

**ADVISORY BUDGET COMMITTEE
TOWN OF MADISON
October 10, 2023
MINUTES**

Members Present – Chairman Tino Fernandes; Vice-Chair Sharon Schilling; Selectman John Arruda; Ned Rogerson; Doug McAllister; Joe Dame; School Board Rep Sarah DeMartino

Others Present – Town Administrator Linda Shackford; Chief King; Resident Joy Gray; MadTV Videographer Aysia Morency

Where and When Posted – Town Hall upper & lower bulletin boards and Madison & Silver Lake Post Offices on September 13, 2023.

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

Members of the Committee Introduced Themselves

Approval of September 12, 2023 Minutes

Motion by Rogerson, seconded by Schilling to approve the minutes of the September 12, 2023 with moving Jim Curran’s name to Members Present. The motion passed **7-0**.

Appointment of Alternate Joy Gray – As per the Rules of Procedure the Chairman has the responsibility of appointing alternate members. There were several people who received write-in votes at Town Meeting. Joy Gray was one of those write-ins and has agreed to be appointed as an alternate. Shackford will take care of the Oath of Office.

MES Budget – Fernandes was disappointed that he was the only member to attend the School Committee meeting aside from DeMartino as a School Board Member. Fernandes offered follow-up from the summer meeting he had with the principal and the superintendent and shared information regarding the new Student Success Team which will offer information regarding how Madison students are doing once they are up in the Kennett schools.

A significant number of student’s parents do not have their children take the standardized testing which after five students opting out counts as zero on the test. Schilling asked how many students, to which Fernandes stated that he will obtain that number and find out what the scores would be if the zeros are not factored in. Schilling asked when that number would be available to which DeMartino stated she will get in touch with the principal tomorrow.

Fernandes reported on proposed warrant articles:

1. The annual Special Education appropriation which is proposed at \$30,000;
2. Rehabilitation of the Corner School which has lead paint on it and in the ground around it. It is estimated to cost \$100,000 to demolish it and \$400,000 to restore it. Gray noted that it is on the NH State and National Historic Registry and there are residents looking into finding grants;
3. Replacing the playground with an estimated cost of \$150,000;
4. The creation of an IT Capital Reserve Fund.

Preliminary 2024 Budget Discussion and Anticipated Large Expenses for 2024 Town Budget – The Committee reviewed the preliminary 2024 budget with notable comments as follows:

Building Inspector – it was suggested to see about lowering the training line from \$800 to \$600;

DPW – The salary section still needs submitted and it was asked that the transfer station revenues be included in the worksheet;

Election – There are four elections in 2024 and the consideration of the purchase of a new voting machine as the one the Town has now will no longer be supported. Shackford stated that the Town Clerk hoped to have it as a warrant article with the Committee suggesting it be worked into the regular operating budget.

Fire Dept – The member reimbursement point system was explained by Chief King. Schilling suggested making a payout halfway through the year for budgeting purposes and asked for a history of the reimbursements.

Personnel Administration – Numbers will be entered by the next meeting. Health and Dental Insurance rates for 2024 are expected to be announced later this week.

Police – Chief King stated that the 5.5% officer salary increase is a touch below the average yet still competitive enough to retain his officers. The overspend of the uniform line was because of the purchase of vests; this will be noted in the comment line of the worksheet.

Recreation – The increase in the budget is because the Recreation wages line now includes \$30,000 that was a warrant article last year. The total estimated revenues from Summer Camp are about \$20,000 with that number being incorporated into the worksheet.

Insurance – Workman’s Comp and Liability insurance numbers should be available from Primex in the next week and will be incorporated into the spreadsheet.

MadTV – Schilling would like to see the percentage step increase information versus the increase due to an increase in the number of meetings for the wages. McAllister said that can be done.

Capital Improvement Plan Review – Rogerson was able to add four more column year and adjusted some titles, admitting it still needs some work. Adding reference to warrant articles would be helpful. Arruda explained the history behind the Road Improvement line stating that its up to the voters if it is level funded adding we do not get as much work for the same money anymore.

Such Items as Properly Presented – Fernandes remarked on the public hearing regarding RSA 32:11 for an over expenditure of the budget. Arruda explained that the Town is asking the Department of Revenue to allow us to use \$441,000 of the \$880,000 in the Town’s unassigned fund balance to pay for the road repairs necessitated by the July storm. There is no choice but to pay for it stated Arruda; this use of unassigned fund balance takes away the option for the Selectmen to buy down taxes.

Public Comment – There was none.

8:01 PM – Motion by McAllister, seconded by Schilling to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda Shackford,
Town Administrator
Recording Secretary