

Town of Jackson Town Board Meeting
Budget Meeting
October 17, 2023

The Town Board of the Town of Jackson met on October 17, 2023 at 7:03 pm at the Town Hall for the budget meeting.

PRESENT:

- Jay Skellie..... Supervisor
- Travis Rea..... Councilman
- Edward Rouse..... Councilman
- Jennifer VanDeWater..... Councilwoman
- Molly Dixson..... Town Clerk
- Sean Carney..... Highway Superintendent
- Donna Nolan..... Budget Officer

Also present: Assessor Tim Grogan, Salem Fire Chief Bob Graham, Chairman of the Salem Fire Dept. Board Joe Weaver and members of the Salem Vol. Fire Dept.

Absent: Councilwoman Carol Rich

Supervisor Skellie opened the meeting by inviting an introduction from Budget Officer Nolan regarding the 2024 Preliminary Budget. Budget Officer Nolan stated that the budget sits at a 27.3% increase from last year with an allowable 2.65% increase, which requires extensive cuts to be made. Budget Officer Nolan did inform the Board that since the October regular monthly meeting, she has increased the unexpended balance which has helped to offset the raise. She pointed out that revenues cannot be increased without raising taxes.

Supervisor Skellie invited the present members of the Salem Volunteer Fire Department to speak on their budgetary concerns. Members of SVFD introduced themselves, followed by introductions from the Town Board. Chief Graham opened by stating the increase (27.5%) they have requested is in line with what is necessary to run the dept with costs constantly increasing. Chairman Weaver handed out proposed budgets to the Board for reviewal. Chief Graham stated that costs for any new volunteer members just starting out currently sit at \$5,000.00, between training, gear and gear fittings.

[Councilman Rea enters at 7:08 pm]

NFPA standards require air compressor maintenance and air quality be tested quarterly, another additional expense that continually increases each year. Chairman Weaver spoke to state that funds incurred from fundraising had to be dipped into to meet regular fire expenses this year. A substantial amount of money needs to be put into trucks as well, leaving little left over for other items. Chairman Weaver stated that the SVFD has multiple items up on the budget that require a considerable request from the towns they serve. He pointed out that they have always tried to remain equitable. The Board reviewed several line items on the SVFD Budget that have increased. Chief Graham stated that the

numbers are true and there are a lot of 'ifs' to add up. New fire trucks are within the \$900,000.00-\$1,000,000.00 range and going up all the time, on top of maintenance costs. Chief Graham stated that he does not know when it will get any better. Supervisor Skellie spoke to say it amazes him how all of the local fire departments can cover each other so well. Chief Graham asked if the Board had any questions for the volunteers. The Board had no further questions.

The Town Board reviewed the budget line item by line item on each page, as lead by Budget Officer Donna Nolan. They discussed the following items:

- Budget Officer Nolan pointed out that she has increased the Highway Dept.'s Unexpended Balance to \$80,000.00 since the October regular monthly meeting.
- The Board reviewed the Assessor's budget increase of \$6,000.00, with a \$2,000.00 increase for the Assessors themselves. The Board questioned if Equipment would need to stay at \$2,000.00 since the Assessor's had purchased a lot of equipment items this year. Assessor Tim Grogan stated that one item he wanted was an answering machine at Town Hall to relieve the calls made to his home. As there were no other equipment purchases that would seem necessary, the Equipment budget was lowered to \$500.00. Contractual Expense was also lowered to \$3,000.00.
- Budget Officer Nolan pointed out that she had added \$2,000.00 to the Attorney Contractual Expense. She stated that most of the Attorney fees have come out of the Assessor's contractual line this year for grievance supreme court cases, so there may be more there than what is needed. Attorney Contractual Expense was lowered to \$5,000.00.
- Board members agreed that the Contractual Expense for Control of Dogs should be lowered, as there are not many additional expenses incurred throughout the year aside from Personal Services. Contractual was lowered to \$1,600.00.
- The Board reviewed the Supt. of Highway's salary increase of 19.1%. Budget Officer Nolan stated that the Highway workers will be getting a 13% increase over the course of 2 years in their contract. Councilwoman VanDeWater stated that the Superintendent's increase should be in line with the rest of the Dept's. Budget Officer Nolan said a 13% increase from \$52,056.00 would be about \$58,800.00. The Personal Services for Supt. of Highway's was changed from \$62,000.00 to \$58,800.00.
- Planning Personal Services was kept the same at \$1,700.00 and the Contractual Expense was lowered to \$3,000.00.
- Contractual Expense for Refuse and Garbage was lowered from \$1,500.00 to \$1,000.00.
- State Retirement was dropped down to \$11,500.00 from \$12,500.00.
- The Board now began reviewing Highway Appropriations. Supervisor Skellie questioned if we could return to the current year's \$85,000.00 Contractual Expense budget for General Repairs. Supt. Carney stated that there is a lot of money being put into trucks but that was agreeable. It was lowered from \$101,250.00 back down to \$85,000.00.
- Bridges Contractual Expense was cut back to \$23,000.00.
- Machinery's Contractual Expense was lowered from \$144,450.00 to \$124,000.00.
- The Board reviewed Town Highway Snow Removal's Contractual Expense. Supt. Carney stated that expenses for chains, blades and other equipment is included in this and not just salt and sand. The Board agreed to lower the Contractual Expense to \$100,000.00.

RESOLUTION #104-23

A motion by Councilwoman VanDeWater, seconded by Councilman Rea; Resolution passed 4-0, **to change the date for the November regular monthly meeting to November 8, 2023 at 8:00 pm.**

RESOLUTION #105-23

A motion by Councilman Rea, seconded by Councilwoman VanDeWater; Resolution passed 4-0, **to set the date for the public hearing on Local Law #4 of 2023, a law to override the tax levy for the 2024 fiscal year, to November 8, 2023 at 8:00 pm.**

RESOLUTION #106-23

A motion by Councilman Rea, seconded by Councilwoman VanDeWater; Resolution passed 4-0, **to set the date for the public hearing on the 2024 Preliminary Budget to November 8, 2023, immediately following the public hearing on LL#4-23 at 8:00 pm.**

RESOLUTION #107-23

A motion by Councilman Rouse, seconded by Councilwoman VanDeWater; Resolution passed 4-0, **to set the salaries for all elected officials as discussed at this budget meeting, to be posted in The Eagle along with the notice for the budget hearing.**

RESOLUTION #108-23

A motion by Councilman Rouse, seconded by Councilman Rea; Resolution passed 4-0, **to adjourn at approximately 8:46 pm.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:46 pm.

Molly Dixon, Town Clerk