



## Administrative Assistant to the Selectmen

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### Proposed Administration Budget 2019/20

I am pleased to submit the first draft of the proposed 2019/20 Administration Budget. As a general comment, the goal was to keep operations at the status quo. We have recently discussed the need for additional help at the town office, as the volume of business has increased over the years to a point that it seems overwhelming at times. That conversation has not yet progressed beyond the concept level, and it's my intention to become more specific with a proposal, but not until the 2020/2021 fiscal year budget, as I think we can squeeze by another year with the same staffing level. I will be looking to make some internal changes in office operations to possibly become more efficient with the help that we have. What those are, I have no idea just yet.

Here is the explanation of the proposed budget.

#### **SALARIES**

Selectmen & Tax Assessors – There is no change proposed to the current salary level to the elected municipal officers. I have not yet spoken about this with either body, but these are the same “stipends” that have been in place for several years.

Administrative Assistant – You recently signed a 3-year contract with me, and this is the 2<sup>nd</sup> year agreed to figure in the contract.

Benefits – A 7.5% increase is budgeted. We won't know for sure what the increase will be until late November or early December on the Me Municipal amount. This is mostly a wild guess.

Clerk/Tax Collector – The contract with Jennifer runs out at the end of June. I will be recommending another 3-year contract with a pay scale to average \$40,000/year. This would be \$38,000 for FY 20/21 which is a 4.63% increase. I have not discussed this with Jennifer at this time.

Assistant Clerk – We have budgeted this amount for several years and have not come close to spending this. Usually we have been able to get by without the emergency fill-in.

Health Officer – This is the state mandated minimum and has not changed in years.

Facilities Maintenance – No change to the overall level is proposed. We've not spent anywhere near this amount in the past. Much of the payment to Rick is assigned to Parks.

Elections- The Election clerks are paid \$15/hour and I don't see any increase at this time. Thanks to the tabulation machine, the hours for an election are significantly reduced. The Election workers will generally be here about 14-hours per election. We

generally have 3 elections per year (November, March, June). That would total \$1,170. The moderator's cost is also included in this line, so add another \$270 and that makes it \$1,440.00.

**Total Salaries** – The proposed salary and benefit increases are \$4,890, or 3.33%.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES**

Electricity – Based on the actual bill from 17/18 (\$2,792), a \$200 reduction is proposed to \$3,000 from the current year \$3,200 budget.

Office Machine Maintenance – This mostly covers the copier maintenance contract. No change is proposed and the amount was sufficient last fiscal year.

Travel/Education – A slight reduction is proposed based on the 5-year average. We've cut down on both travel and education costs, mostly thanks to the check capture machine so we don't go to the bank as often.

Postage – No change is proposed to postage.

Office Supplies- No change, the proposed amount is close to the 5-year average.

Advertising – No change. We've done very little newspaper advertising for administrative matters. If we need to hire someone, that will eat up the budget.

Telephone – A slight reduction is proposed. The telephone account covers the main office number, fax number, and the cell phone I carry.

Lien Costs – No change is proposed. The expenses are offset by the revenues charged to customers paying their liens.

Heating Fuel – Not sure how to call this one, but no change is proposed. The pre-purchase price this year was closer to budget than it has been in the past. I'm in hopes the prices don't increase too much.

Dues/Memberships – A \$100 increase is proposed. The biggest part of the line is the membership in Maine Municipal Association.

Banking Costs – No change is proposed. This covers the service fee on the checking account which is well under \$10/month.

Tax Maps – A \$100 increase is proposed based on the 17/18 actual cost.

Books/Publications – A \$150 increase is proposed. Instead of the printed books, the excise tax publications giving the MRSP amounts for various types of vehicles are now only available on-line with a subscription. It's more expensive but a LOT easier to use.

Records Preservation – No change is proposed in this line. It has been a while since we've sent books out for rebinding/preservation. We probably should do more if the budget for this year holds out

Legal Fees – A \$1,000 decrease is proposed. We currently have just one suit pending, and it's my hope that it will be decided in the current fiscal year. We badly overspent the legal line last year due to the gravel permitting suit(s).

Election Cost – Other – This covers any specialized office supplies and a meal during Election Day for the ballot clerks.

Audit – A \$100 increase is proposed, but it might have to be higher. Our contract with Jim Wadman runs out after this year's audit.

Assessing – Appraisal – no change is proposed (\$3,500), but we might have to increase this a bit based on the FY 18 actual (\$3,780)

Town Report/Meeting – No change is proposed based on the 5-year average.

Miscellaneous – We spend a lot of miscellaneous in FY 18, due mostly to (surprise) employee recognition. A \$100 increase to \$200 is proposed for the budget.

Newsletter – The cost to print the Lamoine Quarterly went up a bit. The \$30 increase is based on the current price (\$264/issue)

Sales Tax – No change to the \$25 budget is proposed.

**Total Administrative Expenses** – The budget is proposed to drop by \$900 or 1.93% due to a reduction in legal fees.

**General Assistance** – No change is proposed to the \$2,500 budget.

## **Insurances**

FICA/Medicare – These two lines are a product of all the salaries multiplied by the federal rates. I have plugged in tentative salaries in the other budgets to come up with a figure for comparison. This will change as the actual budget figures are developed.

Property and Casualty – This is just a guess with about a 7% increase in the MMA rate, a \$600 proposed increase to \$9,000/year.

Public Officials Liability – Same as property and casualty, just a guess. The \$200 increase is up 6.25% and is the same as the 17/18 budget.

Workers Compensation – The proposed \$400 increase is also a bit of a guess, representing an 11.11% increase to the current budget.

Volunteer Coverage – The proposed \$25.00 increase is based on the actual for 2017/18. It's a 14.29% increase, but a very minor amount.

Unemployment Insurance – The proposed decrease of \$300 is based on the actual and 5-year average. Usually our premium is much higher, but we get a dividend in periods of low unemployment.

Deductible Fund – As of June 30<sup>th</sup>, there is a little over \$8,000 in the deductible fund. The proposed \$500 addition is unchanged from the current budget. My recommendation would be to get this fund up to \$10,000 over the next 3-years and hold there unless the deductible amount goes up or the fund is utilized.

**Total Insurance** – The total is up roughly 8% or \$2,500.00. If we get more information about actual increases, that may help.

**Equipment** – A replacement Computer is budgeted for this fiscal year (it'll replace the one in my office). We have a replacement computer budgeted for Jennifer's machine in the current fiscal year. We will also have to upgrade some of the software, especially the database program so that it plays nice with all the machines.

The total \$1,500 budget is unchanged from the current fiscal year.

## **Maintenance**

Furnace – This will cover cleaning the furnace at the town hall. No change from the current fiscal year.

Lighting – Again, no change from the current fiscal year.

General Maintenance – The \$1,500 is based on the 5-year average of actual general maintenance costs. The larger than budgeted expense for the just passed fiscal year was for the new water filter (\$2,000) installed at the town hall. Our monthly pest control service is \$55/month.

Grounds – This is actually down by \$500 from the current fiscal year based on the 5-year average.

Keys and Locks – No change is proposed compared to the current fiscal year.

**Total Maintenance** – A \$200 increase in the total maintenance budget is proposed, or 6.45%.

**TOTAL ADMINISTRATION** – The total administration budget is proposed to rise by \$6,671.29. Insurance is \$2,500, Salaries \$4,900 which accounts for all (and then some) of the increase.

Respectfully submitted,   Stu Marckoon, Adm. Asst.