TOWN OF EAST KINGSTON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES

Monday, January 6, 2020 6:30 PM
Public Hearing on the 2020 Budget

Present: Richard Poelaert, Chairman; Justin Lyons Selectman and Selectman Robert Nigrello.

Others Present: Paul Deschaine, Community Partners, LLC; Becky Merrow, Town Administrator. Department Heads Chief LePage; Chief Warren; Road Agent Brinkerhoff, Cemetery Trustee and Library Trustee Conrad Moses and Sarah C. from the Library. Abby Mills member of the public.

Richard Poelaert called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

There were questions on the budget including the IT budget/server and the Town Administrators proposed salary. The new accounting software is an increase of $17,000 and was added at today’s earlier budget work session.

The new personnel administration default budget is $280,000. Why? This will be looked at and worked on.

Chief Warren reminded the Board that the East Kingston Cooperative budget required a 2/3 majority due to a bond and that their budget did not pass in East Kingston. Even though voters defeated the Cooperative Budget last year, the taxpayers must pay.

Enrollment at the school affects what must be paid by the Town according to a formula. 70%+ of the budget is for the School (versus Town and County).

On the 1/6 version of the budget, the Library noted there is a figure of $137,253 in the “actual” column that needs to be removed. There is some confusion about the total request. Why is the budget request at $3,105,245? Paul Deschain mentioned because the capital items were separated from the operating budget.

Discussion of cistern work to date. None has been done as there is not enough money in the fund yet. One cistern costs approximately $60,000. The Town is raising funds in $15,000 increments. Department Heads expressed that nearly all of them waived inserting capital reserve items into the warrant this year due to the sharp increase in taxes after the revaluation. The budget cannot be finalized until after the deadline date for petition warrant articles which is 1/14 this year. There are very few money articles from the Town, but we expect many articles from the Planning Board.

At this point, Robert Nigrello read the proposed change to the Elderly Exemption.

Selectman Lyons presented a new warrant article for a feasibility study for Old Town Hall. The article is to add $10,000 to the budget for a feasibility study by a code consultant. The
study would arrive at the cost to demolish the building and to provide a cost estimate of materials abatement if the Town were to retain the building. There are suggestions moving forward. A newsletter. Periodic Department Head Meetings. A ½ year Meeting to obtain citizen input.

Citizens are still concerned about what to do about the Railroad Depot Building. The building cannot be used due to the high-speed railroad.

The Old Town Hall has been moved. It does not have a full basement. Could it be moved? If so, where would it be moved to? Land may need to be acquired. On the railroad building a septic system was installed. Would be a shame to move it since the septic system was installed. LCHIP funds were used for the project. What restrictions will that present? These buildings may be more of a liability than an asset.

Motion by Robert Nigrello and second by Richard Poelaert to add $1,848 to the budget to pay for the new short-term disability policy for employees from Healthtrust and to execute any documents necessary to accept the proposal. Second by Richard Poelaert. Motion carries unanimously.

Highway Budget. Motion by Bob Nigrello and second by Richard Poelaert to reduce the paving budget from $234,000 to $175,000. To increase Ice and Snow Removal to $248,000 From $165,000. Motion carries unanimously.

Motion by Robert Nigrello and second by Richard Poelaert to pay salt bills for 2019 in the amount of $9,356.09. Motion carries unanimously.

Motion by Robert Nigrello and second by Richard Poelaert to increase legal in the 2020 budget from $60,000 to $65,00. Motion carries unanimously.

Motion by Robert Nigrello and second by Richard Poelaert to add $20,000 to the 2020 budget for the Accufund Accounting program. Discussion-this is a 2020 expense and will not come from the 2019 budget or encumbrances as the Board previously discussed. Motion carries unanimously.

Motion by Robert Nigrello and second by Richard Poelaert to restore the Fire Chief stipend of$15,000—an increase of $5,000. Motion carries unanimously.

Motion by Robert Nigrello and second by Richard Poelaert to include a $5,000 stipend for the Road Agent. Discussion—the Road Agent is the only elected official in East Kingston who does not receive a stipend. There are many things the Road Agent does that he is not paid for. There are lots of extras he does. Motion carries unanimously. Motion later "disallowed," as it was not included in the budget—warning/notice. No new monetary items after the publication of the Public Hearing.

RMON IT services quote was reviewed. Motion by Robert Nigrello and second by Justin Lyons to increase the IT technology budget by $9,000. There cannot be a clean cutover of services from Mainstay to RMON. It is recommended and advised that 3 months of duplicate and/or redundant services take place. This "spill over" represents the majority of the $9,000. Motion carries unanimously.
No further discussion.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Becky Merrow

[Signatures]

Richard S. Poelaert   Justin B. Lyons   Robert L. Nigrello
Present: Richard Poelaert, Chairman and Selectman Robert Nigrello.

Others Present: Paul Deschaine, Community Partners, LLC; Becky Merrow, Town Administrator.

Richard Poelaert called the meeting to order at 2:30 PM.

Changes to the budget:

Highway-Paving. From $233,000 to $175,000.

Snow/Ice Removal. From $165,000 to $248,000. This line to include a $5,000 stipend for the Road Agent.

RMON and IT Services. Increase $9,000 from $7,348 to $16,000.

Fire. Reinstate the $5,000 decrease in Fire Chief salary.

Accufund add $18,000.

Add new Short-Term Disability Policy approximately $2,000. Employee tax assistance—pay out of legal in year 2020.

Meeting adjourned at 3:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Becky Merrow

Richard S. Poelaert                Justin B. Lyons                Robert L. Nigrello