

**Board of Selectmen
Special Meeting
Tuesday, May 2, 2023
Preston Town Hall - Lower Level**

Call to Order - Sandra Allyn-Gauthier called the meeting to order at 6:02 P.M.

1. Roll Call

Sandra Allyn-Gauthier

Jerry Grabarek arrived at 6:10 PM

Ken Zachem

Also Present

Cindy Varricchio - Finance Director

Jim Corley - Public Works Director

Kimberly Lang - Recording Secretary

Members of the Public - 3

1. Budget Discussion based on the Board of Finance's Public Hearing

Sandra Allyn-Gauthier shared that the Board has worked hard to prepare a comprehensive budget that would allow the Town to meet challenges as it moves forward. She reiterated that it's important to have smaller changes over time rather than deal with large fluctuations. She reminded all that the Board of Finance after their Public Hearing requested that the general government budget be cut by \$100,000. Ms. Allyn-Gauthier stated that further reductions will decrease the level of services, programs, and activities, and it will reduce our ability to plan and prepare for the future.

The Board then discussed 6 areas that could see reductions with the least amount of harm to the forward progress that the Board is striving for.

- One area of reduction was Legal Fees, after a brief discussion it was decided to reduce that Line Item by \$16,500.
- Another area of reduction was the Reval Line that was to build up funds before the next Reval occurs. It was decided to reduce that by \$25,000. It was suggested that any funds that are returned at the end of the year to request that the Board of Finance put funds into that Line rather than into the Fund Balance account, that way the funds for the future Reval begins to build towards the anticipated cost.
- It was decided that ARPA funds could be used to support the \$25,000 needed for the Grant Writer.
- It was then decided that the following reductions could be covered by LOCIP funds - \$7,500 for servers, \$21,000 for road surfacing, and \$5,000 for the POCD.

In summary, the reduction of Legal Fees by \$16,500, eliminating \$25,000 for the Reval and \$25,000 for the Grant Writer, reduced the budget by \$66,500. LOCIP funds will be used to cover the cost of \$7,500 for servers; \$21,000 for road surfacing, and \$5,000 for the POCD. The total use of the LOCIP funds is \$33,500. With the reduction of \$66,500 and the \$33,500 use of LOCIP funds the Board reduced their budget by the requested \$100,000. It was noted that APRA funds will be used to support the \$25,000 Grant Writer, a critical position if the Town is to reap the benefits of the millions of dollars available through grants from both the state and federal governments.

Ken Zachem motioned that Legal Fees be reduced by \$16,500, eliminate \$25,000 for the Reval, and eliminate \$25,000 for the Grant Writer, reducing the budget by a total of \$66,500. LOCIP funds will be used to cover the cost of \$7,500 for servers; \$21,000 for road surfacing, and \$5,000 for the POCD, making the total use of the LOCIP funds \$33,500. APRA funds will be used for a \$25,000 Grant Writer. The reduction of \$66,500 and the \$33,500 use of LOCIP funds reduced the budget by the requested \$100,000. Jerry Grabarek seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

The Board then reviewed the budget process going forward after the Board of Finance's meeting later tonight.

2. Public Comment and Questions

Andy Biledeau, 99 Lakeview Drive, thanked the Board for their work. He then asked how much of the PRA line had been spent. And then asked the Board to contemplate reducing the PRA rather than reducing other areas.

Bill Legler, 55 McClimon, clarified the PRA's spending, and then stated that they have faced repairing a dam and substantial maintenance in preparing the property to be turned over to the tribe.

Jill Keith, 26 Tanglewood Drive, supports the General Government to move forward intact due to the substantial grants and the improvements that have occurred. However, she does not support the Board of Education budget and would like to see reductions in that budget.

3. Adjournment

Ken Zachem motioned to adjourn at 6:31 P.M.. Jerry Grabarek seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kimberly Lang

RECEIVED
PRESTON, CT
2023 MAY -4 P 2:47
Jill Keith
PRESTON TOWN CLERK