Board of Selectmen
On-Line Via Zoom & YouTube Live
February 4, 2021
Special Budget Workshop Meeting Minutes

Selectmen Present: T. Govert; C. Quinn; R. Smith
Also Present: D. Angersola; S. Hedler; C. Varricchio; S. Wheeler; L. Zemienieski, and other members of the public via virtual media

1. First Selectman Smith called the Board of Selectmen's meeting to order at 9:06 a.m.

2. 2021-2022 General Budget Review Workshop

   A. Public Works/Transfer Station Operating and Capital Budgets

   Mr. Smith provided an overview of this agenda item and noted that deferred maintenance has resulted in a request for significant increases in the Public Works Operating and Capital budgets. He outlined the following proposals that he and the Department Superintendent feel are necessary:

   - Moving from a 10-year to a 7-year rotation of light dump trucks.
   - Purchasing extended warranties for the Public Works trucks.
   - Repairs to or replacement of a number of Public Works buildings.
   - Purchasing and installing a dedicated generator for the Transfer Station.
   - Implementing a plan for improvements to Town roads.

   Mr. Smith introduced Public Works Superintendent Hedler who reiterated the need to accelerate the rotation of the department's light dump trucks. Mr. Hedler also noted the cost-savings benefits of securing extended warranties for the vehicles.

   Superintendent Hedler provided details about his proposed pavement management plan. He advised that the Town has 120 miles of roads and his recommendation is that a 10-year cycle be implemented to address, grading/paving/drainage issues. He stated that the proposed plan calls for 12± miles of road to be upgraded each year at an estimated annual cost of approximately $800,000.00 to $900,000.00.

   Mr. Smith reported that the recent 3-mile repair project to Petticoat Lane had cost the Town $600,000.00 because deferred maintenance had resulted in extremely poor road conditions. He stated those kinds of repair projects are not sustainable over the long-term. Mr. Smith further noted that he expects the Town will hire sub-contractors to do some of the work since the Town's road crews do not have an abundance of excess time in their schedules.

   Mr. Smith and Superintendent Hedler responded to several questions from Ms. Govert. Ms. Varricchio provided a view of detailed information for several Public Works vehicles on ClearGov. Mr. Smith noted that the department's budget line for repairs has been substantial; however, it is their long-range goal to stabilize expenses over the next five years by accelerating the vehicle rotation schedule and securing extended warranties on the heavy equipment.

   Mr. Smith introduced Director of Operations, Don Angersola, who reviewed the following Public Works/Transfer Station Capital Improvements budget requests:

- He has received a quote of $28,934.00 to purchase a generator to run the Transfer Station's compactors and hoppers during power outages. He noted that, although the Town has several single-phase generators, they cannot be used at the Transfer Station because the electrical service there is 3-phase.
- Public Works' buildings' overhead door motors and remotes are at the end of their useful life and need to be upgraded.
- The furnace for the office area and mechanic's bays is due to be replaced and $44,000.00 has been included in the budget for this project.
- He is waiting for two quotes to install a camera system for the outside area of the Public Works Department.
- He is waiting for quotes to repair several of the Public Works department's buildings: the lower walls of the department's main metal building, the building next to the fuel pumps, and the tan yard loader building.
- The roof of the department's main building will need to be replaced in the next 5-6 years.
- There will be a need to construct a 6000-sf cold storage building to replace the garage that will be torn down when the Village Revitalization project moves forward.

Ms. Quinn expressed her disappointment about the lack of maintenance to the Public Works buildings and Mr. Smith noted that rot is a common problem with metal buildings. The Board discussed how to avoid the issue in the future.

In response to a question raised by Ms. Govert, Superintendent Hedler provided an overview of the tree work going on in Town. He stated that there is $150,000.00 in the 2020-2021 budget to remove dead/diseased trees and he has requested an additional $50,000.00 in the 2021-2022 budget.

Mr. Hedler advised that Eversource has dedicated ten bucket truck crews to the East Haddam area during 2021 to remove trees/limbs threatening their powerlines and that the Public Works crews are working closely with them. He stated that he maintains an on-going list of approximately 18,000 "hazard" trees on the Town's right-of-ways and noted that once Eversource is finished with an area, the Public Works crews will go in and remove the remaining "hazard" trees.

Mr. Smith advised that, in addition to the dead/diseased ash trees, arborists are now also predicting a higher mortality rate for sugar maples. He further stated that, while Eversource and Public Works are doing a good job removing "hazard" trees, there is a problem with getting rid of the wood quickly enough.

There was a general discussion regarding Eversource's protocol for tree/limb removal and the cost of getting rid of the excess wood and chips.

In response to a question raised by Ms. Quinn, Ms. Varricchio confirmed that she would distribute hardcopies of the proposed budget as the sections are completed.

3. Public Comment: There were no public comments submitted to the meeting.

4. Adjournment: There being no additional business to discuss, a motion was made by Ms. Govert, seconded by Ms. Quinn, to adjourn the meeting at 10:35 a.m. Unanimous aye.

Recorded

Respectfully submitted,
Theresa Govert, Secretary