

Town of Jefferson
Select Board Budget Workshop & Public Budget Hearing Select Board Meeting
February 7, 2022
Jefferson Community Center

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Select Chairperson Cindy Silver, with Kevin Meehan (Selectman), Norman Brown (Selectman), & Amanda Simino present.

The pledge of Allegiance was recited to salute the flag.

Select Board Budget Workshop: Selectman Norman Brown proposed to the board wage increases for the Fire Department and EMS. The breakdown is as follows per hour.

Fire Fighter base wages:

- Fire Fighter- \$15.00
- FF Level I- \$16.00
- FF Level II- \$17.00
- Additional certifications that are obtained by individuals of the Fire Department may qualify for a \$1.00 more per certification.

Officers base wages:

- Lieutenant- \$16.00
- Captain- \$17.00
- Deputy Chief- \$18.00
- Chief- \$19.00
- Additional certifications that are obtained by officers of the Fire Department may qualify for a \$1.00 more per certification.

Pay increases will be determined on proof of certification that will be kept in their personnel files.

Would like to increase Fire Department budget by \$6,500 in support of wage increase. How the \$6,500 figure was determined by taking a three-year period number of hours averaged them out which in this case the average was 956.33 hours. Looked at the purposed Fire Department budget added the expenses all together. Keeping the \$3,000 allotted for building inspections and increase the total expenses by \$6,500 will support the wage increase.

EMS base wages:

- EMS- \$15.00
- EMR- \$16.00
- EMT- \$17.00
- AEMT- \$18.00
- Paramedic- \$19.00
- Additional certifications that are obtained by individuals of the EMS Department may qualify for a \$1.00 more per certification.

Pay increases will be determined on proof of certification that will be kept in their personnel files.

Would like to increase EMS budget by \$2,000 in support of wage increase. How the \$2,000 figure was determined by taking a three-year period number of hours averaged them out which in this case the average was 75 hours took the rate of two EMT's where the department has 2 EMR, 2 EMT, 1 Paramedic. Took the base rates of EMT's (\$34) multiplied by the 75 hours for the year and came up with \$2,550.

Members of the Fire Department and EMS Department will have to come to the Town Office to fill out wage increases if the motion passes.

Selectman Norman Brown made a motion to increase Fire Department budget by \$6,500 and EMS budget by \$2,000 to support these wage increases. Selectman Kevin Meehan seconded the motion. Before the motion passes Selectman Kevin Meehan asked for clarification of Fire Department Officer pay where a Lieutenant has FF Level II but making the same an hour as a FF Level I. Selectman Norman Brown clarified in saying that these are base pay figures by rank if we have a Lieutenant that is a FF Level II they would have \$2.00 more an hour. After the clarification, the motion passed unanimously.

Selectman Norman Brown spoke with the Fire Chief about these figures and asked that he clean up and follow up with members that have not been to calls or meetings in a few years. This is due to workers comp. insurance, and it will allow a better idea of the actual roster. He also let him know to send his members to the Town Office for wages increases when the time comes that the wage change is made.

Other Business:

- Review and sign Amanda Simino's hire and wage change form
- Review accounts payable for 1/25, 2/2 & 2/5/22 and payroll 1/24, 1/31, & 2/7/22
- Review and initial Deposits for 1/24 & 1/31/22
- Review and initial Unpaid Bills for 2/14/22

Select Board Budget Hearing

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Select Chairperson Cindy Silver, with Kevin Meehan (Selectman), Norman Brown (Selectman), Cheri Marshall, Mary Gross, Liz Milligan, Chris Milligan, Terri Larcomb, Alan Balog (Zoom), Opal Bronson, Nancy DeCoursey, Jason Call, Maura Annette Chappelle (Zoom), James Akerman, Sr. & Amanda Simino present.

Select Chairperson Cindy Silver gave some time to the public to review the proposed Town budget. Going to run a Q & A session. Chairperson Cindy Silver stated that there would be two-line item increases for the Fire Department and EMS that will be discussed at tonight's meeting. Cheri Marshall asked why the budget for the Conservation Commission was not raised with an over send on 2021's budget. Selectman Norman Brown stated that the Conservation Commission did not come to the Board and request an increase in their budget. Without them asking for an increasing we are assuming that that expense will not be carried over to FY 2022. Selectman Norman Brown asked that everyone go back to page 2 of the budget to go over the wage increases for the Fire Department and EMS. Selectman Norman Brown stated that their wages have increased in a long time. FD will increase by \$6,500 and EMS by \$2,000. Jason Call asked that these increases would be on top of what was listed on the Draft of the budget and yes, they would be. Selectman Norman Brown spoke about the wages being based on certifications. Terri Larcomb brought up the Ambulance service went up. For many years, the Town of Jefferson got by with only paying \$16,000 per year and unfortunately with the times

changing and the extent of the program Lancaster had to raise the annual price. A lot of discussion has gone into this piece and the town is still not where the Town of Lancaster would like us to be as far as the pricing goes. Terri Larcomb asked what General Government Buildings is and it has to do with any type of maintenance, fuel, and safety expenses for any town owned buildings. Cheri Marshall asked about the significant increase in the Highway Departments budget. Selectman Norman Brown answered by stating that the town needs a new 6-wheel truck with a sander body and plow. In the Hwy Dept's. CRF has a balance of \$114,000 that we can use and the total amount for the truck is \$210,000. So, we had to put an additional \$95,000 into the Hwy's budget. Also, discussion on possibly raising the amount that the town puts into the Hwy Dept's. CRF each year from \$40,000. Cheri Marshall asked about another increase that is in the Hwy Dept's budget of \$22,000 which is for the body of the new truck. Jason Call asked about the \$25,000 figure for the revaluation and if it was going to put the town on a more cyclical review of all properties. We are signed in with CNP for five years at \$25,000 and the plan is that the town will be on cyclical review. Some of the budget expenses will be offset by revenues. A lot of the expenses that were paid out in 2021 due to the fire the town has not seen reimbursement yet for those items. The town will see the revenue for that in 2022 which will be additional revenue for 2022. Cheri Marshall asked about the library budget. Liz Milligan a Trustee of the Library spoke on the library's budget. The library will be moving to the JCC building some expenses will be higher/lower than years past. Hours of operation are looking to increase and adding an additional staff member. Where this will be the first year of being in the new building it is hard to tell what the expenses will be, plus the library will be staying in the current building for a few months out of the calendar year before moving into the JCC building due to construction and back ordered pieces of furniture. Jason Call asked if the library's share of utilities was factored into their budget. For the Library it was a starting point, and we will have a better understanding closer to the end of the year for budgeting for next year. A question was asked about what falls under executive budget, salaries, stipends, office supplies, the Select Boards portion of utilities, and dues. The question was asked about needing to have a part-time Office Assistant on top of the Administrative Assistant. There is a need to have someone that is well versed in day-to-day duties that keep the office flowing. We need to have someone that can pick up when people are out on vacation, extended leave time, and in the event the Administrative Assistant moves on. It is important that the Town Office stays running no matter what the case may be and the only way of doing that is having someone on staff that can step in. Jason Call stated that the town should not use exact verbiage for the vehicle in Article 10. It was recommended to use the term "or equivalent too" with the exact vehicle verbiage in the event for whatever reason the town is not able to purchase that exact make and model. Article 13 needed a correction to the word "board" Liz Milligan asked why there was not an Article for EMS. The Select Board advised the EMS Department to come and talk with the board if they are in need of something and that the board would increase their budget. Liz stated that EMS wanted something in place to except donations. They have been approached by community members in the past about how they can donate. It was recommended that the EMS starts an account like the one that is set up for the Veteran's Memorial so that they can take in donations. The town has already taken in a \$100 donation for EMS. A check will be issued out of the general fund to EMS so that they can set up that account. Liz was advised by the board to discuss with Cheryl Meehan on how to proceed with getting the account set up. Nancy DeCoursey asked about a Warrant from the Conservation Commission for Solar Power for the town. She stated that David dropped it off to the town office in January. The office had not received anything, Nancy will follow up with him. Jason Call asked if he could address the Town's People about understanding that the Town of Carroll withdrawal from the school district is important and could hit Jefferson hard as far as taxes. Cheri Marshall asked when the candidates that are running for office will be posted to the website. Select Chairperson Cindy Silver stated that she will follow up with Linda Cushman for a list so that Cindy could post it to the town's website.

Chairperson Cindy Silver closed the Budget Hearing at 7:16 p.m.

Chairperson Cindy Silver opened the Select Board meeting at 7:19 p.m. with Select Chairperson Cindy Silver, Selectman Kevin Meehan, Selectman Norman Brown, Marry Gross, Terri Larcomb, Alan Balog (Zoom), Maura Annette Chappelle (Zoom), Mark Dubois, James Akerman, Sr., and Amanda Simino present.

Approval for meeting minutes for January 31, 2022. Selectman Kevin Meehan made a motion to approve the January 31, 2022, meeting minutes. Selectman Norman Brown seconded the motion and with no discussion the motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Payroll for 1/24 & 1/31/22 and Accounts Payable for 1/25, 1/28, 2/2, 2/5/22. Selectman Kevin Meehan made a motion to approve Payroll and Accounts Payable for all dates stated above. Selectman Norman Brown seconded the motion and with no discussion the motion passed unanimously.

JCC Renovation Update from Selectman Norman Brown: Progress is still moving right along. Carpet will be going down starting the end of this week. Painting is close to being complete. The middle of the building's roof started to leak, DHI has sent us a Change Order 6 to spray foam the middle part of the building's ceiling like we had done at the two gable ends. The amount of Change Order 6 is \$29,876. Selectman Norman Brown made a motion to approve DHI's Change Order 6. Selectman Kevin Meehan seconded the motion with no discussion the motion passed unanimously. The electricians are moving right along; they had the Electrical Inspector here and the Plumbing Inspector will be coming back because the plumbers will be doing more work to the boiler room. The Select Board would like to hold an Open House at the Jefferson Community Center before Town Meeting starts on March 8, 2022. They are hoping that the different departments and organization that will be housed in the building will be there that night for when the Town's People are walking around.

Public Input: Discussion with Mark Dubois from the Highway Department about Button Road and Black Velvet Road. The town crew has for many years gone all the way up past town owned portion for a convenience factor to be able to turn around safely up until these last couple of snowstorms. By doing this they have plowed up Diane Arcand's driveway to make the turn around. That area is becoming hard to get any of the trucks up in there and turn around. The decision that was made by Select Board and Hwy. Dept. was to continue to plow the area that the town has been doing right along until the end of the winter season. The Select Board advised Amanda to draft a letter to Diane stating that the Town will continue to plow but next winter the Town would not be maintaining that portion of the road.

Other Business:

- Review and sign Supplement Warrant from Mary Gross
- Review AVRRDD annual report
- Review and sign 2 Abatement's from Mary Gross
- Review and sign contract from CAI Technology
- Sign Amanda's wage rate increase

Select Chairperson Cindy Silver made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:19 p.m. Selectman Kevin Meehan seconded the motion and with no discussion the motion passed unanimously.

******Next Select Board Meeting will be held on February 21, 2022 @ 7:00 p.m.******

Respectfully submitted

Amanda Simino