

Advisory Budget Committee

Minutes

September 29, 2020

This meeting was at the Barrington Town Hall with remote participation available.

Members Present: Steve Saunders, Peter Royce, Dannen Mannschreck, and John Morris

Others Present: Conner MacIver, Tracy Hardekopf (remote), and Amy Doherty (remote)

Steve Saunders called the meeting to order at 4:32.

The group reviewed the draft minutes from September 22, 2020. Steve mentioned the changes he proposed.

John made a motion to approve, seconded by Dannen; approved by consensus.

The group reviewed the 9/28 Select Board meeting.

Tracy shared an opinion from the Select Board that the request of Department Heads spending time finding 5% in their already zero-based budget was unnecessary. There was concern about the extra work it would create for the Department Heads.

Tracy, as a new member, would like to know the mission of the ABC. The Select Board had already asked for the departments to give a “no fluff” budget.

Steve shared his opinion that the goal of the ABC was to make sure the budget was as lean as possible.

Tracy asked that the ABC look at and review the accounts in detail and make suggestions on specific line items rather than asking for a 5% decrease.

By consensus, the group agreed that the 5% reduction request was not necessary.

Peter asked about the compensation study and what impact it had on wages and benefits. Conner explained that the goal of the compensation study was to align Barrington’s total rewards with comparable communities. Wages and benefits were evaluated. Overall, wages were increased, and a couple of benefit categories were reduced. Barrington’s health and retirement benefits align with comparable communities.

Tracy excused herself from the meeting at 5:58 pm

Conner talked about some changes from the Tax office. The Tax Collector requested the registry of deeds line be reduced to \$1,050 and increase the postage account to \$7,500.

Conner talked about a change for the Town Clerk. The Town Collector requested the postage line be increased to \$900.

Peter pointed out an error on the calculation of Tax wages. Conner will correct.

Steve was curious about what encompasses the \$4,000 expense in Equipment line. The group consensus was that they would like an explanation from the Town Clerk.

Peter brought up the fact that the mileage lines were not brought down at all for Tax and Town Clerk. Conner expects some of the travel would be for the Deputy Tax Collector and that training could be in person. Amy added that the Tax Collector will still be getting mail daily and requesting mileage reimbursements.

Steve wanted to talk about the Select Board's request for the Highway Department to consider a modular unit for their office space and break room. The group felt that 2020 unexpended appropriations would be a good source to pay for this.

Steve has requested for the Road Agent to report on road improvement projects in 2020 and planned projects in 2021. Conner informed the group that the Road Agent will present planned improvement projects to the Board on 10/5 and that properly reconstructed roads have an expected life of 20 years.

Meeting adjourned at 5:59 pm.