr. to \$20.36 hr. The adjustment for zoning officer would be \$16,996.00 and assistant to \$8,433.00, total \$27,224.00.

The Chair made a motion to vote to re-adjust the amount for 4191 Zoning Officer from \$27,131.00 to \$27,224.00.

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

(4153) Legal

The Chair made a motion to approve the amount of \$50,000.00 as approved by the BoS and Steve seconded the motion.

The Chair asked if there were any questions.

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

(4155) Payroll Expenses

The Chair made a motion to approve the amount of \$104,501.00 as approved by the BoS and Steve seconded the motion.

The Chair made note that the FICA has increased by 7.65% and the amount going into the retirement for the Police and Fire dept. will be 31.28% and for office help it will be 13.53%.

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

(4194) Municipal Buildings

The Chair made a motion to approve the amount of \$75,600.00 as approved by the BoS and Steve seconded the motion.

The Chair explained you can see the individual line amounts on the budget to actual.

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

(4196) Insurance

The Chair made a motion to approve the amount of \$103,152.00 as approved by the BoS and Steve seconded the motion.

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Effingham Budget Committee Minutes
68 School Street, Effingham
November 21, 2023

The Chair explained the amount paid for health insurance for a family plan yearly is \$36,364.00 and individual is \$13,468.00. The liability and worker's compensation has increased to 12.5% and short-term disability has increased 113%. The employees contribute of 10% goes back into the general fund and the employee covers their own dental. Leo questioned who is covered under health insurance and Chair Strauss stated the two police and town administrator, with everyone else having liability and workers compensation.

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

(4215) EMS Contract

The Chair made a motion to approve the amount of \$125,636.00 as approved by the BoS and Steve seconded the motion.

The Chair explained this is a contract amount for Action Ambulance which has another 4-5yrs and discussed the contract term and pricing with a refund coming to town due to less usage. A public comment from Chuck Fuller made mention that the ambulance usage went down due to the High Watch Recovery changed hands and the contract is on file. A Public question from Erik Jones asking that the usage went down but the rates went up and Chair Strauss stated they may have had increases, but the total is spread over all the towns. Mr. Fuller added the contract does have a yearly increase in addition to a possible extra increase/decrease for usage

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

(4312) Highways & Streets

The Chair made a motion to approve the amount of \$601,000.00 as approved by the BoS and Rosemarie seconded the motion.

The Chair explained that the line for "road reconstruction" is blank and is done by a warrant article, and the price of calcium chloride has increased significantly so the town will be putting the calcium in front of homes rather than the whole road. Steve questioned Selectman Chris Seaman if they do Huntress Bridge Rd and Wilkinson Swamp Rd where there are no houses. Selectman Seaman stated that if cost allows it would be done on the high traffic roads and in front of homes as it also does help maintain the road base. Chair Strauss mentioned that the line for \$257,000.00 was for the new winter road contract. Rosemarie questioned if the town was doing any crack filling and Chair Strauss stated it was held back this year due to budget issues and expected to be done next year. A public question from Erik Jones on whether next year it will cover two years of cracks to be filled and Chair Strauss stated it will cover the two pallets worth of materials. Selectman Seaman explained that crack filling is to maintain roads that are

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68 School Street, Effingham
November 21, 2023

in good shape before doing ones that are beat up, which at that point it would be too late to fill. Chair Strauss noted that in 2022 the town did not spend the amount budgeted and only used \$11,000.00.

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

(4323) Solid Waste Collection

The Chair made a motion to approve the amount of \$100,830.00 as approved by the BoS and Steve seconded the motion.

Chair Strauss stated that Hazard Waste Day did not happen this year. Selectman Seaman stated that it did, but you would have had to travel to other towns to participate. A question on amount of increase due to certification for transfer station employees and Chair Strauss stated it is for four employees.

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

(4324) Solid Waste Disposal

The Chair made a motion to approve the amount of \$80,507.00 as approved by the BoS and Steve seconded the motion.

The Chair explained that when there is a charge for an item that amount goes into a special trust fund only to be used by the transfer station. Selectman Racine asked do we receive money back for metal and the answer is the town receives a check. Selectman Racine asked how it would work if a compactor went down and Chuck Fuller and Chair Strauss explained that the funds would be moved from the existing Transfer Station trust fund by the trustees and if additional funds were needed it would require a special meeting to obtain funds from the special trust fund.

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

(4325) Solid Waste Cleanup

The Chair made a motion to approve the amount of \$13,000.00 as approved by the BoS and Steve seconded the motion.

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Effingham Budget Committee Minutes
68 School Street, Effingham
November 21, 2023

The Chair went over the line items and touched briefly on how the PFAS Testing works. Steve asked if any money is left over does that also go into the trustee fund and Chair Strauss stated it goes into the General Fund.

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

(4411) Health Administration

The Chair made a motion to approve the amount of \$4,050.00 as approved by the BoS and Vicki seconded the motion.

The Chair explained that the budget has decreased due to no longer having a paid health officer deputy and the health officer's amount increased by \$600.00. A public question from Erik Jones on who the health officer was and Chair Strauss stated Bill Piekut.

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

(4520) Parks & Recreation

The Chair made a motion to approve the amount of \$40,000.00 as approved by the BoS and Steve seconded the motion.

The Chair explained that this is a contractual agreement with the increase being \$5,000.00 a year up to a \$50,000.00 total for the Town of Ossipee felt was our town's fair share for use of the Recreation facilities. Once the \$50,000.00 is met than it will be decided to either renegotiate or see were Ossipee stands. Rosemarie feels that \$40,000.00 is a lot and understands that the people came out and voted for it and Chair Strauss agreed that is what the town meeting is about and to educate the town on what they are getting.

Motion Vote: Chair Strauss-aye, Leo Racine-aye, Steve Regal-aye, and Vicki Kirkwood-aye, Rosemarie Wissenbach-abstain, and Scott Hilsman-aye (Passed 5-0-1).

Non-Profit Analysis/Rating Sheet

The Chair directed the board to sheets 16 and 17 and explained that the VNA and Red Cross are not submitting for funds this year, sheets are adjusted accordingly. Meals on Wheels have asked for a significant increase and have never gone over the budget amount in the past. The Chair and Leo looked back at the state requirements for non-profit and found that they should be listed under the non-profit 4415 not 4445.2 for Vendors. The Chair will adjust the budget sheet accordingly. The Chair also questioned the BoS why Meals on Wheels are paid monthly and not after April 1st and Chair Strauss stated that per the BoS no more weekly billing and they will

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68 School Street, Effingham
November 21, 2023

only receive amount approved for. Chair Strauss received an email back from Concerned Citizen (Meals on Wheels) explaining the increases in salary and meals, \$3.00 more a plate and feeding more people.

The Chair covered the paperwork he received from Melissa Seaman on the amounts from the County and they cap at 2% of their budget, and looking at the last sheet you see other outside groups such as End 68 hours of Hunger who possibly may send a petition. Chair Strauss pointed out that these groups are asking for certain amounts and receive less from the County and other towns. Also, that the Meals on Wheels is not on the list asking for money from the County and Misty from Meals on Wheels would like to come to the non-profit presentation night along with Starting Point and Freedom Food Pantry. Steve wanted to point out that most all the groups come back yearly and ask for more money and the Freedom Food Pantry does not and they are thankful for the amount the town gives. Chair Strauss also pointed out that Effingham benefits from Freedom Food Pantry (FFP), so we tend to give them the amount they requested, and the board does not normally give more than what is requested. Steve questioned why Misty Ryder from Meals on Wheels did not go to the County and Chair Strauss said that would be a question to ask at the non-profit meeting after her presentation. Selectman Espie questioned the email and the amount of people receiving meals in town and Chair Strauss stated that also is something to question at the presentation and to look over the non-profit packages for any questions to ask in the next meeting on December 5th. The Chair asked if anyone has seen any warrant articles for non-profits around and Chuck Fuller said he has seen one for End 68hrs of Hunger.

Unassigned Fund Balance

The Chair directed the board to page 18 of the UAFB calculations, the projected amount to use out of the UAFB for the draft warrants is \$186,500.00. After expending the \$186,500.00 it is still estimated this will keep the UAFB at approximately \$800,000.00.

Draft Warrant Articles

The Chair directed the Committee to the draft warrant article packets 4901,4915 and 4916, the written description is on the back and went over the process for approval.

4901 Other Warrants – Chair Strauss explained that on Ryefield Road the state funds will not be in there, it was put in as a reminder and to keep the amount at \$250,000.00. Those funds might be used in another area. Chair Strauss went over the line for Antenna Repeater and Operating budget in the draft warrant article and that items may be added to the warrant, for example the fire department Engine 2 needs to be repaired and if the BoS agrees it could be added. A conversation on Engine 2, time frame of being repaired and Selectman Seaman mentioned he has done research and would like to talk with BoS and Fire Department on his findings on Engine 2 repairs. Chair Strauss questioned run times of the engine in the past and

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68 School Street, Effingham
November 21, 2023

would like that information and Steve questioned leaving it as a tanker and repairing the engine's mechanical issues.

Chair Strauss updated the board that the bids came in for the road work on Ryefield Rd. There were four bids from the following: Allstate \$250,211.66, R&D \$215,541.79, Pike \$227,868.60 and GMI \$206,356.50 and the UAFB will not be needed to assist with the cost. Leo pointed out that this includes the shoulder work and all inclusive to one contractor. A public question from Erik Jones on if the paving is to the town line or Rt. 16 and Chair Strauss stated Rt. 16 which is .77 of a mile. Selectman Seaman explained that it is a wash and gave an example of Town of Ossipee taking care of Leavitt Rd. Steve asked when the BoS will be deciding, and Chair Strauss stated at the next BoS meeting.

4915 Capital Reserve Funds – The Chair explained the front and back of the sheets and the front is what the BoS will be approving and read out the line's items on the warrant. Chair Strauss stated the line Town Owned Bridges is a typo and should read \$50,000.00 and bottom line should read \$141,500.00.

4916 Expandable Trust Fund – The Chair Strauss explained that these items are the same we see every year for the public hearing.

The Chair explained that the draft usage of the UAFB can be moved around prior to the public hearing. The Chair feels this leaves a healthy amount in the UAFB and asked the Committee/BoS how they felt; the Committee/BoS response was they are comfortable with the projection.

Budget to Actual

The Chair met with Michelle and cleared up all except one item and then Chair Strauss did another review and came up with a few more issues for correction. Chair Strauss found that under 4210 Police/Other it shows \$1,915.00 expended and that should be a detail charge that can be moved to the 5000 Police details. The next one found was under 4210 Police Details for \$800.00 expended should also be moved to 5000 Police details and another under 4901/Salary for \$625.50 there was a grant that was not submitted in time and that amount will go back to the 4210 Police/Other. Steve asked why there was a \$1.00 budget for Police detail and Chair Strauss stated that should be zero and will make note of it. The last one is under 7000 Grants for \$15,000 for Jacob Glass for HTH Project and it does not show an expense line, an expended line needs to be added. Chuck Fuller explained the grant amounts and that he has a meeting to go over corrections needed for the HTH Project and Chair Strauss will provide the updated information for the next meeting.

The Chair asked if anyone had anything they noticed for corrections and to let him know if they find anything.

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68 School Street, Effingham
November 21, 2023

Reminders

The Chair reminded the board to bring the non-profit packets for the next meeting.

Public Comment

Steve asked Chair Strauss if Meals on Wheels were listed in 4445.2 and 4415 last year and Chair Strauss stated that no they have always been listed only under 4445.2 and the mistake was never caught.

Erik Jones stated that the End 68hrs of Hunger is \$2,500.00 not \$3,000.00 and that if a non-profit only bills for \$3,000.00 and we voted to give \$4,500.00 then that is a contribution whereas if billed under 4445.2 Vendor they only receive billed amount which could be less then requested. Also, if we do not give the full amount will they still serve the community. Chair Strauss stated that they will only serve what they have money for and those are good points to consider and to discuss at the next meeting.

Chair Strauss asked if any further questions from the Public, there were none.

Next Budget Meeting

12/5/2023 @ 6pm

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Steve at 7:40pm. The motion was seconded by Dave.

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