



**Budget Committee Meeting Minutes
Monday, February 10th, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.
Bristol Town Office**

Committee Members Present: Terry Lowd (Chair), Richard Frances (Vice Chair), Alfred Ajami, Sandee Brackett, Rob Davidson, Paul DiMauro, Chuck Hanson, Paul Leeman III, Karl McLetchie, Patricia Porter

Committee Members Absent: Alex Beaudet, Prescott Cheney,

Also present: Chad Hanna (Selectboard Chair), Paul Yates (Selectboard), Christopher Hall (Town Administrator), Jessica Westhaver (Deputy Treasurer)

Department Members Present: Paul Leeman, Jr. (Bristol Fire & Rescue Department), Clyde Pendleton and Laurie Mahan (Parks Commissioners), Lara Sargent (Parks Director)

Members of the Public: Candy Congdon (Lincoln County News)

Voting Capacity for the meeting – 10 voting members

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Terry Lowd followed by the pledge of allegiance.

Housekeeping –

- Minutes from the January 14th, 2020 meeting were approved. All in favor.

New Business – Discussion of Parks & Recreation, Fire and Rescue and Town Department Budgets:

- **Bristol Parks and Recreation Department – Clyde Pendleton, Parks Commission Chair, Laurie Mahan, Parks Commissioner & Lara Sargent, Parks Director**
Pendleton, Mahan and Sargent presented the proposed budget for the Bristol Parks and Recreation Department. The Parks Department self-funds with revenues received from admissions and had a net cash position as of December 31st, 2019 of \$267,005.05. Pendleton shared the plans for 2020 as follows:
 - Increase in admission price for the Pemaquid Beach of \$1.00. This will bring the new admission price to \$5.00. Annual resident passes will not increase in price (new passes are \$8.00 and renewal passes are \$5.00).
 - Cleared an additional area at New Harbor Town Landing to accommodate more float storage for additional revenue.
 - New Kayak storage rack at Hanna Landing. This will be available at the owner's risk for storage of personal kayaks.
 - Internet has been added to both the Lighthouse Park and Beach Park.
 - Parks will transition to organic pesticides only for all locations. With this change will be an increase in cost. Pendleton noted this will fall in line with a warrant

article at this year's Town Meeting to mandate all Town properties only use organic pesticides.

- Continue the use of an Estate disbursement received by the Parks Department strictly for use to maintain the Lighthouse Park. These funds will go to offset expenses for the LHP.
- Pendleton moved on to discuss the Pemaquid Beach Pavilion project and funding. As of February, Parks has received \$494,638.20 in revenue:
 - \$369,534.21 in smaller grants, donations & sales revenue
 - \$120,400.96 in LWCF grant reimbursements
 - \$4,703.03 in interest earned

Remaining LWCF Grant funding available is \$179,599.04. This would bring the revenue raised for the project to \$663,575.27. The original estimate of construction was \$776,987 (prior to change orders), which does not include architect fees already paid. The Parks Department anticipate using \$120k from their capital reserves for the remaining cost, however, will request from the Town a line of credit for \$50k as a precautionary measure. It is anticipated the cost of a LOC in 2020 would be approximately \$11,500 (which would only be 6 months of payments). If used, the LOC would be paid down in 4 years.

- Questions from the committee:
 - Lowd – Questioned whether a kayak rack would be a liability and raise the Parks insurance rates? The Commissioners were unsure, but would state the rack would state “store at your own risk”
 - Davidson – Questioned who managed the building at Hanna Landing? It was clarified the Town is responsible for the building.
 - Frances – Questioned the current amount in Parks capital reserve. It appears there is \$360k. Why is this amount not being used for the Beach Pavilion? Sargent clarified certain amounts are restricted for specific projects (\$11,168.42 for playground, \$10k sinking fund for tractor). The remaining funds in their general CD are undesignated. Their current budget shows for \$130k to go into capital reserves for 2020 (\$90k earmarked for the Beach Pavilion from 2019 net cash, \$10k for tractor sinking fund, and \$20k to undesignated funds). There is also \$17,980.25 left in the Beach Pavilion capital reserve account. Frances asked why more undesignated funds are not being used for the project? The commissioners stated keeping undesignated funds available are used as a cushion in case of a lackluster season. Decreased revenue due to bad weather could be detrimental and Parks would like to avoid this type of situation. However, if needed, the undesignated funds could be used as a last resort.
 - Brackett – Reiterated the cushion is good in the event of a bad season. She also stated historically, when fees were increased for admissions and weddings, the Parks would see a temporary decline in revenue. Ticket sales would decline, and wedding revenue would drastically decline, which holds true to current day. Mahan stated the raise in the Beach admission fee would remain lower than the area beaches such as Reid and Popham.
 - Ajami – Stated it was good to keep the cushion. He also pointed out Parks exceeded their revenue prediction for 2019.
 - Hanson – Passed out a report he created going over Audited Cash & Project Funds. This report showed an increase in cash position since 2011.

- A motion was made by Ajami to approve the budget for the Parks & Recreation Department as presented, Hanson Seconded; Leeman, Brackett, and Porter abstained; all in favor. VOTE: Budget Committee Recommends (7-0-3).
- **Bristol Fire and Rescue Department – Paul Leeman, Jr., Fire Chief:**
 Leeman presented the proposed budget for the Bristol Fire & Rescue Department with an increase of 3% to taxation for 2020. Leeman opened with information from the Department for 2019:
 - 2019 saw 491 calls:

▪ 320 Medical	▪ 4 Water Rescues
▪ 41 Motor Vehicle Accidents	▪ 15 Mutual Aid Calls
▪ 51 Fire Calls	▪ 33 Special Duty Events
▪ 24 Fire Alarms	▪ 37 Down Trees (29 involving power lines)
 - EMS calls were down in 2019 in part because of a resident who required multiple responses had moved from town.
 - 823 Hours were spent in training with a total involvement of 6,078 man hours.
 - Bristol fire fighters, as well as many other towns, were able to take part in the training burn of the old Pemaquid Beach building in October. This was an invaluable opportunity for all individuals involved.
 - The ISO (Insurance Services Office) fund carried forward from the previous year were combined into the Dry Hydrant budget in 2019. This will aid in the development of the new dry hydrant in Round Pond, which will be certified by a Geologist. For a dry hydrant to be ISO approved, it must be certified in this manner. An increase in the Dry Hydrant budget line of \$20,000 is in place for 2020.
 - The Fire Department will be applying for two grants in 2020 for upgrades in safety equipment.
 - Leeman also presented positions he is responsible for as full time Fire Chief:

▪ Fire Warden	▪ Safety/Compliance Officer
▪ EMA Director	▪ Constable
▪ Building Inspector	▪ Health Inspector
 - Questions from the committee:
 - Hanson – Questioned duty as Safety/Compliance Officer and if this responsibility is to replace the hiring of an outside professional for compliance services, and if so, would this lower the compliance cost shown in the Parks budget? Leeman stated that it is his responsibility to help all departments with compliance, however, the additional support of Lynn Martin, who works directly with Maine Bureau of Labor Standards, is invaluable. She has more direct contact with the State and sees many different situations in which she can help with additions to future requirements.
 - Frances – Questioned how many run reports from EMS calls has Leeman written? Leeman stated all of them when he has attended a call. It is mandated calls be entered by a responder who attended the call. With the increase in report writing by Leeman, this has resulted in a decrease in the amount of payroll by reducing staff working on data input by approximately \$8k.

- McLetchie – Questioned when the next Fire Truck would need to be replaced and if a loan would be required? Leeman stated the 2003 tanker would most likely be the first in line. He would like to make sure future loans be staggered so two loans would not be required at the same time.
- Frances – Questioned the current standing of the Samoset Fire Companies private trust accounts. Leeman stated there are two accounts at Bath Savings. One which is strictly for EMS which currently holds \$366,016.79 and the other account which is for capital purchases for Fire which currently holds \$1,673,243.52. The second account has the stipulations of only being able to use 70% of interest earnings. In 2019, two large pieces of equipment were purchased from the EMS funds, for the Town.

- Stryker Power Cot - \$14,026.56
- Stryker Chest Compression Machine - \$14,513.77

Future purchased planned from these accounts are:

- New UTV (Approximately \$40k)
- Jaws of Life
- New Rescue from EMS Fund
- Thermal Imaging Cameras

They also have two accounts at First National Bank. A fire account with \$34,423.49 and an EMS account with \$15,361.38. From these funds the expenses and revenue of the blue 911 signs is retained.

- Hanson – Questioned how stipends are currently handled and who received them? Leeman stated as chief, he no longer receives a stipend. He does have a stipend schedule which is paid out by rank designation.
- Ajami – Questioned the number of hours Leeman listed as working hours? Leeman stated he had only taken 32 out of 160 hours of vacation time in his first year as full time. Ajami stated it is important to take vacation time for your own personal health, which Leeman agreed. Ajami built off this question asking if there was enough cushion in the budget in the event of a hazmat or major catastrophe. Leeman believed he did, even with a proposed 3% increase in hourly wages. Many calls, such as home fire response, provides reimbursements from insurance companies. Additionally, the Fire Department has a Emergency Contingency capital reserve account setup for major events that could over expend the budget. Leeman also discussed the new activation of the Lincoln County Rescue Task Force, which would be used in major events. Because this group is organized through Lincoln County EMS, all insurances are covered through the organization without additional cost to the Towns.
- DiMauro – Questioned the current number of members in the department. Leeman believed approximately 38. Of these members, they are all of different levels of capabilities. There were many new members in 2019 who hold previous backgrounds as first responders.
- Frances – Questioned the duplication with CLC Ambulance Service. With the substantial increase from CLC for 2020, are there aspects the BFR department could cut back on. Leeman stated that CLC is not a replacement of the Bristol first responders. Bristol is here to provide basic care in a timely fashion until CLC can arrive and take over for transport and additional care available at a paramedic level. Bristol is only licensed to provide basic EMT care. The joint efforts save time for CLC as basic care

has already been initiated. Hall stated the research and information obtained about creating a Town level paramedic service would severely exceed the costs to continue the agreement with CLC ambulance.

- A motion was made by DiMauro to approve the budget as presented for the Bristol Fire and Rescue Department, Davidson Seconded; Leeman abstained; all in favor.
VOTE: Budget Committee Recommends (9-0-1).

- **Town – General Government – Selectboard & Town Administrator:**

Hall requested the board to review two articles from the 2020 warrant which specifically dealt with the Fish Ladder project and the Roads budget. These would be the only matters discussed at this meeting:

- Hall stated the Town budget will only be up approximately 1.5%, mostly due to the increase in the CLC Ambulance agreement. He believes, along with the Selectboard and the Fire Chief, the cost of CLC Ambulance is worth the services they provide.
- In 2020 there will be less spending of grant money and an increased spending of surplus, which reduces cash balances. In 2019 the Town opened a LOC for \$500k in anticipation of the shortfall between tax commitment and the receipt of tax payments.
 - Anticipated expenses for the construction of the Fish Ladder for 2020 are \$550k. This is for the complete operation and not for cosmetic masonry. The RFP came in at approximately \$755k. Of the proposed budget, \$198,000 would come from Fish Ladder capital reserves and \$77,500 from carry forward. The remaining \$274,500 will come from surplus.
 - The Town is currently collecting stones from residents at the Town garage to help lower the masonry costs. Any cosmetic masonry would possibly be replaced with landscaping until future funding is available.
 - Due to the draw on surplus, the Roads budget article has been decreased to accommodate the additional need of surplus. Only crucial projects from the Roads budget will be completed in 2020, such as paving of Coggins Rd, Fogler Rd & Carl Bailey Rd. Major paving projects will be postponed until 2021.
 - The Selectboard agreed that while the Auditor recommended borrowing while rates were low, they would like to hold off on borrowing for future bridge projects, keeping our borrowing at a minimum.
- Questions from the committee:
 - Hanson – Questioned what dollar amount in surplus would put the Town's cash balances in the red? Hall believed it would be uncomfortable under \$1.2M. With the 2020 Tax Commitment, a raise in the overlay should be expected to accommodate in increasing the Surplus balance. Surplus as of December 31st, 2019 was \$1,209,662.76.
 - Frances – Questioned the difference in amount Wright Pierce provided as a cost estimate for the Fish Ladder Project at close to \$1M when first presented to the Town, where the alternative was presented at \$300K to \$350K. This was not far from the RFP, why was this? Becker Construction provided the RFP, and masonry work was the more substantial increase to the cost. Future plans to make the area into a park with a footbridge over the Fish Ladder will be down the road in a few years as cosmetic work.
 - Davidson – Questioned if the repairs to the Dam were within this budget article. Hall stated the Dam repairs were in a different article with its own budget. Funds from 2019 that were planned to be used for the Dam repairs

were carried over into 2020. Davidson asked if the Dam article included safety repairs? Hanna stated those are planned for in a few years and not this year's budget. The primary focus is to repair the dam to prepare it for the Fish Ladder. Davidson agreed the plan for the Fish Ladder was respectable and agreed that requesting a loan for the project was not the best approach.

- McLetchie – Questioned if the donation of \$200k from last year is included in the Fish Ladders budget and if the Selectboard can spend this without Town approval. Hall stated the budget did include this donation. It was accepted by the Town 2019 and has been carried into 2020.
- No vote was taken on these articles and it was decided to allow the budget committee time to absorb and process the information until the following evenings meeting, when the board would conclude its final vote on all Town warrant articles.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00pm. The committee will next meet on February 11th to discuss and finalize their recommendations on the Town budget and final warrant articles.

Respectfully submitted,
Jessica Westhaver
Staff Liaison

Budget Committee APPROVED: _____