

**ADVISORY BUDGET COMMITTEE
TOWN OF MADISON
December 7, 2021
MINUTES**

Members Present – Chairman Steve Bartlett; Doug McAllister; Tino Fernandes; Selectmen Representative Bill Lord; School Board Representative Mike Brooks; Ron Force; Ned Rogerson

Others Present –Town Administrator Linda Shackford; MadTV Videographer Aysia Morency

Where and When Posted – Town Hall upper & lower bulletin boards and Madison & Silver Lake Post Offices on September 30, 2021.

Meeting Called to Order – By Bartlett at 6:00 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: Motion by Rogerson, seconded by Bartlett to approve the minutes from November 9, 2021 as written. The motion passed unanimous.

MES Budget Discussion:

The meeting held last night of the school board reviewed their 2022 proposed budget. Clarification was received as to the number of staff proposed for 2022 which is 24, an increase of 2 from 2021. The 2022 budget at \$7,231,309 has a 0.46% increase over the 2021 budget at \$7,198,174, with the default being less than the proposed.

McAllister noted that the proposed student population for 2022 is less than 2021 and questioned why the need for an increase in staff. Bartlett noted that the increase is special ed para professional.

The hiring of a case manager to deal with academic deficiencies related to remote learning is also one of the positions to be filled stated Brooks. Brooks informed the committee that part of the budget increase is due to the collective bargaining agreement which should be finalized tomorrow night. That agreement will be presented at the January 3rd school board and public budget hearings.

Tax Rate Setting:

Lord announced that the 2021 Tax Rate has been set. The rate is \$13.77 for the Town and \$18.35 for Eidelweiss. This is the lowest rate since 2008 and one of the four lowest since 1983. The Selectmen used \$400,000 of unreserved fund balance to buy down the town rate portion and left \$400,000 in the fund. The four component rates – municipal, local school, state school and county – all went down. The equalization rate for 2021 was received at is at 75.6%. The Department of Revenue likes to see the percentage within ten points of one hundred and will allow time for the market to correct itself before requiring the Town to update or reassess.

Current Drawdown Budget Status:

Lord began a brief overview of the drawdown noting we are at the 93% point of the year with 83% spent. There should be funds remaining at the end of year with talk of purchasing one of the two cruisers slated as a 2022 warrant articles with those funds.

Rogerson asked about the status of the dam and boat launch work. Lord stated that the DES permit has been approved, materials are delivered but the level of the lake has not gone down enough for DPW to start the project.

Fire: Chief Brooks spoke to this page explaining that the stipends have been paid out for the year and that he is doing some research to be sure that all necessary expenses have been paid. Brooks adopted this

budget mid-year when he became chief. Brooks expects to ask the Selectmen to encumber money to purchase turn-out gear.

Preliminary Review of 2022 Budget:

Executive: Changes to this budget included moving the land use salary in with the administrative assistant line and some pay raises to level out with surrounding towns was explained by Lord.

Insurance: The amounts went up in 2022 which included jumps in liability and workman's comp.

Notes Due: Purchases at the 2021 Town Meeting for vehicles increased the notes due line, while at the same time, Lord noted that this is the last year for some previous lease commitments.

Anticipated Warrant Articles for 2022:

Police Cruisers: It is the intention of the Selectmen to purchase a cruiser with 2021 year end funds which will necessitate asking Town Meeting to approve the lease only one cruiser on the 2022 warrant.

Ballfield Improvements: There have been no numbers received for that project yet.

Charity Petition Requests: Shackford stated that we have received several that still need to be reviewed and approved by the Checklist Supervisor. Rogerson, having had already volunteered to review charity petitions, asked that they be sent to him via email as they are approved.

Road Improvements: Rogerson noted that a couple of years ago the paving warrant article amount was increased. Rogerson questioned if we are still getting ahead and staying on plan with the same amount of money. Lord stated that we are already ahead of the plan as Director Cyr was able to take care of some additional roads last year.

ARPA Funds:

Lord stated that the Town has received \$138,000 in ARPA funds which is half of the total to be received. Projects are underway that include new radio equipment being completed by Ossipee Mountain Electronics for Town vehicles. This will allow better communication amongst DPW, police and fire in conjunction with radio tower improvements being made with the help of VDOW and the Carroll County Sheriff Department. Audio/video cameras have been installed in the upper level of Town Hall. Storm water damage prevention equipment has been purchased for public works.

Brooks asked if the pavilion project at the ballfield is on the list. Lord has seen this on the list of possibilities for projects but has not seen plans yet.

Brooks is looking into and has calls out to several generator companies that would cover the Town Hall and both DPW garages.

Such Items as Properly Presented to the Committee – There were none.

Public Comment: There were none.

7:15 PM – Fernandes made a **motion** to adjourn, seconded by Rogerson. The motion passed unanimously.

NEXT ADVISORY BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING – The next Advisory Budget Committee Meeting will be on Tuesday, January 4, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Meeting Room.

Respectfully Submitted,
Linda Shackford,
Town Administrator
Recording Secretary