

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

**Effingham Budget Committee Minutes**  
**68 School Street, Effingham**  
**February 4, 2020**

**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), John Meisner (selectman), Ian MacMillan (police sergeant), Randy Burbank (fire chief), Cheryle Feirick (library trustee.)

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

**Minutes**

The Budget Committee (BC) reviewed the minutes from the January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020 meeting.

**A motion was made by Dave Strauss to approve the January 14<sup>th</sup> minutes as printed. The motion was seconded by Chuck Fuller. The vote was 6-0 in favor of the motion.**

The BC reviewed the minutes from the January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020 meeting.

**A motion was made by Dave Strauss to approve the January 22<sup>nd</sup> minutes as printed. The motion was seconded by Leo Racine. The vote was 6-0 in favor of the motion.**

**New Business**

Dave Strauss reviewed the previous years' unpaid taxes. For 2019 there are \$435K in unpaid taxes. This number is likely to drop when income tax refunds are received. 2018 still has \$215K in unpaid taxes and the total amount of unpaid taxes for all years is \$676K.

The GWRSD (school) tax rate is set to increase by \$0.07. There is some skepticism because of previous preliminary numbers being wrong compared to the actual rate billed to the town. Dave Strauss is preparing to check some of their numbers to attempt to verify the increase. Part of the lower than expected rate could be to the number of students being less than previously indicated by the district. (199 students verses the 206 expected.)

**Year End Budget to Actual**

The majority of the mis-posted items in the budget lines have been corrected. The BC considered making changes to several budget lines. Employee Insurance, Street Lights, Compactor Disposal Fees were all left as proposed because recent changes that have been implemented, or changes proposed that may affect them next year.

The BC reviewed all budget questions and reasoning behind the budget levels approved to make sure that all BC members were on the same page for the Budget Hearing on February 10<sup>th</sup>. Chuck Fuller will provide the Police Department PowerPoint presentations to explain and justify the police department budget. The Fire Department also now has 5 vehicles to maintain since the ownership of the Forest Fire Response Truck has been transferred to the town.

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**New Warrant Articles**

Warrant Article #30 to add \$3,500 to the Fire Department Equipment Expendable Trust Fund. The funding will come from the Unassigned Fund Balance and not be raised through taxation.

**A motion was made by Dave Strauss to approve the Warrant Article #30 for \$3,500 to add to the Fire Department Equipment Expendable Trust Fund as printed in the Town Warrant. The motion was seconded by Leo Racine. The vote was 6-0 in favor of the motion.**

Warrant Article #31 to appropriate \$3,785 to be added to the Police Safety and Protective Gear Trust Fund. The funding will come from the Unassigned Fund Balance and not be raised through taxation.

**A motion was made by Dave Strauss to approve the Warrant Article #31 for \$3,785 to add to the Police Safety and Protective Gear Trust Fund as printed in the Town Warrant. The motion was seconded by Tom Hart. The vote was 6-0 in favor of the motion.**

Warrant Article #32 to appropriate \$3,300 to be added to the Transfer Station Recycling Center Capital Reserve Fund. The funding will come from the Unassigned Fund Balance and not be raised through taxation.

**A motion was made by Dave Strauss to approve the Warrant Article #32 for \$3,300 to add to the Transfer Station Recycling Center Capital Reserve Fund as printed in the Town Warrant. The motion was seconded by Chuck Fuller. The vote was 6-0 in favor of the motion.**

All other Warrant Articles have been previously approved by the BC.

A Petitioned Warrant Article was received from the Effingham Public Library Board of Trustees to raise \$1,750 to raise the Effingham Public Library Expendable Trust to \$5,000. The BC discussed the purpose and the requested amount of the warrant article. The amount brought the Expendable Trust to over \$5,000, the example of projects under consideration was questioned as to whether appropriate to expend from this fund, and the responsible party Library Trustees or BoS for such items proposed were all questioned. The BoS had not recommended the article. It was noted that no changes could be made to the wording or amount of petitioned warrant articles.

**A motion was made by Dave Strauss to not recommend the Petitioned Warrant Article from the Library for \$1,750. The motion was seconded by Theresa Swanick. The vote was 5-0 in favor of the motion to not recommend, with Chuck Fuller abstaining from the vote.**

**Other Business**

Dave Strauss shared his budget notes with the BC to have for the Budget Hearing and Town Meeting.

A draft of the MS-737 will be available on February 10<sup>th</sup> for the BC to review.

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**Next Meeting Date**

The Budget Committee will meet on February 10<sup>th</sup> at 5:15pm to approve minutes and take care of any other BC business. At 5:30pm the public hearing on the 2020 Proposed Town Budget will begin. The snow date is February 13<sup>th</sup> at the same times.

The Town Voting will take place on March 10<sup>th</sup> and the Town Meeting will be held on March 14<sup>th</sup>.

The next regular BC meeting will be on April 14<sup>th</sup> to elect officers.

**Adjournment**

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:25pm.