

**SPECIAL MEETING
FARMINGTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Tuesday, January 18, 2022**

The conduct of the meeting will include remote access by telephonic, video, and electronic means. The public may attend in person or by viewing the live stream at <http://mtbluetv.org/program-live-stream-farmington-selectmen.html> or Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/MBTV11/> or by calling 778-5874

Chairman Matthew Smith called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M. with the following members present: Stephan Bunker, Michael Fogg, Joshua Bell, and Scott Landry. Town Manager Christian Waller participated remotely as authorized by PL 2109, c.617. Executive Assistant Nancy Martin, Town Clerk Leanne Dickey, Code Enforcement Officer Steve Kaiser, Police Chief Ken Charles, Interim Fire Rescue Chief T.D. Hardy, Fire Rescue Deputy Chief Tim A. Hardy, Fire Rescue Captain Terry Bell, Parks and Recreation Director Matthew Foster, Parks and Recreation Assistant Direct Jennifer Savage, Public Works Direct Phil Hutchins, Fire Deputy Chief/Town Budget Committee Chair Clyde Ross, Budget Committee Member Judith Murphy, TV camera operator Tom Martin, and members of the press and public were also present. Members of the media and public participated remotely.

ITEM 1: Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

ITEM 2: To Review the Following Proposed 2021 Departmental Budgets:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| A) Treasurer / Clerk | M) Recycling |
| B) Cemeteries | N) Administration |
| C) General Assistance | O) Committees & Events |
| D) Assessing | P) Municipal Building |
| E) Code Enforcement | Q) T.A.N. |
| F) Police | R) Other Protections |
| G) Fire | S) Debt Service |
| H) Parks & Recreation | T) Legal Reserve |
| I) Community Center | U) ADA Reserve |
| J) Public Works | V) Contracts/Public Services |
| K) LORAP | W) Outside Agencies |
| L) Five Year Road Program | |

Stephan Bunker proposed that for time savings, rather than having each Department Head explain the cost of living adjustments (COLA) unless there was a personnel change, the Department Heads not review that section.

A) Treasurer / Clerk

Town Manager Christian Waller reviewed the proposed 2022 Treasurer/Clerk budget for \$418,100 which is an increase over 2021 of \$133,289, or 46.8%. He explained the increases in the COLA, Elections, Personnel/Expenses, and Contractual Services line items.

B) Cemeteries

Town Manager Christian Waller reviewed the proposed 2022 budget for \$3,810 which is a decrease from 2021 of \$92,675, or -96.1%. He explained Cemetery Sexton Ed Vining retires on January 31, 2022. The Town contracted out Sexton services to Wiles Funeral Home, and maintenance will be managed by the Public Works.

C) General Assistance

Treasurer/Town Clerk Leanne Dickey reviewed the proposed 2022 General Assistance budget for \$25,000, which is the same amount as budgeted in 2021.

D) Assessing

Town Manager Christian Waller reviewed the proposed 2022 Assessing budget for \$143,748 which is an increase from 2021 of \$13,251, or 10.2%. Mr. Waller explained the Assessing budget is based on the Town's contract with John O'Donnell and the contributions to the future tax revaluation reserve.

E) Code Enforcement

Code Enforcement Officer Steve Kaiser reviewed the proposed 2022 Code Enforcement budget for \$236,000 which is an increase from 2021 of \$72,407, or 44.3%. Discussion included: COLA, personnel, tenure, and retention.

F) Police

Police Chief Ken Charles reviewed the proposed 2022 Police Department budget for \$1,694,400 which is an increase over 2021 of \$187,612 or 12.5%. Town Manager Christian Waller and Chief Charles explained staffing challenges, officer recruitment, officer retention, mental health training, crime scene investigation education, and the police vehicle reserve.

G) Fire Rescue

Interim Fire Rescue Chief T.D. Hardy reviewed the proposed 2022 Fire Rescue Department budget for \$963,799 which is an increase over 2021 of \$192,646, or 25.0%. Interim Fire Chief T.D. Hardy explained the increase in the Personnel/Expenses, Reserve Account, and Vehicle Maintenance line items. Discussion included: proposed staffing increase of two full-time utility firefighters to cover vacations and reduce overtime pay, health insurance, retirement plans, the department's vehicle replacement schedule, and the Reserve Account balance.

H) Parks and Recreation

Parks and Recreation Director Matthew Foster reviewed the proposed 2022 Parks and Recreation Department budget for \$386,815 which is an increase over 2021 of \$183,473 or 90.2%. Christian Waller explained the Salary/Wage increases. Discussion included: proposed staffing increases and challenges, public safety, employee safety/liability/coverage issues, land and property improvements, increased program hours, pandemic challenges, Reserve Account, and the transfer of line-item expense transfers from the Community Center into the Parks & Recreation budget.

I) Community Center

Parks and Recreation Director Matthew Foster and Assistant Director Jennifer Savage reviewed the proposed 2022 Community Center budget for \$177,888, which is an increase over 2021 of \$51,720 or 35.4%. He explained the increase in the Personnel/Expenses, and Building Repair/Maintenance line items. Discussion included: staffing, contractual services, structural engineering issues/roof replacement, snow load removal, air exchange handlers, and overall liability concerns.

J) Public Works

Public Works Director Philip Hutchins reviewed the proposed 2022 Public Works budget for \$1,841,582 which is an increase over 2021 of \$335,366, or 22.3%. Christian Waller explained the increase in Personnel/Expenses. Discussion included: salary/wage surveys, vacation coverage, proposed staffing increases – (1) office manager, (1) construction foreman, (2) utility/equipment laborers, and Worker's Compensation costs. Mr. Hutchins reported that he has fielded over 250 voicemails in the last three months; it is overwhelming. He has not taken a week-long vacation in over three years, and he is burned out. The proposed staff increases will allow him an opportunity to focus on Director tasks.

K) L.O.R.A.P.

Town Manager Christian Waller reviewed the proposed 2022 L.O.R.A.P. budget for \$154,900 which is an increase over 2021 of \$73, or 0.0%. Mr. Waller explained that this budget amount comes from the State.

L) Eight-Year Road Program

Public Works Director Philip Hutchins reviewed the proposed 2022 Eight-Year Road Program budget for \$650,000 which is an increase over 2021 of \$350,000, or \$116.7%. Discussion included: Market inflation (supplies, materials, pavement, culverts), equipment rental, and contractor prices/availability. Mr. Waller stated it is a dynamic landscape; costs are dependent on the timeframe of getting roads up to speed and prepared for maintenance. Mr. Hutchins stated that contractor availability is an issue; they need to start doing more projects in-house. Stephan Bunker requested a list of roads that are scheduled for repair. Mr. Hutchins reported that the five-year road list is posted on the Town's website.

M) Recycling

Public Works Director Philip Hutchins reviewed the proposed 2022 Recycling budget for \$178,050, which is an increase over 2021 of \$3,438, or 1.97%. He explained the increase in the Personnel/Expenses line item. Discussion included: projected revenue from fees compared to previous years, fee/tipping schedule, and the Norridgewock landfill.

The Selectboard thanked Public Works Director Phil Hutchins for his hard work and dedication.

N) Administration

Town Manager Christian Waller reviewed the proposed 2022 Administration budget for \$306,500 which is an increase from 2021 of \$45,419 or 17.4%. He explained the increase in the Personnel/Expense line items which involves moving certain staff from hourly to salary and adjusting wages for the Executive Assistant and Planning Assistant.

O) Committees & Events

Town Manager Christian Waller reviewed the proposed 2022 Committees and Events budget for \$5,500, which is a decrease from 2021 of \$2,300 or -29.5%. He explained that the request for Memorial Day funding decreased. Memorial Day flags are being reused from year to year.

P) Municipal Building

Town Manager Christian Waller reviewed the proposed 2022 Municipal Building budget for \$94,050, which is an increase from 2021 of \$9,176, or 10.8%. He explained the increase in the Personnel/Expenses. Discussion included: fuel cost, building maintenance, contingencies, and professional services.

Q) T.A.N.

Town Manager Christian Waller explained that the annual request of \$5,000 was eliminated this year. The Town borrows funds from the Wastewater Department instead of implementing a Taxi Anticipation Note. Once the budget is approved at the annual Town Meeting, the loan is repaid.

R) Other Protections

Town Manager Christian Waller reviewed the proposed 2022 Other Protections budget for \$584,900 which is an increase over 2021 of \$22,314, or 4.0%. Discussion included: Insurances, Traffic Light Maintenance, Street Lights, and Ambulance Service line items. Mr. Waller reported that Maine DOT should take over traffic light maintenance in 2023.

S) Debt Service

Town Manager Christian Waller reviewed the proposed 2022 Debt Service budget for \$260,400, which is an increase over 2021 of \$47,832, or 22.5%. He reported that the Town Garage debt was paid off in 2021. Debt service covers the police building and the new fire truck bonds.

T) Legal Reserve

Town Manager Christian Waller reviewed the proposed 2022 Legal Reserve for \$5,000 which is a decrease from 2021 of \$5,000, or -50.0%. The current Legal Reserve balance is \$33,311.98.

U) ADA Reserve

Town Manager Christian Waller reviewed the proposed 2022 ADA Reserve budget for \$2,500, which is an increase over 2021 of \$1,500, or 150.0%. He explained that this line is for future accessibility projects, the current balance is \$11,497.88. Discussion included: the cost of detectable pads for sidewalks, ADA portable bathrooms, and future needs.

V) Contracts / Public Services

Town Manager Christian Waller reviewed the proposed 2022 Farmington Library appropriation request for \$228,000, which is an increase over 2021 of \$22,596 or 11.0%.

Town Manager Christian Waller reviewed the proposed 2022 Gay Cemetery appropriation request for \$1,000, which is the same as 2021.

Town Manager Christian Waller reviewed the proposed 2022 Franklin County Animal Shelter appropriation request for \$16,900 which is a decrease from 2021 of \$172 or -1.0%.

The proposed 2022 Contracts/Public Services group total is \$245,900 which is an increase of \$4,426 or 1.8%.

W) Outside Agencies

Town Manager Christian Waller reviewed the proposed 2022 Outside Agencies requests for \$17,998, which are the same as last year.

Solar Farm Review Projections

Christian Waller provide the Selectboard with a copy of the Solar Farm Revenue Analysis he completed. The average annual tax over twenty years is \$708,902. The average annual tax over thirty years is \$520,826. The total tax revenue over the life of the project is \$15,624,783.

State Revenue Sharing

In response to Stephan Bunker’s inquiry, Mr. Waller stated there are no projected changes in State Revenue Sharing funds. A brief discussion was held regarding the calculation process.

The Selectboard will vote on the 2022 Budget proposals on Tuesday, January 25th; and the Budget Committee will meet on Wednesday, January 26th.

ITEM 3: To Discuss the American Rescue Plan Act Funds (ARPA)

Joshua Bell moved to table Item 3 until January 25, 2022; Stephan Bunker seconded.

VOTE AFFIRMATIVE 5 MOTION CARRIED

ITEM 4: To Approve the Minutes of December 28, 2021

Joshua Bell moved to approve the minutes of December 28, 2021; Stephan Bunker seconded.

VOTE AFFIRMATIVE 5 MOTION CARRIED

ITEM 5: To Discuss Other Business

- A. Christian Waller requested that Leanne Dickey be appointed Treasurer in addition to her duties as Town Clerk, Registrar of Voters, and Welfare Director.

ITEM 5: To Discuss Other Business (continued)

Joshua Bell moved to appoint Leanne Dickey Treasurer; Michael Fogg seconded.

VOTE AFFIRMATIVE 5 MOTION CARRIED

- B.** Stephan Bunker stated he was able to find entities who were spearheading projects to Franklin County Commissioners for ARPA funding consideration. Improvements to the domestic violence shelter, homeless center services, and low-cost childcare.

- C.** Joshua Bell stated he appreciates all the work that went into the budget, but he recommends the Town does not drastically increase the budget. Christian Waller acknowledge there were still some areas to be ironed out.

There being no further business to come before the Board, **Michael Fogg moved to adjourn at 10:07 P.M.; Joshua Bell seconded.**

VOTE AFFIRMATIVE 5 MOTION CARRIED

Minutes respectfully submitted by Nancy L. Martin.

Michael J. Fogg - Secretary