

**Town of Hill
Budget Committee
2025 Budget**

11/6/24 Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Bruce Blazon (Chair), Marshall Bennett (V. Chair), Betty Hanks, Frank Simeone, Tom Angeley, Joann Irving, Bill Machado, Shaun Bresnahan (Sec/Ex-Officio), Wendy Rosa-Fuller (Ex-Officio)

Members Absent: none

Public: Steve Heller

Bruce called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM

Reviewed minutes from 10/30/24 meeting. Bill made a motion to accept minutes as submitted; Frank seconds the motion. Motion passes unanimously (9-0)

Shaun presented the proposed budget for the lines that are managed by selectmen.

4130 Executive; proposed budget is \$103,125 which is \$19,341 more than 2024.

The major increases are:

- \$19,553 Wages Admin. Assistant; current assistant has notified the select board that she plans on retiring August 1, 2025. Wages are budgeted to hire (2) part time positions. One to do the book keeping and the second to do secretarial duties.
- \$260 Audit; it is anticipated that this line will increase more because a hard audit of the books will be required to insure there are no errors transferred one book keeper to another. Audit will be completed prior to August 1.
- \$300 Telephone & Services; this is the phone and internet access for Selectmen's office.

Decrease follows:

- \$2,600 New Equipment; this covered half of the expense for purchasing new copier/printer for town offices.

4152 Revaluation of Property; proposed budget is \$17,856 which is \$26,372 less than the 2024 budget.

Major increase:

- \$456 Assessing; this is an increase in the annual assessing contract for doing pickups for properties that have under gone improvements and review of 10% of properties for 5 year revaluation.

Decreases are:

- \$25,000 Cyclical Update; this covered the 5 year update of all properties in town. There will be a warrant article in 2025 to create a capital reserve account to lessen the impact of the next 5 year update. Overall there was a 111% increase in the assessed

value of the town. Selectmen used \$225,000 from unreserved fund balance which should result in most tax payers seeing a decrease in their taxes.

- \$2,028 Mapping; still waiting for an updated cost for annual updates to tax maps. 2024 was the final year of a 3 year contract. Prior to 2021, tax maps hadn't been updated since 2008.

4153 Legal Expense; \$10,000 which is \$5,000 less than 2024. Although \$20,329 was spent in 2024 the selectmen feel that the two issues driving this expense have come to a close so they anticipate less money needed.

Bruce asked about any zoning issues outstanding? Discussion on issue with his neighbor which will likely result in court action whether it is needed to address zoning violation or the town defending its position. Bruce feels that this line should be increased to \$20,000. Shaun said he will have to discuss at next Selectmen's meeting.

4155 Personnel Admin; \$16,672 which is \$1,358 more than the 2024 budget.

Major increase:

- \$1,358 Workers Comp; increase in annual premium for town coverage.

Other lines have no changes.

Frank asked who is the towns agent? Shaun replied we use Pimex which is a state created pool that municipalities use for their insurance needs.

4191 Planning & Zoning; \$5,395 which is \$1,412 less than budgeted for 2024.

Major increase:

- \$88 Dues; this covers the dues to Lakes Region Planning Commission. They provide support and services regarding land use issues.

Decrease:

- \$1,500 Legal; this had been increased in 2024 in case there was a challenge to the towns decision to deny the Greenacres Gravel Pit application. This hasn't materialized so this line was reduced.

4194 General Govt. Bld; \$23,297 which is a decrease of \$371 less than budgeted for 2024.

Increase:

- \$200 Water; line was under budgeted for 2024.

Decreases:

- \$571 Fuel Oil; contracted price for heating oil has decreased.

4195 Cemeteries; \$8,850 which is \$2,400 more than budgeted in 2024.

Increase:

- \$2,400 for mowing Pleasant Hill Cemetery. The warrant article that was approved to transfer Pleasant Hill Cemetery to the Town of Hill included \$2,400 for the mowing of the cemetery. This has been added to the 2025 Budget. The selectmen will be soliciting bids for mowing in 2025 so this line could change. We anticipate having this completed by the end of December.

4196 Insurance; \$29,150 which is \$3,557 more than budgeted for 2024.

Increase:

- \$3,557 P&L Insurance; increase in premium for the towns property and liability insurance through Primex.

Bruce asked about revenues; when can we anticipate seeing these? Shaun will try to get these for the 11/20 meeting.

Joann asked about the Animal Control line in the police budget and she is concerned that the Police Chief said this was a contracted service with Franklin Animal Shelter. She questions if this a contracted service or a donation in the event that the Police Chief needs to take a stray dog to them. With the population of feral cats and rabbits increasing in town there should be a contracted service to handle this issue.

Marshall renewed his concern regarding the Fire Budget and the \$5,000 for Protective Clothing. He feels there is sufficient gear currently for the number of fire fighters and this maybe too much. Shaun replied that he agrees there is likely enough gear but there could be some gear that is expiring or other issues. Any purchase will likely exceed the \$350 PO limit so the expense will be reviewed and discussed by the selectmen with the fire chief prior to any orders.

Next meeting is 11/20/24 to review the Water Works budget.

Frank made a motion to adjourn at 7:40 PM, Betty seconds the motion. Motion passed unanimously (9-0).

Respectfully Submitted
Shaun Bresnahan; Secretary