

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Approved with changes: \_\_\_1/30/24\_\_\_\_\_  
Unapproved: \_\_\_\_\_

**Effingham Budget Committee Minutes**  
**68 School Street, Effingham**  
**January 19, 2024**

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

**Members Absent:** Vicki Kirkwood, Jim Giguere

**Others Present:** Chris Seamans (Selectman) and members of the public; Garan Romanovic, Erik Jones, Tyler Eldridge and Susan Slack.

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 amended changing “savior” to “savings” on page 3 paragraph 1 for January 2, 2024, and the motion was seconded by Steve. The Chair made a motion to vote.

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

**Board Business:**

The Chair covered the total current estimated tax impact was \$0.50/k. He noted that the Committee will cover numerous changes tonight and if all are approved the estimated tax rate could be \$0.46/k.

**4901 Antenna Repeater:**

The Chair made a motion to approve the amount of \$19,000.00 as approved by the BoS and Rosemarie seconded the motion.

The Chair explained that the questions raised at the last meeting were answered at the Selectman’s meeting with the antenna not being visible and will be used by both the Police and Fire department. Tyler stated that it works great and allows for private communication between the two departments.

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

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**4901 Fire Engine #2 Refurbish:**

The Chair made a motion to approve the amount of \$250,000.00 from the capital reserve fund as approved by the BoS and Steve seconded the motion.

The Chair read the draft warrant article, stating that there are three bids with the low to high from \$167000.00 to \$280,000.00. BoS Racine stated that the BoS have asked the bidders to give a detailed itemized cost by line item before approval..

The Chair asked the board if any questions, there were none.

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

**4901 Heritage Commission:**

The Chair made a motion to approve the amount of \$500.00 as submitted by the BoS and Rosemarie seconded the motion.

The Chair opened the discussion and welcomed Susan Slack. Chair Strauss read RSA 674 and questioned if the Historic District can do all the duties, then why do we need a Heritage Commission? Susan replied explaining that they are two different entities, but they can be combined. In order for them to be combined the town needs to vote to establish the Heritage Commission. Rosemarie asked what does the Heritage Commission do and Susan explained per RSA 674 that the Historic District can only set regulations whereas the Heritage Commission can do more functions such as hire a consultant, advise planning board, they can accept properties and or gifts, do an inventory and work with other non-profit organizations for example. Susan also stated that with the town approaching a 250-year anniversary, having a lot of historic resources in the town the Heritage Commission could be an advocate for the historic resources.

Chair Strauss questioned about having issues with getting board members to which Susan explained that there has been a transition period but has had a lot of new members and good attendance with none of the lack of quorum issues. Susan also explained that there are two warrant articles, one to establish the Heritage Commission and the one before you requesting funding. She also stated it is their desire to increase membership from 5 to 7. Erik Jones stated that people declined to be members of the Historic District in the past because they were not interested in the regulatory aspect but may now be interested in the options that can be handled with the Heritage Commission side. Erik also explained how some local towns make use of having the Heritage Commission, such as restoring an old snow roller. The Chair asked can it be the same members and Susan stated yes.

The Chair made a motion to vote.

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

**4901 Budget Sheet Update:**

The Chair directed the board to make updates to the budget sheet, making the bottom line \$522,000.00 with \$3,000.00 total tax impact.

**4210 Police Updated:**

Chair Strauss directed the board to the Police packet and explained that Current Chief is retiring, Tyler Eldridge will become Chief, Brian Baker will become Sargent. The Chair explained the salaries on the third page and back on the second page the Chief salary will be based on a 40hr week, Sargent a 40hr week and Patrolman to 32hr week so this is where the part-time salary will roll down to. Tyler asked for the line to say patrol officer/part-time, and the board agreed.

Chaired noted the following line item changes:

Salary-Chief 26 hrs/wk to Salary-Chief 40 hrs/wk. 2024 Request and BoS approved columns from \$50,200 to \$69,366.24.

Salary-Part-Time. 2024 Request and BoS approved columns from \$10,000 to \$0.

Salary-SGT 40 hrs/wk. 2024 Request and BoS approved columns from \$70,720 to \$65,760.

Salary-Patrol Officer 40 hrs/wk to Salary-Patrol/Part-Time Officer 32 hrs/wk. 2024 Request and BoS approved columns from \$64,272 to \$49,920.

Total Request and BoS approved columns from \$246,259 to \$236,113.24. Budget Committee approved column from \$245,246 to \$236,113.24.

Chair made a motion to approve the BoS approved 4210 Police budget of \$236,113.24 changing the previous Budget Committee approved amount of \$245,426 to \$236,113.24. Steve seconded the motion.

The Chair asked if any questions.

BoS Seamans entered the meeting and reiterated that the numbers on the second page that are blank, the board is filling the amounts approved over and Chair Strauss explained how they are filling out the sheet.

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

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**Budget Sheet Packet:**

The Chair directed the board to the budget sheet packet and page four of the agenda packet to make the changes and updates.

**Budget Packet Changes:**

Pg. 15 4191 Zoning Officer – remove line for “supplies”.

Pg. 22 4220 Fire – remove the ## marks from Fire Chief and delete associated note on bottom of page and add the note above “Chief required to work at least two shifts per week”.

Pg. 23 4290 Emergency Management – remove line for “Antenna Repeater” and associated note at the bottom of page, note in 4901. Steve questioned the budget request amount and Chair Strauss said to update budget column to \$2,500.00.

Pg. 29 4324 Solid Waste Disposal – delete “Used Oil” line, no longer needed. Steve questioned where the paid fees from transfer station show, and the board had a short discussion about where the information is and that it is available if needed.

Pg. 31 4411 Health Administration – remove the legal L/I and changes will go to legal page.

Pg. 43 Operating Budget amount will change from \$2,231,406 to \$2,222,093.24.

Pg. 44 4901 Other Warrants – add the updated amounts for Heritage Commission at \$500.00, Engine #2 for \$250,000.00 and delete operating budget line.

Pg. 45 4901 Verbiage for Warrants- remove operating budget line and update line for Heritage, 68hrs Hunger and Engine #2 Refurbishment.

Pg. 46 Aquatic Plant – delete from 4915 CRF (moved to 4916 ETF) and the new totals for bottom are \$39,000.00, \$139,000.00 with final amount approved of \$136,500.00 with tax impact of \$35,000.00.

Pg. 47 4915 ETF Aquatic the writing for Invasive Aquatic Plant was deleted. Moved to 4916 Non-Capital Reserve/sheet 51.

Pg. 49 4916 ETF added Invasive Aquatic Plant and the amount of \$2,500.00 across the board for all totals except “BC Approved” which is \$5000.00. Generator goes to \$22,500.00 approved. Police Safety gear goes to \$7,000.00.

The Chair brought to the board’s attention a request from the HTH project for electrical work needed to bring the antenna to the tower, that there are no grants available for this type of work and they are looking for an additional \$5,000.00 to cover the cost. They are requesting to change the HTH request from the \$10,000.00 to \$15,000.00. The BoS and Budget committee had a

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discussion. The Chair suggests changing the fire department equipment to \$20,000.00 and using the \$5,000.00 which was from the UAFB for the HTH Repair Request.

The Chair asked BoS to revote.

**4916 Fire Department Equipment Adjusted**

BoS Seamans made a motion to vote to adjust 4916 Fire Department Equipment from \$25,000.00 already approved to \$20,000.00 and BoS Racine seconded the motion.

**BoS Motion Vote: Leo Racine-aye, and Chris Seamans-aye (Passed 2-0-0).**

The Chair made a motion to approve the BoS adjusted amount of \$25,000.00 to \$20,000.00 for 4916 Fire Department Equipment and Steve seconded the motion.

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

**4916 Town Hall Repair and Restoration Adjusted**

BoS Seamans made a motion to vote to adjust the amount from \$10,000.00 to \$15,000.00 for 4916 Town Hall Repair and Restoration with \$5,000.00 coming from the UAFB and BoS Racine seconded the motion.

**BoS Motion Vote: Leo Racine-aye, and Chris Seamans-aye (Passed 2-0-0).**

The Chair made a motion to approve the BoS adjusted amount of \$10,000.00 to \$15,000.00 for 4916 Town Hall Repair and Restoration with \$5,000.00 coming from the UAFB and Rosemarie seconded the motion.

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

The Chair continued with the changes to the budget sheet.

Pg. 49 Bottom line amounts change.  
2022 Actual increases to \$85,500.00  
2023 Budgeted changes to \$35,500.00  
2024 Totals are \$83,500 & BC approved \$86,000

Pg. 50 Update warrant articles for Fire department to \$20,000.00.  
Emergency generator to \$22,500.00.

Pg. 51 Police Safety gear change to \$7,000.00 and the wording for Town Hall repair

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will change "\$10,000.00 raised from taxation" and "\$5,000.00, from UAFB" zero taxation. The verbiage is a draft.

Pg. 20 4210 Police changes as approved in current meeting.  
At top of page change Joe Duchesne name to Tyler Eldridge.

The Chair stated that the information will be verified and sent for printing and will be posted in the paper for the February 7<sup>th</sup> Public hearing.

**MS-737**

The Chair directed the board to the MS-737 packet to make updates.

Pg. 2 Line for Public Safety, change both columns for Selectman's and Budget Committee Appropriations amount to \$236,113.00. Amounts for bottom columns change to \$546,824.00.

Pg. 5 Change the bottom totals for "Total Operating Budget Appropriated" for the Selectman to \$2,224,306.00 and the Budget Committee to \$2,222,093.00.

Pg. 6 Article 4915 for Invasive Aquatic Plant will change to 4916 and next line for Fire will change to \$20,000.00 and Police Safety gear will change to \$7,000.00.

Pg. 7 Emergency Management generator change to \$22,500.00 and the next line down change Town Hall repair to \$15,000.00. Under the added line for Town Own Bridges add a line in for Engine #2 Refurbish with \$250,000.00 for both lines, bringing bottom total to \$741,500.00.

Pg. 8 Add lines for 68 Hours of Hunger at \$2,500.00 and Heritage Commission for \$500.00.

Pg. 10 Under 3915 From CRF for both columns add \$250,000.00.

Pg. 12 Change the totals for "Total Operating Budget Appropriated" for the Selectman to \$2,224,306.00 and the Budget Committee to \$2,222,093.00. The next line for Special Warrant Articles, change for both lines to \$741,500.00. The next line for Individual Warrant Articles, add \$3,000.00 and on bottom line Total Appropriations for Selectman change amount to \$2,968,806.00 and the Budget Committee amount to \$2,966,593.00.

Pg. 13 Change line 1 and 7 to the amount of \$2,966,593.00.

**Budget Answer Package:**

The Chair went over the updates to the cover sheet based on above adjustments.

The Total difference between BoS and Budget went from \$3,045.80 to \$2,212.80, the next paragraph shows \$.51k increase and the increase changes to \$.46 cent. The total estimate property tax increase was \$1.03 and changes to \$.98 cents, the budget committee approved total was \$2,231,406.00 and changes to \$2,222,093.00, the difference from last year is now

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\$97,380.24 and overall budget total will be \$2,966,593.24, the UAFB total will be \$186,500. The Chair reminded the committee this is a note sheet and for the board to customize it in their own way to use for notes.

**Budget to Actual**

The Chair directed the board to the Budget to Actuals sheet for final 2023 explaining these are the numbers that are used for the Budget to Actual for 2024 starting in April. Chair Strauss directed the board to the back sheet for the Operating Budget and Town Approved Budget and stated the books closed with the amount of \$78,324.93 this does not take in the fact of the amount of \$30,000.00 for the Assessing Contract. The Chair discussed the previously carried over amounts.

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

**Reminders**

The Chair reminded the Committee the scheduled Public hearing dates are WEDNESDAY 2/7/24 with a snow date of THURSDAY 2/8/24.

Submittal for Printing of the Budget package will happen Monday 1/22 after all the adjustments of this meeting are entered.

He stated the Committee has 3 openings this year, 2 three year positions and 1 one year position. Sign up is 1/24 thru 2/2 at the Clerk's office.

Election for the Presidential primary is Tuesday 1/23 at 8am till 7pm. The elections are being held at the school.

The Chair asked if there was anything else to discuss and there was nothing.

**Next Budget Meeting**

1/30/2024 @ 6pm  
2/7/2024 @ 5pm Public Hearing  
2/8/2024 Public Hearing snow date

**Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Dave at 7:41pm and was seconded by Rosemarie.

**Motion Vote: Chair Strauss-aye, Leo Racine-aye, Steve Regal-aye, Rosemarie Wissenbach-aye, ~~Jim Giguere-aye~~, and Scott Hilsman-aye (~~Passed 6-0-0~~) (Passed 5-0-0).**