

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Approved with changes: \_\_\_\_\_  
Unapproved: \_\_\_\_\_

**Effingham Budget Committee Minutes**  
**68 School Street, Effingham**  
**December 17, 2019**

**Members Present:** Dave Strauss (chair), Theresa Swanick, Leo Racine (vice chair), Tom Hart, Jory Augenti, Chuck Fuller (selectmen's rep).

**Members Absent:** Tim Eldridge.

**Others Present:** Nate Fogg, Mike Cahalane (selectman), Susan Slack, Ian MacMillan (police sergeant).

The meeting was called to order at 6:30pm.

**Minutes**

The Budget Committee (BC) reviewed the minutes from the December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019 meeting.

**A motion was made by Leo Racine to approve the December 10<sup>th</sup> minutes as printed. The motion was seconded by Dave Strauss. The vote was 6-0 in favor of the motion.**

**Old Business**

Dave Strauss confirmed that DRA would provide a presentation to the Budget Committee on Wed, January 22, 2020 at 4:30pm.

Susan Slack (town moderator) was present to discuss the need for voting machines in town. There is a Trust Fund with a current balance of \$3,097. The trust fund was funded one time. The second generation of voting machines will be available soon. The town currently spends approximately \$300 to \$350 to pay folks that count votes at the elections. With more voters and three elections this coming year, it gets harder to find residents willing to count the votes. The upcoming primary will have up to three ballots to be counted.

Elections receive more scrutiny than ever before. The town clerk could not attend the meeting; however she feels that the town should switch to a voting machine within the next three years.

No one is against getting a voting machine, however, all committee members want to know the total cost of purchasing, maintaining, calibrating, and using the voting machine.

Also, with the current budget crunch coming from the school portion of the taxes, could we wait and fund the ballot machine a couple of years down the road. The cost of two ballot counting machines (spare unit required) will be about \$8,000 to \$10,000.

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**Budget Reviews**

**4915 Capital Reserve Funds**

**Planning, Land Use, CIP-** It was noted that the BC approved the Capital Reserve Line for \$1,875, not \$1,000 as indicated on the 2020 Budget Worksheet.

**Voting Machine-** 2019 Budget amount \$0. 2020 Budget request \$3,500.

**Theresa Swanick made a motion to fund the Capital Reserve Fund at a total of \$3,500. Chuck Fuller seconded the motion. The vote was 3-3 in favor of the motion and the motion failed.**

**Dave Strauss made a motion to fund the Capital Reserve Fund at a total of \$1,000. Leo Racine seconded the motion. The vote was 3-3 in favor of the motion and the motion failed.**

**Theresa Swanick made a motion to fund the Capital Reserve Fund at a total of \$2,400. Tom Hart seconded the motion. The vote was 5-1 in favor of the motion. Roll call vote: Strauss- Nea, Leo Racine- Yea, Swanick- Yea, Fuller- Yea, Augenti- Yea, Hart- Yea.**

**Police Cruiser Purchase-** Purchase a police cruiser from the existing Capital Reserve Fund for \$45,000.

**Dave Strauss made a motion to purchase a police cruiser from the Capital Reserve Fund at a total of \$45,000. Theresa Swanick seconded the motion. The vote was 6-0 in favor of the motion. Roll call vote: Strauss- Yea, Leo Racine- Yea, Swanick- Yea, Fuller- Yea, Augenti- Yea, Hart- Yea.**

The total approved from the (4915) Capital Reserve Funds page is \$38,615. (Police Cruiser does not count in total because it is for spending from the CRF not placing money in the fund.)

**4130 Executive**

Current budget \$127,700. Budget request \$148,820.

**Computers:** Debated the need for the 5k computer maintenance contract. Different companies were explored for this contract by the BoS. The town corrected some major computer issues over the past year. Security and backups are now in place and offsite backup data is available. The BoS have hired a computer firm to keep the town's and police department computers up to date with adequate security measures in place to ensure secure data. This does not include the Library computers. The contract is for \$4,890 per year.

**Contracted Services:** The town keeps money available to contract with experts as needed, including wetland permits for culvert and bridge replacement.

**Postage:** The town will begin using a postage meter. This provides a discount in postage and saves manpower getting to the post office for postage.

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**Salary- Selectmen support staff & Salary- Town Administrator:** Increase of 26K due to the addition of contract employee (Accessing) to town employee. BoS detailed the benefits of this transition.

Other lines were reviewed without discussion.

**Dave Strauss made a motion to approve the 4130 Executive budget of \$148,820. Tom Hart seconded the motion. The vote was 6-0 in favor of the motion. Roll call vote: Strauss- Yea, Leo Racine- Yea, Swanick- Yea, Fuller- Yea, Augenti- Yea, Hart- Yea.**

**4152 Assessing**

Current budget \$57,250. Budget request \$57,250.

Level funded as this is the last payment of 5-year contract and total remaining is balance expected for last payment. New 5-year contract starting in 2020.

Dave Strauss made a motion to approve the 4152 Assessing budget request at \$57,250. Leo Racine seconded the motion. **The vote was 6-0 in favor of the motion. Roll call vote: Strauss- Yea, Leo Racine- Yea, Swanick- Yea, Fuller- Yea, Augenti- Yea, Hart- Yea.**

**4155 Payroll Expenses**

Current budget \$65,000. Budget request \$70,000.

The retirement line is for 2 full-time employees. The "Other" line covers Social Security, FICA, Medicare. The new police chief has been hired and is going through a medical review and background check prior to beginning work.

**Dave Strauss made a motion to approve the 4155 Payroll Expense budget of \$70,000. Tom Hart seconded the motion. The vote was 6-0 in favor of the motion. Roll call vote: Strauss- Yea, Leo Racine- Yea, Swanick- Yea, Fuller- Yea, Augenti- Yea, Hart- Yea.**

**4196 Insurance**

Current budget \$108,800. Budget request \$92,000.

The budget includes Health Insurance and the Primex Liability/Workers Comp, & Unemployment Insurance.

**Dave Strauss made a motion to approve the 4196 Insurance budget of \$92,000. Theresa Swanick seconded the motion. The vote was 6-0 in favor of the motion. Roll call vote: Strauss- Yea, Leo Racine- Yea, Swanick- Yea, Fuller- Yea, Augenti- Yea, Hart- Yea.**

**4312 Highway & Streets**

Current budget \$729,500. Budget request \$529,000.

**Paving and Road Reconstruction** Warrant Articles were previously approved.

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**Calcium Chloride** a one-time application this year gave results with less grading. BoS rode the truck and noted an addition amount was required to complete all the dirt roads for the one-time application.

**Materials** amount was increased as the BoS will be using road contractor to do shouldering on new paving which will save money. The 15k of material was purchased at the end of 2019 will greatly help keep the dirt work cost down for the next phase of Green Mountain work.

**Roadside Mowing/ Clearing** is more for clearing than mowing at this point in time.

**Crack Sealing** will be used on paved roads to keep water out of the road base and make the pavement last longer.

Although is was not shown on the budget worksheet, the BoS have approved the \$529,000 budget request.

**Dave Strauss made a motion to approve the 4312 Highways & Streets Expense budget of \$529,000. Tom Hart seconded the motion. The vote was 6-0 in favor of the motion. Roll call vote: Strauss- Yea, Leo Racine- Yea, Swanick- Yea, Fuller- Yea, Augenti- Yea, Hart- Yea.**

**Other Business**

1/14/2020- Warrant Article Review. 2/10/2020- Budget Hearing. 3/10/2020- Town Voting. 3/14/2020- Town Meeting.

The MS-737 will be filled out by the BC and given to Brian to be signed. The BC should have the final budget numbers by 2/18 so that the budget can be signed.

**Next Meeting Date**

The Budget Committee has a review meeting for Warrant Articles set for January 14<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm.

**Adjournment**

**A motion was made by Theresa Swanick to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Tom Hart. The vote was unanimous in favor.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:37pm.