

HUDSON, NH BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Minutes of the October 18, 2023 Meeting

1. CALL TO ORDER - by Vice-Chairman Morin the meeting of October 18, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. in the Selectmen Meeting Room at Town Hall.
2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE led by Police Captain Steve McElhinney
3. ATTENDANCE

Board of Selectmen: Dillon Dumont, Bob Guessferd, Dave Morin

Selectman Roy had an excused absence.

Chairman Marilyn McGrath had an excused absence.

Staff/Others: Steve Malizia, Town Administrator; Jim Michaud, Chief Assessor; Tad Dionne, Police Chief; Dave Cayot, Police Captain; Steve McElhinney, Police Captain; Chrissy Peterson, Recreation Director; Lisa Labrie, Finance Director; Beth McKee, Town Accountant; Jill Laffin, Executive Assistant

4. BUDGET PRESENTATIONS

Vice-Chairman Morin recognized Town Administrator Steve Malizia for an introduction. The Town Administrator began by saying, So as everybody's aware, this is the third evening of our budget review. Tonight we'll be going through Assessing, the Police budget and the Recreation budget. I believe we've gone through all the other budgets, so we'll talk about those budgets, any other budget requests they have and any proposed warrant articles.

I would like to start, I talked to Brian yesterday. He identified an area in the Planning Board, part of the budget. If you recall, the other evening, we removed some monies out of the Planning Department. We have a corresponding removal out of the Planning Board because when he looked at it more closely, he said, gee, we really should do the same thing. So I'm proposing that you make a motion to reduce the account 5572-214, Notices/Newspaper Ads by \$2,000 from \$3,400 to \$1,400. Selectman Dumont said, quick question. Do you have what page that's on? The Town Administrator replied, Land Use tab, Planning Board. See the line there it's got \$3,400. He went on to say, it's reasonable to at least take that down \$2,000. Selectman Dumont replied, no, that makes sense. The Town Administrator then said, because when you look at that same line item, it shows zero. So we think it's prudent. And he identified it. So I just wanted to get it out there because it's just \$2,000 we can remove. Selectman Dumont said, yeah sure I'll make that motion, to which Selectman Guessferd replied, I'll second that motion. Motion carried 4-0.

Assessing (5410 & Warrant Articles G & P)

The Town Administrator addressed the Board saying, now we'll turn to the first presentation of the evening. It's the Assessing Department. The Assessing Department's under tab 5400. This cost center basically is the Assessing cost center. Mr. Michaud is here to answer any questions. I do believe the predominance of this budget is obviously labor and benefits, as we've talked before based on contractual contract numbers. And he has a zero funded budget here other than the labor and benefits.

Town Assessor, Jim Michaud began by saying, Good evening. Steve just took my opening line. Outside of the 100's flat on operating expenses, as Steve said. The 100's would be the salaries and the retirement system and some medical. We have no outside the budget requests. It's fairly flat as far as the budget is concerned.

Vice-Chairman Morin asked, any questions? To which the Board replied, no. Selectman Guessferd added, I looked at this and yeah I'm good.

Warrant Article G - Funding for Property Revaluation CRF

The Town Administrator then went on to say, so then we should turn your attention, he has several proposal articles and I believe if you go to Tab G in the back this is looking to put, I believe it's \$25,000 into the established Capital Reserve Fund for Future Property Revaluations. As you're well aware, we're required by New Hampshire law to revals at least every five years. So what we try to do is put money in this so that we don't get hit with a large bill in say, the fifth year. This also allows us, if we need to do something in the period between the five years, we can we can do at least something. So again, this is a pretty routine, pretty regular request. And the voters have funded it for the last quite a few years.

Mr. Michaud replied that's correct. You you have the amount that's currently in there now. And you know, at five years at \$25,000, it only gets us to \$125,000. So it's kind of important to not take a year off. Right? And so you want to make sure you have enough not just for 2027 if not earlier, but also you're looking at the next one after that a little bit. So you don't have to tap budget necessarily to do it. You can do it off the Capital Reserve.

Selectman Dumont was recognized and said, your estimate. Oh I'm sorry. Go ahead. You're estimating roughly obviously a possible cost of 186,000 for that next one? Mr. Michaud replied, correct. I'm assuming some inflationary effects. You know we principally have two contracts. Right? We'll have one for public utility. That's what we've done in the past. Public utility and cell towers. And then the other one would be for all the other residential, commercial, industrial. Selectman Dumont replied, I'm good. I'll set.

Warrant Article P - Elderly, Disabled & Blind Exemptions

The Town Administrator explained, The other article is under tab P and it actually if it goes forward it'll actually be three separate articles. We're looking, Mr. Michaud is recommending, we revise the Property Tax Exemption for the Elderly, for the Disabled and for the Blind. I think I'll let him speak to it, but I believe it's been a few years since we've adjusted numbers. And given the fact that our valuations rose, we'd like to try to at least be somewhat equitable to keep our residents that need these exemptions or at least keep them qualified.

Mr. Michaud replied that's correct. So the income well, I'll deal with the income and asset limitations first, because when we requalify, folks, we have to do that at least once every five years. So we could do it every year. We do it once every five. And we've we've lost some folks. Right? Our assessment review year was last year. When the State comes in and looks at everything we're doing. And so we're required to requalify and our our income and asset amounts haven't changed since 2018. Right. So now we're talking 2024 right. Six years just on CPI alone on Social Security increases would justify some increase in the amount of the income allowed. So you allow a higher threshold on income for single and married; You A could potentially qualify more people and potentially the people that lost it on our last go around could regain it. I've given a pretty extensive spreadsheet that looks at a lot of area communities, a lot of numbers. You know, we're trying to stay somewhere in the moderate range of the area communities. You could justify going higher right, by based on this data. You know, I kind of went down the middle of the road, moderate approach. I don't recommend an adjustment to the assets. Assets, we're right in the middle range in the assets at \$160,000. And that's usually not what keeps people out. It's the income amounts that keep people out.

Mr. Michaud went on to explain, and then consistent, what we've done in the past, our Blind Exemption amount, the exemption and our disabled amount of the exemption and the disabled income and assets limits, we track the E one, the first level age category for the elderly. So we traditionally track them the same. And not every community has a Disabled exemption. Right? That is really optional. Everybody's got a blind, everybody's got an elderly. So there's a lot of math in there on the second page. And also in my in the text of the memo, I lay out how much it could cost us. Right? So \$50 million in value is, in value, is a penny on the rate. Even with these even assuming a 10% increase we're at like 39-40 million. I mean we're still not at a penny. So that's the the nice part per se, of having a nice big tax base. Right? But also keep in mind that if we do a reassessment and things go south, these things probably aren't going to be lowered. Right? So there's a little bit of a hedge on that. Right? You want to go to too high up. Right? But I think it's a rational basis for supporting. They have to be three separate warrant articles, but for supporting three separate warrant articles to increase those for 2024.

Vice-Chairman Morin asked, any questions? Selectman Guessferd replied, no, I think that makes sense. Seeing no further questions, the Board thanked Mr. Michaud for coming in.

Police (5610-5673)

The Town Administrator said, so the next cost center we're going to be looking at is Police tab 5600. And the Chief is here. Captain Cayot is with him. Chief is here to speak to his budget. So, Chief, what we've done is we've gone through the budgets and at the end we go through the Out of Budget Requests. So budgets, each cost center. And then at the end the Out of Budget Request.

Police Chief Tad Dionne addressed the Board saying, yes, absolutely. Okay. Thank you. First I'd like to single out my appreciation to my Administrative Coordinator, Sherrie Kimble, who couldn't be with us tonight. Captain Cayot, Captain McElhinney, Captain McStravick, Jana MacMillan and Master Patrol Officer Jason Downey and IT Director John Beike, for helping us through the budget. Without their assistance, this would be very difficult.

Chief Dionne went on to say, during the Fiscal 25 year budget process, my staff and I focused on recruitment and retention, training, safety equipment and police facility while trying to keep the same standard of excellence, the police servants, with the level of funding. By the end of this year, we expect to be down, by the end of October, we expect to be down five officers. This year we did hire six new officers. Unfortunately, we have a net gain of one because we've had five retirements or resignations. But I'm very optimistic that we'll hire more before the end of the year, and I'm positive we will hire more in the end of the fiscal year and continue that into FY25 to become fully staffed.

We are focusing on recruitment. That means utilizing best practices to get our brand out to our candidates across the United States. Interestingly enough, the other areas we focus on will also help us with recruitment and retention, and that includes good training, good safety equipment, and an excellent facility. The first six months of FY25 will mark the last year the increase in training that's been put on by the LEAC Commission. When the State government asked us to follow that Commission and increase training hours from eight hours additional for each officer to 24 hours additionally. So that basically is two additional days of officer.... and I say additional training because we already have several disciplines that we have to have training about what in which is firearms, use of force, defensive tactics. Also, while trying to implement this and and get all these new training in, we have to look at training supplies. Those are also cost increases. We try to offset that with grants, with federal and state funded training, and also with asset forfeiture whenever possible. We also concentrated on continuing the need to replace our safety equipment and fund other equipment, which will help us effectively and efficiently police the town. That includes Tasers, body worn cameras, rifle rated shields, AEDs, drones, etcetera. Some of these things will address in an outside budget request.

With the increase in the size of the police facility, we need to focus on increasing costs in order to run this facility. That includes maintenance contracts like for instance, fire suppression, HVAC, the generator. It also includes janitorial supplies, water, gas, electric and yes, thank you. As mentioned before, we will be presenting three outside budget requests for your consideration. The first would be with our safety equipment regarding the Tasers and the body worn cameras. The second will be requesting we requesting with the increase of the size of the building to actually increase facility budget, to maintain the building and run it. And then last would be more safety equipment, our AEDs or automated fibrillation defibrillators are expired in 2025, which means they're no longer going to be supported for repairs and maintenance. So we have to go to a next generation. So we'll be looking to to address that one item as well at a one-time purchase. I'd like to, I know you guys have looked over the budget, so I'd like to just go through it section by section and then present the outside budget requests after that. And I'll be happy to answer any questions as we go along.

The Town Administrator said, so 5610 is the Administration for the Police Department. I believe it starts on page two. Page two is the summary. And again, this one I believe has a -2% on the operating part. And again the labor benefits are just clearly labor and benefits. Most of that's....Chief Dionne explained, so the only I'll quickly note that our Small Equipment Repairs, which is 5610-203, we did we did reduce that for \$500. We finished upgrading all our aging radars. So we were able to reduce that line. And then 5610-214 Newspaper Ads/Notices. We did increase this line by \$500 in order to in order to compete with recruitment. Yeah, we have

to advertise. We use an Indeed.com. We try to use a premium section of that so that we get top candidates, top ad searches. So I don't believe we increased or decreased any other, I'm sorry office. Other Office Supplies 5610-303. We reduced that by \$1,000. That's just based on usage, where we normally do use a lot of DVD and thumb drives for discovery. But body worn cameras, for instance, is a web based discovery for the Attorneys. So we don't we don't need that supply. So we're able to reduce that. And I don't know if anybody had any other questions on 5610. Selectman Guessferd replied, you hit all the stuff I was looking at.

The Town Administrator said, 5615 is his Facility. That's the Police Facility. This is not taking into account he has an outside the budget request for the addition. But this is basically a facility. Again, the operations part is no increase. The labor part is the labor and benefits. Chief Dionne explained, so with 5615, we kept everything pretty much level the way it is, because we do have to address some of the facility concerns in the outside budget. So I don't know if you had any questions on any of those lines in the facility. Vice-Chairman Morin asked, this include the addition? To which the Chief replied, that's correct. Vice-Chairman Morin replied so you'll be okay? Chief Dionne replied, well, the the outside budget request we'll be speaking about that. The Town Administrator added, so that's kind of separately for separate considerations. Selectman Guessferd said this is for the current facility. Chief Dionne agreed.

The Town Administrator said, so 5620 is for Dispatch. Vice-Chairman Morin said, before we get go anywhere. If we're going to have the addition just just the question why didn't we just put it in? The Town Administrator replied, because he couldn't meet the parameters. Chief Dionne agreed adding, yeah, I wouldn't have been able to meet the parameters. Vice-Chairman Morin replied, okay, I understand, but we got kind of no choice. That's why I was asking. The Town Administrator laughed saying, unless you don't open that part of the building. Chief Dionne replied, I think it was procedural, I think. That was my thought we were just. The Town Administrator added, everybody really strove to kind of come in at that level funded. Vice-Chairman Morin replied, understood yep. The Town Administrator added, but the reality is you're going to have to do something.

The Town Administrator went on to say 5620 so this is the Dispatch again a zero increase on the, and they have a pretty modest operating budget. It's predominantly labor over here. And again that's contractually driven with benefits. Chief Dionne asked, any particular questions on Communication? There were none.

Patrol 5634 - The Town Administrator explained, this is obviously the largest account I believe they have, 5634. And they had a slight decline in the operating budget portion. But obviously the labor piece goes up again. It's where folks are on the salary scale, benefits and all that goes with that.

Chief Dionne explained, so in in this particular in our police line, the Sworn Personnel 5630-211, we went from zero up to 15. I'm sorry. What was it, \$1,000. So we had a \$1,000 increase in our blood alcohol tests. So that's traditionally we weren't charged for doing those tests. And we're not only being charged now, but even those have gone up. So we're looking at about \$150 a draw on a serious bodily accident injury. A serious bodily injury accident, which we have, we do have a number of those a year. So certain hospitals charge and certain don't. And if they're being if somebody's being evacuated to a hospital, that's not our call where they're going. So if we end up, if that ends up being the person that we need to request blood from, we're getting charged if they're at a certain hospital. So so that's why we added that there. And then if you do

5630-402 Automobiles - we were able to reduce that line by \$5000. Over the last couple of years we have overspent that line. But it was for the need for a shortage of police cruisers and the ability to get some at a lower value right away. So our our fleet is up to date and we're not, with the shortage of staff, we are just not pushing the mileage per year right now. So we don't we do not anticipate overspending this line at all. We've also been able to upgrade detective vehicles with using asset forfeiture as well. So I don't. And we're going to continue kind of that kind of line. So I don't believe we're going to overspend this at all. We were able to reduce it by \$5000. And I think that covers the changes we had in that. But I don't know if there's any other questions on.

The Town Administrator added, but bottom line, you were still about 1% less than last year. And the predominant like I say, is labor accounts, the benefits and salaries. But when you have vacancies, we have to budget for those vacancies with with the max benefit package, because you may attract someone that has that.

And if you recall, we also had that petition to article to add the the officer. So that's now in the budget. Just so you're aware that it'll also be in the default budget because the voters voted for it. So just just pointing that out, it's not just in this case just benefit. Just, you know, there are some vacancies. We have to just plan for those accordingly.

So after that it's 5640, Investigations - This is just purely operating budget. I believe there's no salaries here. And it's the same number he's got the same year over year. Chief Dionne added and in particular 5640 the only we overspent one of the lines. 325 and that was because we we bought a fuming changer for the new addition out of our crime scene line. So that was just an expected.

The Town Administrator continued with Animal Control 5650 - I know we all know what a great job the Animal Control Officer is doing. Chief Dionne agreed saying, that's true. Very true. Yeah we had no changes on that one. The Town Administrator replied, yeah, no changes on the operating budget. Selectman Guessferd said, large salary and benefits amount but that's that's. The Town Administrator replied contractually. To which Selectman Guessferd replied yep.

The next one would be Police Information Systems. This is the it that we talked about last night with Mr. Beike, so I believe we're all set. We should be all set I think was....no, pardon me. That's not the that's not the IT, that's your Records Division. So basically has the two, the two full time clerks and you have a part time clerk. Chief Dionne replied, for that? No, that's in the prosecutor one. So yes, it's two full time clerks. The Town Administrator added and that's basically salaries and benefits. They have a \$200 operating budget. So that didn't that didn't change.

Support Services 5671 - The Town Administrator said, I believe there was a modest increase here. The Chief explained, yes if I could in line 237, we added \$5,000. That is our Training budget. That is the expectation that with the additional hours, 2024 marks the year, the calendar year marks the last year for the LEAC increase in the training, additional training hours that officers need. So that obviously would be the first portion of fiscal 25. So we added \$5,000 to budget anticipation for that. question.

Vice Chairman Morin asked the Chief, under that, did you add any wellness training training since we've got the Wellness Officer and we can do stuff with that? Chief Dionne replied we're sending the Wellness Officer this year to Florida for a conference. So we anticipate continuing training with him all the time. He's also he's he's constantly searching for like right now he's he's identified training for our peer to peer support. He's identified training for our our our Critical Incident Stress Team. And he's in the process of trying to come up with a policy for a Critical Intervention Team. So we're he's working that all the time. We have a line as well for the wellness position. It's a modest line of \$1,500 as well that we have added to the budget. So yes, in essence, yes, that he would be part of that training. Vice-Chairman Morin then said, okay, so next year we should expect something to see that everybody's getting some type of wellness? Chief Dionne replied, everybody gets wellness training. Vice-Chairman Morin replied, right. But but there's got to be outside stuff that we can bring in. Now that we've got somebody to coordinate, that we can do some much better training and so much more, more care for our people. Chief Dionne replied, yes, yes. And I think it's funny, we actually had this conversation yesterday. He's looking at, he's looking at a contractual issue with an outside person now. And we're looking at seeing what we can do there. He just sent me it yesterday. Vice-Chairman Morin replied, I know that it's been was brought to me that there was a I don't even know what it's called, tell you the truth, Chief, but one of the firefighters had pursued it through the Fire Department. Chief Dionne replied that's what I'm speaking of. That's what it is. Selectman Morin replied, all right. Chief Dionne added, so, yes, we're on the same. Absolutely. Chief Dionne asked, any any other questions on services 5671? Selectman Dumont replied, I guess just just an explanation so that the \$1,000 increase on Other Professional Services. Chief Dionne replied, yes. Good question. So thank you. And I don't know why I didn't highlight that one. Right now the exams in order to get a valid reliable exams. The price has gone almost through the roof. And we still need for entrance exams and promotional exams a valid reliable exam. So we are we're Cpt. McElhinney shops around for them but we came up with the best options. There's still an increase in the budget line and that's why we added that. Selectman Dumont replied, yeah I mean it's right below that obviously the Office Supplies you took away a thousand. So you know washes out. But I just figured I would ask just because it's in there. Chief Dionne

replied, that's correct. And I think we actually added the Wellness line at 340 as well. The \$1,500 for that as well.

Selectman Guessferd was recognized and said, this is just more of an editorial thing, and I've seen it in a few other places later on as we go through your budget under under 340, it's \$1500 and it goes to \$1500 and it says 100% change. So some math issue, some software issue there or something. Chief Dionne replied I don't know where. The Town Administrator replied probably because it was zero the years before. I think it's a relatively new thing. But year over year it should just be the same. Selectman Guessferd replied, yeah I just yeah, there's a few of those in the, in the budget. To which the Town Administrator replied, no matter how much you look at this there's always so yeah. At least it doesn't say zero divisible by zero because sometimes that shows up. It drives me nuts.

Crossing Guards 5672 - I believe you have a full complement of crossing guards. Chief Dionne replied we have a couple of posts that are open, but we do have a full we're at, I think nine now. So we have a few posts open. We have a good applicant right now that's in the process as well. So we're we're very close. Selectman Guessferd replied That's great to hear. Chief Dionne replied it is good. Very good news.

Police Prosecutor - Chief Dionne explained, prosecutor, legal clerk, victim witness advocate. Those are all full time positions with benefits and the part time legal clerk.

The Town Administrator replied and again, the operating portion is zero. And it's actually pretty modest on the whole budget. I think it's 2/10 of a percent just because of the mix of who's in there. Sometimes you put different people in, they have a lower salary, so it works out pretty well. And I believe our Prosecutor is working out very well. Chief Dionne replied, very well.

Selectman Guessferd was recognized and said, I have a question. When you look at the 1XX salary and benefits number for FY24, it says \$373,000. Then you go down below it says 393,714. I did the math and I guess it should be \$393,714 I'm not sure why that number up in 1XX for FY24 is \$20,000 plus lower. Chief Dionne replied, that's a good question. Selectman Guessferd then said, I mean, I added up all the numbers on the previous page for all the benefits and the salary, and it came up to the \$393,000. The Town Administrator replied, they call that a gotcha. Selectman Guessferd replied, yeah. Well again I know I'm being picky. Chief Dionne replied, no, no, no, that's quite all right.

The Town Administrator then said, \$396,938 was the number though. Bottom line. Selectman Guessferd replied \$394,000 the .2%. Vice-Chairman Morin asked, anything else? Selectman Guessferd replied, not on that section, no. Selectman Dumont replied, I'm good. Thanks.

The Town Administrator then said the last piece is the Police Station Debt Service. As you're well aware, we bonded that. So we have a bond schedule, it's a 20 year. This is year two. So just you're clearly seeing last year and then this year. Every year the the interest declines. So you're paying less interest. I believe it's a pretty level principal payment. So the principal payment will be the same. But interest you had the highest interest the first year. By the end of this you'll be down to like \$10,000. But for now, we have to amortize this over the 20 years. Selectman Guessferd said, another one of those 100% ones. The Town Administrator replied yeah, because it's the first year. You know, next year it'll. Selectman Guessferd replied, well, no, I mean, it says 100% and the numbers are the same. The Town Administrator replied yeah, it is the same at the top. Yeah I know yeah I agree.

The Town Administrator went on to say so after that, the IT piece which Mr. Beike spoke about last night. That's the 5677. So I believe we covered that.

Outside the Budget Requests

Costs Associated to Police Facility Expansion

The Town Administrator started off by saying, And this is the cost associated, I think, with the expansion of your facility, that's what we have on the book. The expansion of the facility. Okay, so I think it's the \$33,076.

Chief Dionne replied, okay, great. So on this one I do you all have a worksheet? I'm going to give you a new worksheet because I made an error in my math. Sorry.

Chief Dionne explained, my original memo to the Board had a total increase of \$33,000, etcetera. The actual number is it should be \$35,176. And the error was made in a subtotal on the worksheet for the Professional Services highlight. I subtracted \$2100 when I should added, so the subtotal of Professional Services should be, \$3,376.66. And that's where my error was. So but anyways, that's why I've passed out the new one. Essentially what I did was, what we did collectively was we took the size of the old building, added the expansion, got our gross square foot of 19,950. That represents an approximate 43% increase in the size of the building for us. So taking our actual expenses, for instance, in utilities, we took our actual expenses from from FY23, if we had the numbers at the time, we multiplied that out by the 43%. And that's what we gave the additional, the additional amounts that we would need. In 5616-206 for electricity, 5615-207 for water and sewer, 5615-210 for natural gas under utilities. And that represents what I do is more or less I rounded those off. So we would be asking for \$29,800 in the utilities lines. I don't know if you had any questions on that part of it.

Chief Dionne went on to say, then on Professional Services, obviously we have maintenance contracts. We were able to get a quote at the time we were putting the budget request together from PELMAC Service our security. So they were able to give us a quote. Everyone else was not able to come up with a quote at the time. So again, we used the same allocation to try to come up with that number. And we were looking for an increase in the Professional Services line of \$3,376, based on using the same PELMAC CINTAS and train, I should say, with CINTAS is our fire extinguishers, we were able to figure out how many we need for the building because they're already there. There's six new ones going into the building. So we figured out the average price for maintenance per cost, and we just we multiply that out to get that. That's a \$96 increase for the fire for the the fire extinguishers. But the total on that on the Professional Services line was \$3,376. And I don't know if anybody had a question on that.

And then the last one was Janitorial Supplies. This is a double a double conundrum. At this point, Janitorial Supplies have gone up almost 100% for toilet paper, paper toweling, things like that that we're using all the time, some of the cleaning products. But that said, we're already we've already overspend those lines the last couple of years because of that, we're we're we're still shopping around for for a less expensive product, as long as we get the same quality and quantity and often they they end up selling you less and charging you less. And wait a second, they're not apples to apples. So we got to be careful as we're trying to do it per sheet, per box, per pack and make sure we're getting the same. But anyways, what we did was took our actual from FY23, multiplied that by the 43%. And that's what we came up with the extra \$2,000 and that. And then of course, the total increase for the Professional Services/Janitorial Supplies and Utilities would be we were requesting \$35,176. And I know this is an estimate.

Vice-Chairman Morin asked, any questions? Selectman Guessferd asked, can we just put this in the budget? I mean, it doesn't make me, you know, think we need to. Vice-Chairman Morin replied we got no choice. The building will sit there and the Chief replied, we'll close it when it gets cold. Selectman Guessferd replied then you got to buy blankets. Vice-Chairman Morin added, we'll have the fans from the old building blowing heating for the new one.

Replacement of AED's

Chief Dionne explained, essentially our Automated Emergency Defibrillators are expiring in 2025, which is support for both software and for supplies and repairs. So we're we use currently we use G3 Cardiac Science automated ones. They were bought out by ZOLL. So there is a generator G five. That's the one we're looking for. It's a next generation of G5 Powerheart. It's the next generation up for that one. So we'd be using a product we're already familiar with. It's very user friendly and for a very small price which we have in the budget already, I can get the adapters for Fire. And I've already been in contact with with Deputy Chief Paquette. It's inexpensive and instead of us buying an adapter for every ad, we'd just buy the four that they would need. We'd buy it from our budget, give it to them for that. So we would we would have that ability to while we're working a patient, the Fire shows up. Let them take over with advanced treatment. They can they can use the same pads and same product and just hook theirs up at that point. So the the quote we received was for

\$18,975 for that. And we were looking to add that to the outside budget request so we could bring our 11 up to date.

Vice-Chairman Morin asked, Chief Dionne, could you explain we had talked about this real quick the other day. Can you explain to everybody so everybody hears what they're doing now about putting limits on how long this equipment lasts and things of that, why we have to keep replacing all this stuff. The fire department's in the same boat that.

Chief Dionne replied, I would imagine the manufacturer is thinking at some, every one of these has some sort of life cycle, and they don't want to warranty us or backers after they reach this certain life cycle, or they're facing new technology. So they're producing a new product and they're getting behind the newer product. And at that point they're stopping at some point, the support of their older products because like our Tasers, my older Tasers would have still worked, but they no longer will warranty us. They had like a \$10 million insurance policy with Tasers if they back you in a situation where it was properly used. So when they when the software is outdated and they're telling you we're not backing this anymore, that's that's an important risk aversion for us that we need to we need to go with the new. That's why we had to buy new Tasers. And we're faced with the same thing with with any product that has technology. And that's one of the reasons even body worn cameras, it's going to be the same thing. You know, the good thing we can get into a limited contracts with body worn cameras, but it's the same thing. They're all going to put out new generations, better product. And at some point they're the manufacturer is telling us when the life cycle is when it's the same thing with rated shields, they give you a lifespan for the shields for like five years. And it's like, I'm pretty sure they probably still stop something, but how do I, you know, how do we go home to someone and tell them, hey, we were using expired shields and they didn't work if something happens. But I'm pretty sure.....Selectman Guessferd interjected saying it's risk management, I mean it. Vice-Chairman Morin added, and it forces our hand. I mean, and you've got to have this equipment. Chief Dionne replied everybody's up against it. We are trying to offset that. Like for instance, we have some great heavy duty rifle rated shields, which we bought with asset forfeiture last year to help bring that bring, you know, bring those into into play without having to cost the taxpayer a cent. So but yeah, that's that's kind of where we're at. And for this, you know, when you look at that as percentage of our operating budget when it comes to someone's someone's life or something. The Town Administrator asked, and they're in the cruisers, correct? To which the Chief replied, yes. We use 11 to go out on patrol and we actually have one in the building. We actually have a generation five in the building already. So that's not expired. We don't have to replace that one.

Service Agreements for Tasers & Body Worn Cameras

Chief Dionne explained so we still have an existing contract with the Axon for our Taser7. And with Body Worn by Utility you still have existing contracts with them. FY25 will mark our last year in the contract with Body Worn by Utility, and we'd be on the hook for them at \$69,953 for for the body worn cameras and for Axon for the Tasers, our contract for that year would be \$35,293. We have typically gone through a warrant article on this over the last few years for this this amount, we're trying to get it into the budget and as an outside request, because these are expenses that we have to pay every year.

I don't foresee body worn cameras going away. I think that just even speaking of the supervisors and the lieutenants, it's helped. It really helps us just even with a complaint against the law. We were talking about it today. You know, one of the officers was being rude. We play the video. They weren't being rude. We even asked people they want to watch it. They don't want to watch it once we tell them we have it on video. And and that's just one aspect. I mean, there's been training value in it. There's certainly transparency. You know, it certainly helps us with discovery. And so it's been it's been great on that aspect as well. And you know, instead of us trying to present a case where we're, you know, something happened and this person really had a had a bad effect and started kicking out our cruiser windows. We have it on video now. So it's a little bit different when you can see what what the officers are kind of facing when they're out there. So I don't foresee that going away. It was one of the recommended unfunded but recommended at the time mandates from the LEAC Commission, as well as to have body worn cameras. It was the only one we hadn't accomplished at that time when we got them. The Taser7 are you know, it's an it's an excellent option in a very bad situation that is less lethal. So.

The Town Administrator then said, unfortunately we didn't make it into the budget because to default budgets. So it kept being outside outside. Last year I believe we funded it by putting money in the reserve fund and then immediately withdrawing it. Chief Dionne replied that's correct. That's what we've been doing. The Town Administrator added it's never been in the budget. I can't put it in the default budget is the issue. You may also consider, if you're looking at this maybe on Tuesday or whatever, maybe another warrant article where we're trying to put the money in the reserve fund. We do the same thing we did last year. That way you hopefully the voters vote for it. I think they see the value in it, but that's something we can discuss. That's how we did it last year. You could certainly put it in the budget. My concern, if it's if you go to default, it comes out and then we have to find the money for it. So I'm just trying to play the odds. And they supported capital reserve funds last year. Maybe that's the way to go for this year. I'm just suggesting it. But certainly we can discuss it. Selectman Guessferd replied, yeah, yeah. Because I mean, if you had it like last year, it's highlighted. So people see it, they know it, they understand it. Yeah. But if it's just an additional cost in the budget it creeps that budget up a little bit more at some point, there's a, there's a place where the citizen goes, no. The Town Administrator replied, we clearly, I think we clearly need this and this will be the fifth year. So it's not like we're giving these back. But I'm just trying to look at what your odds are if you do it one way versus the other way. So just a thought for when we get to that.

The Town Administrator then said, and I don't think you have any warrant articles. To which the Chief replied, I do not have any warrant articles this time. No I don't. We might have one I guess. The Town Administrator replied, well that would be a Board decision. But you didn't have anything else on top. To which the Chief replied, No, I do not. Seeing no further questions for the Chief, the Board thanked Chief Dionne, Captain McElhinney and Captain C

Selectman Guessferd then said, you guys were at the top last year. Got the facility. Chief Dionne replied it's changed a lot since you've been so you got to think about coming back. It's just unbelievable right now. Selectman Guessferd replied, I want to come back over. Chief Dionne added, we're starting to see finished millworks going in and now it's really coming to life. You know, drop ceilings hanging. It just looks good. It's starting to look nice. Selectman Dumont said, it's all starting to tie together. I was watching the videos. It looks great. Chief Dionne thanked the Board. Seeing nothing further the Board thanked the Chief for coming in.

Recreation (5810-5839)

The Town Administrator explained, so Chrissy is here for the Recreation budget, which we all know. We all know the programs that that the Recreation Department puts on. There's a lot of excellent programs for a wide range of citizens, from seniors to little kids. I believe Chrissy has two out of the budget requests. Because she has so many small departments, it's probably best to take those as we complete the major departments. So her first department would be Administration, which starts on page one. And that's 5810. That's Chrissy herself, her administrative folks, the salary and benefits. And I believe it's down one and one half percent for the operating piece of it.

Vice-Chairman Morin asked, any questions? Selectman Guessferd said, there's two small accounts that have. One of them went down. One of them went up the Lodging and the Registration Fees for conferences, basically. Ms. Peterson replied, yes, exactly. it's just kind of flipping due to the inflated fees for them. So just kind of swapped it a little bit.

Outside the Budget Request - Convert Two Recreation PT Office Assistant Positions to One Full Time Position

The Town Administrator then said, so one of the outside the budget requests pertains to this cost center. It's to take the part time Rec office assistant. And I believe you had two. Two part time and make it into one full time. If you look at the scope and what they do in the year round nature of the recreation programs. And again, this is many years ago, started as a part time gig for the Recreation Director. It's been full time. I think Christy will speak to you, but I believe it believes it's time to consider going to full time so we won't have to part time. We'll just have one more full time. And I think that would work for your department. So she's provided, the Rec Directors, provided the rationale. We've done the cost. And there's also the job description to give you examples of the duties. But it's a small but mighty department that has a lot of activity. And not only that, but

they you know, they will backstop the Senior Center, for example. So it's not just sitting in the office, it's going over to the Senior Center. If you do any of the programs, you'll see them there at night. You'll see them at the comedy, you'll see them on the field. So there's a lot that goes on here. And I won't speak again for you, but I'm just trying to point out that it's, you know, there's quite a lot that happens there.

Ms. Peterson then said, I appreciate that. Everything you said is absolutely true. We do have two part time positions, currently. We one position is currently open though. So I'm requesting the Board to consider to transfer it to one full time position and replace of the two part time. Just to offer a little bit of history. I believe it was FY16. It might have been FY17. The voters had voted to make the part time office assistant position full time. So as a result, the insurance benefits were added into the budget a couple of years later the former recreation director director at the time had restructured the staff and essentially divided the full time position into two part time positions. Kind of like a job sharing. Now, fast forward to current days and looking at FY25, based on the growth in the needs of the department, it would be more conducive and cohesive to have a full time person rather than a part time person or two part time people. Essentially two part time people work different days, different hours, and you kind of get into that situation where the left hand is not talking to the right hand. So it just kind of keep things running a little bit more consistently and absolutely be a huge help for me. So due to due to the two part time positions already being, the salaries being in the budget, my request is specifically for the insurance benefits to be put back into the budget, which at most, depending on which benefits and insurance packet should be at most \$41,000. The Town Administrator then said, again, because we max out.

Ms. Peterson asked, anyone have any questions? Selectman Dumont replied well, I guess just just for clarity. So by putting those two positions together you're looking at someone with an average annual salary around \$37,000. Ms. Peterson replied, yes.

Facilities - The Town Administrator explained so the next cost center would be the Rec Facilities. This is the Community Center. But this is 5814. Page 10. And I believe it's got a modest increase because again, supplies and the maintenance things go up. Fire Alarm Maintenance whatnot. Again, this is the Community Center which gets a lot of usage. Ms. Peterson said, it's also the Senior Center too. The Town Administrator replied, Pardon me, I forgot. Yes. It's the Senior Center too. Any questions?

So the next center will be the Supervised Play. This is the big summer program. It's cost center 5821, I believe. Again, it's a modest bump up into some of the field trip costs that we have. Those are pay as you go. So I will also point out that we've budgeted \$160,000 of revenue for this cost center. So those are summer fees. Those are cookout fees. Those are field trip fees. Pay as you go. So for a budget of \$122,913, we're getting \$160,000 worth of revenue. She has an outside the budget request for this because I believe, and I'll let you speak to it, But I believe we're looking at increasing counselors and whatnot. Ms. Peterson replied, correct. Counselors and operational costs.

Outside the Budget Request - Increase Supervised Play Operating Costs and Increase Salary

Ms. Peterson explained, so the Recreation Department, the summer program has been running for two, two summers now since it was closed during the Covid 19 pandemic for a couple, a couple of years. With that said, the current budget is not reflected to the inflated fees that have occurred since 2020. Minor increases, of course, have been made over the past few years within the budget parameters and restrictions. We, of course, also had a couple of default budgets in there as well, but it's definitely becoming increasingly difficult to continue to provide a quality service to the public with, with the current budget. So my request does kind of increase both or suggesting to increase both the seasonal salary portion as well as the operational costs.

I would like to add that this past summer we had record breaking numbers. We had over 500 kids registered. We've never come close to that. In the past to look at the summer itself. It does cross over fiscal years, but if you were just to look from June to August for our eight week program, we had record breaking revenue of \$180,000, which is \$50,000 more than in the past. So I very proud of the program, but as I said, it's just becoming a little bit challenging to kind of keep up with the inflated fees. So this past summer, I did have to decrease a couple of the field trips that we go on due to the transportation, the bus fees, mileage, depending on which trip would kind of kill us a little bit. So I had to be very selective which which location we would go on

and kind of consider keep everything a little bit closer, which is not a bad thing, but even the vendor fees of the locations, that became a problem too. So looking at this year, worst case scenario, if we kind of kept things where it is now, I'd be afraid that we would have to cap the amount of participants. And I really would not want to do that because it's it's no...Ms. Peterson asked Vice-Chairman Morin, do you have a question? To which he replied, I don't but I'll wait til you're done.

Ms. Peterson continued saying, And then the other portion would just be the, the, the salaries portion to kind of keep a safe counselor to child ratio, especially on field trip days, which are our biggest trips. We usually run two different field trips for younger kids, one for older kids. It's really critical that we keep a safe number. I this part of this proposal is to add an 18th counselor to the lineup. We currently are budgeted for 17 counselors, 4 CIT's and then a few substitute counselors and CIT's as well. And then the other the other half of that would be the current salary ranges from \$13.25 to \$14.00 for our full time counselors. And part of this proposal is to increase the hourly rate for the counselors, the full time counselors of the eight weeks to \$15.00 an hour. I think it's important to kind of get to a competitive, somewhat competitive rate to attract and secure qualified people. You know, the staff that we have is essentially they're the ones that are responsible for the safety of our young community members. And I think it's important to put a value on that, so.

Vice-Chairman Morin then said, just so I'm understanding you, we're making more on this than we're spending? Ms. Peterson replied, yes. The Town Administrator added, right now we've budgeted \$160,000, even with this addition to the budget we're still less than....inaudible. Selectman Morin said, that was going to be my question. The Town Administrator added she took in even more money next year.

So we're conservative when we estimate okay. So with with the budget that she's proposed with this addition, you're still under the \$160,000 of revenue that the program itself is generating. Vice-Chairman Morin replied, and I just wanted to make that clear. And the other thing is, if we add this on, is there going to be any increase to the summer campers that we have come in? Will there be an additional charge because we're raising the budget? Ms. Peterson replied, I mean, it's something that we could consider. I think that the rate that we're at now I'm comfortable with it moving forward. You know, we've increased it, you know, pre-COVID. So I think it will be okay. Vice-Chairman Morin replied, All right. I just want I just want to make that clear so people understand that we're really not raising the budget. We're covering this okay. Thank you. Any questions.

Selectman Guessferd replied, yeah. It's funny, as I went through your budget, the thought came to me immediately that, you know, you're going to need some increased staff or something to cover the record numbers. As you mentioned, you had record numbers, and I was glad to see that you had you had thought through this and added this in here. You know, obviously the thing you want is you want safety for the kids, right? So did you experience this summer were there were times when it was kind of overwhelming for the counselors a little bit? Ms. Peterson replied, I wouldn't say daily when we're at the Community Center, which is, you know, where we have the program. Where it would get a little bit trickier, it would be on on a field trip because the participants, the parents, the community, they do not need to tell us that they're coming. It's basically drop in, you know, you register, you can come at any point except for field trips. We obviously have to pay ahead of time. So we know, like let's say 150 are going on one trip, 100 are going on the other trip. But then that leaves an unknown number that are just going to come in and not go on the trip and stay. So we always have to keep a 1 to 10 ratio. You know that the field trip place is always kind of suggest 1 to 12, but we shoot for 1 to 10. You know, it makes me feel a little bit better as well. But I did have some some substitute counselors, some substitute CIT's. So that kind of helped with having extra bodies at obviously at the Community Center. And then I'm a body as well. So you know, we factored that in as well. So but yes. So it does get a little bit a little bit difficult. And sometimes the staff you know it's an eight week program. A lot of them are college students. So you know we do face, you know, their own vacations and things like that too. So yeah. Selectman Guessferd replied, okay. Yeah. No that's that was good. It was well thought out I'm happy with that. Thank you.

Vice-Chairman Morin asked, anything else? Selectman Dumont replied, I just want to make sure I understand. So the total outside the budget request is at the \$30,000 or is it all line items added up together. Ms. Peterson replied, so the total budget request for that one is \$30,000. I just broke down. Operational costs would be \$12,000 and then eight. Did I do that right? And then \$18,000 for the salary.

Selectman Dumont replied, yeah. I just want to make sure looking at it that it wasn't obviously the, you know, the seasonal salaries, transportation and everything else you have listed above. So at first when I was looking at I was like, well, that's a lot more than \$30,000. And then I see the just the bottom line supervised increase. So I just want to make sure I understood it correct. I'm good. Thanks.

The Town Administrator went on to say, Ball Fields 5824 - if you're all good with that, the next one is ball fields. Again, we produce revenue. This was a slight decrease. Probably a couple less softballs or something. But this is 5824. And again this is the men's and women's predominantly the men's and women's leagues for softball which are very (inaudible).

Next one has 5825, I believe is the Instructional Tennis again a popular program. But we basically we don't hire folks. We hire an organization that tennis association that takes care of it. But it's been very popular with all age groups, right? Ms. Peterson replied, all age groups, including adults. So it's a collaborative program. So it's great.

The Town Administrator said, next 5826 is Lacrosse looks like a decline there. And some of the some of the costs again pretty modest. Just a coordinator type salary. And then everything else is program related dues fees equipment. But again a reduction of looks like what.

Vice-Chairman Morin asked, any questions on any of those before we move on? There were none. The Town Administrator went on to say, Basketball which is 5831, probably one of our most popular programs, if not the most popular. Ms. Peterson said, it's definitely up there. Soccer too. Extremely popular. Selectman Guessferd said, amongst the adults as well. Very competitive. The Town Administrator said, extremely popular. So all age groups I mean all age groups. Ms. Peterson said, actually we started a senior basketball as well. So we very young first grade up to our senior citizens Yep. So very popular. The Town Administrator then said, and then Soccer, which is equally very, very popular. I know because I coach both through my, through my years, years ago. Again, that's pretty straightforward budget there. I think it's slightly up, but you know, ref fees and whatnot. Ms. Peterson added, and that's really just to account the numbers being up in general. More balls, more trophies, everything. So. Selectman Guessferd asked, does this represent an increase in the membership and the participants or just an increase in fees for referees and things like that? Ms. Peterson replied, no, it's actually the the participants, to be honest with you. I mean, I did slightly increase, but it was last year, so it wasn't actually this year for the referees but the participant numbers, we have 580 kids playing. So last year we broke a record with having 500. This year we're we're through the roof. But with with that comes more trophies, more shirts and all that stuff to buy.

The Town Administrator said, I believe the next cost center is the senior, the Senior Center just we have the Senior Coordinator in there. So salary and benefits. And I believe the budget itself had a very modest decline of about 4.7%. Selectman Guessferd said, just a couple of things. Just one of the two that that kind of standout are telephone and equipment rental. This is a Senior Center, right? Ms. Peterson replied, so the telephone, telecommunications, the 5835-208 part of the the telephone was being actually billed under the summer program, under subscriptions, which we don't have that account. So this year I moved it back to where it should be. So that's that's the increase for that.

Selectman Guessferd said, the other was 221- Equipment Rental. Ms. Peterson replied, that is the lease amount. We went to a smaller copier. Selectman Guessferd replied a copier okay. And then we have that pesky 100% that came back again.

The Town Administrator said, next is Teen Dances 5836. I believe that's level funded. Again, these are pay as you go. 5th or 6th grade still? Ms. Peterson replied, yes. The Town Administrator said, you've never lived, until you chaperone one of these things. Selectman Guessferd laughed and said, I've lived, yes. the Town Administrator then said, it goes by fast for the kids. It goes by really slow for the adults. Believe me. It's fun. It's fun to experience. Been there done that a few times. Ms. Peterson said, you should come out of retirement and come back. We always need chaperones! The Town Administrator laughed and said, just the AXE Cologne alone will kill you.

Anyways, after that, it's Community Activities which I believe covers your comedy nights predominantly, right? Comedy nights, father, daughter, mother, son, bunny bash, all that, all that sort of stuff that you put on that the community really enjoys. And again, just a modest decline on, on overall on that. Ms. Peterson added, we don't need police details anymore. We behave ourselves at Comedy Night. Selectman Guessferd replied, Selectman Guessferd said, Yes. I've been to a couple of them. Oh yeah. Yeah they're a good time. One coming up on the 11th. 11th probably sold out though right. Ms. Peterson replied, almost a couple people did have to do a refund. A conflict came up so some games were added to their support. Selectman Guessferd then said, So if you didn't get your tickets, get them now. The Town Administrator then said, I got my table. And I think with that the last one was the IT but Mr. Beike went through IT. So I don't believe there are any other cost centers. And I don't believe you have any separate articles. Ms. Peterson replied, Nope. So that's the Rec budget. Seeing no questions from the Board, they thanked Ms. Peterson for coming in.

The Town Administrator then addressed the Board saying, Okay, that wraps up the budget for tonight. Vice-Chairman Morin said, Um, due to the fact that we have two members that could not attend tonight, we cannot go over the out of budget requests or the warrant articles. And we do have a regular scheduled meeting on Tuesday night, which at this point, is it a good spot to give us time to review those. Plus we may have a nonpublic session also. So if I could get a motion to limit the amount of additions that we put on the agenda for the next meeting, that way we can make sure that we get this budget done and out of the way and get the books off to the Budget committee as soon as possible. Selectman Guessferd made a motion to limit the amount of new business on the Tuesday (10/24/23) meeting, and Selectman Dumont seconded it. Carried 3-0.

The Town Administrator then said, so you'll you will receive summary documents, just so you know, so that you'll know where we are going. The Finance Director will update everything. You'll get the documents. You'll get the the list of out of the budget requests. You have it in your book, but we'll make sure it's highlighted and see the warrant articles are on the summary document. So we can certainly go through that. We want to do the out of the budget requests first because you may move something to a warrant, come back in and then go then go do the warrant article. So that's probably what I would recommend. You have taken care of the revenue. You've seen all the detailed budgets. So now you're looking at the bigger picture.

Selectman Guessferd made a motion to adjourn at 8:06 p.m. this was seconded by Selectman Dumont. Carried 3-0.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 8:06 p.m. by Selectman Guessferd, seconded by Selectman Dumont. Carried 3-0.

Recorded by HCTV and transcribed by Jill Laffin, Executive Assistant.

Absent
Marilyn McGrath, Chairman

Dave Morin, Vice Chairman

Absent
Kara Roy, Selectman

Bob Guessferd, Selectman

Dillon Dumont, Selectman