

Budget Committee Meeting: December 2, 2021

1. Meeting opened at 6:05 and ended at 8:25. Members present were Elaine Higgins, Tim Biggs Ron Price and myself. Absent were Doug Van Horn. Laura Greeley, and Doug Van Horn Also present were Dyann Anderson, Town Treasurer.
2. We went through General Gov't, the Recreation Committee Line, the Cemetery Committee Lines and the Charitable Organizations Line.
3. Major changes:
 - a. In General Government-Contracted Services, an addition of \$13,000 for an Errors & Omissions Survey which would pay for the Tax Assessor to look at every property in town, take photos if new ones are needed, and in general, make sure all properties are up to date in the town assessment book.
 - b. Also under Contracted Services, \$20,000 was added as a new line for a Clean-Up Fund. This fund, if approved, would be used only in the instance where a property owner refused to comply with an order to remove a building that is defined under the State of Maine Dangerous, dilapidated, and abandoned building Statute. The other instance where this fund could be applied is when a property owner refuses to comply with the Junkyard and Automobile Graveyard Statute, also a State of Maine law. Per state statute, and in an instance where the property owner refused to comply, the clean-up costs and all relevant costs would then be applied to the property tax.
 - c. Under Other Expenses, an addition of \$9500 was added to pay for two heat pumps and a water heater for the town office.
 - d. No significant changes were made to the Public Safety, Recreation or Cemetery Lines.
 - e. The committee did feel that the Freedom Community Historical Society line should be changed from being a separate budget line, where it is listed now, and moved to the Charitable Organizations Line. This would allow the town to treat this organization the same as other private organizations such, that the town would gift the amount annually, without the requirement of the organization having to provide an invoice each time for a specific drawdown. Three other suggestions were made as well. (1) Because the town owns the Town House and pays the light bills, insurance, etc., the gift would be reduced by \$500, and (2) the amount left over in the General Fund from the former Town Historical Society, would be given to the FCHS, and (3) we would expect an annual report before Dec 31 each year, to include a Progress Report, EOY Statement of all funds, Balance Sheet, and plans for the ensuing year.
 - f. We didn't spend too much time on the Charitable Organization line because only six charities had turned in requests at this time.

We agreed to meet again Thursday, Dec 15nd at 6:00.

Steve