



Administrative Assistant to the Selectmen

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Proposed Administration Budget Fiscal Year 2021-22

The Board of Selectmen has requested that the upcoming budget attempt to place no greater burden on the taxpayers than necessary, but adequately fund town operations. The goal is to develop a budget that will keep the amount to be raised from taxation level or lower while making sure the town has the necessary revenue to run effectively. The administration budget is prepared with that in mind.

Salaries – No changes are proposed to the town meeting approved salaries for our elected officials. The appointed officials will see, for the most part, a modest increase.

Administrative Assistant – My contract expires at the end of June. A new contract has not been negotiated yet. No change in the current year amount is proposed for next year at this point, based on the benefits which changed dramatically as of last Friday. After the Budget Committee suggested not tying the contract with health insurance, a \$1,500 was placed in the budget.

Benefits – The Selectmen have made a pretty significant change in the health insurance benefit offering. Instead of 80% of a particular plan, the town will mirror the school department and offer \$1,000/month to each full time employee, or \$12,000 per year. With two 2 full time employees, this works out to \$24,000.

Clerk/Tax Collector – The Town Clerk/Tax Collector also has been working on a 3-year contract, and 2021/22 is the final year of that contract, and the amount proposed is the contract price.

Assistant Clerk/Tax Collector – After further review, we've built in some money but not a huge amount more for the Assistant Clerk to help with filing a few additional hours. .

Health Officer – The state mandated minimum is \$100. We have a terrific health officer in Cece Ohmart, and she's been very helpful with advice during the pandemic.

Facilities Maintenance – We also have a terrific employee in this position in Mike Hodgkins. So why the decrease in salary? It's because it doesn't take all that long for him to do his thing. Some of his time is charged to other departments (Parks mostly). We've not come close to using all that is budgeted since creating the position. The Budget Committee also suggested cutting this down further, so the \$6,000 is a little more than has been paid in past years.

Election Workers – The November 3rd election will likely bust this budget, but we've received a significant (\$5,000) grant to help with that. Because of the number of absentee ballots we've hired the assistant clerk to come in once a week to help with other things so that Jennifer can keep up with the absentee process. Additionally, we've got two days with two clerks (and Nancy) to help process the ballots into the system.

The 2021/22 Election season should be milder! There may be a state referendum in November 2021. The annual town meeting will be in March 2022 most likely. There may be some sort of election in June 2022 as well, but that would be it! The \$1,500 set aside for election clerks (from which we also pay the town meeting moderator) should be sufficient.

Total Administration Salaries – The total increase of \$5,100 or 3.25% is for contracted employees and the expected increase in health insurance benefits.

ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES

Electricity – Since installing the LED lighting, the electric bill has been pretty reasonable. The proposed budget of \$2,700 is \$100 less than the current fiscal year.

Machine Maintenance – The proposed \$50 increase reflects the actual cost in this line. This is basically the photocopier maintenance contract.

Travel/Education – Our training opportunities diminished significantly with the COVID-19 situation. The \$2,500 is based on the 5-year average, which is down \$200 from the current fiscal year.

Postage – A \$200 increase is proposed. I have no idea what will happen with postal rates. We've spent quite a bit so far this year, but much of that has to do with the election (more than 600 absentee ballots!).

Office Supplies – The proposed budget of \$2,900 is based on the F Y19/20 actual amount, and is a bit less than the 5-year average. This office is busy, and we go through a lot of supplies!. Hopefully that will slow a bit.

Advertising – We rarely advertise unless it's to fill a vacant position. That costs in the \$500 range (the FY 20 budget spent \$523, most of that being an ad to replace our Facilities Maintenance position).

Telephone – We maintain three phone lines – one land line, one fax line, and the cell phone that I carry. The proposed \$1,750 is for all three lines. I'm contemplating putting in a couple of VOIP lines for outgoing calls (one in the clerk's office and one in the Code Enforcement Office) which would run about \$50/year for each. This would prevent calls from tying up the main line.

Lien Costs – This number is dependent on the number of liens filed and discharged. NO change is proposed from the current fiscal year. The expense is offset by a revenue of the same amount.

Heating Fuel – The town has been fortunate the past few years in that fuel prices have been reasonable. The \$2,500 proposed is a \$500/year drop based on the 5-year average plus about \$700 in case something ridiculous happens to propane costs!

Dues/Memberships – This covers Maine Municipal Association, League of Towns, and various professional affiliate dues for town personnel. MMA is the biggest. The budget is up \$100 based on the actual cost for FY 19/20.

Banking Costs – The proposed budget (\$100) is a \$50 drop based on the actual and 5-year average. This is the service fee on the checking account.

Tax Maps – A \$300 increase is proposed based on the actual cost for the current fiscal year plus 10%. The cost rose to \$2,000 in this current fiscal year.

Books & Publications – This expense has grown sharply in the past few years – it's for subscriptions to the on-line excise tax values for cars, motorcycles and RV's. We need these books, and the cost is based on the actual cost for the current fiscal year.

Records Preservation – We've budgeted \$1,000/year for many years. Some years we get records preserved, some years we don't. I'm thinking perhaps we could move this to the capital projects budget and start a fund for this instead? I'd like to discuss that.

Legal Fees – No change is proposed from the current fiscal year. I'm in hopes that people will stop bringing matters before the town that require a lot of legal help. The last matter that we're shelling out big bucks for (an Appeals Board matter) is hopefully wrapping up this week (10/26/20).

Other Election Costs – After the November 3, 2020 Election, I am taking a stab at this line with no real idea of what we might be required to purchase. PPE is likely needed at future elections, though we're in decent shape for the time being. The budget is proposed to double to \$400.

Audit – The price in the budget is the contract price from James Wadman. This will cover the audit of the current fiscal year.

Assessing/Appraisal – No change is proposed from the current fiscal year. A lot of this cost depends on the amount of construction going on. There is a fair amount!

Town Meeting/Report Expenses – No change is proposed from the current fiscal year.

Miscellaneous – This line is used for the Citizen of the Year award and other items that don't "Fit".

Newsletter – There has been a slight increase in the cost of publishing the Lamoine Quarterly. This assumes a \$300/edition cost.

Sales Tax – This covers the sale of photocopies. And only a slight increase is proposed (\$25.00) which shows as a 100% increase.

Total Expenses – This section is up \$908.75 or 1.89%

GENERAL ASSISTANCE – No increase is proposed to this line. A reminder that 70% of our GA expenses are reimbursed by the State of Maine

INSURANCES

FICA & Medicare – I've plugged in tentative salary figures from other budgets to come up with the federal withholding matches for this account. As budgets get more finalized, these will be adjusted.

Property and Casualty – I honestly have no idea what insurance premiums are going to do in the next fiscal year. After discussion with the budget committee this was pared down to \$12,000 to reflect the actual amount for 19/20.

Public Officials – This is now built into the property and casualty line. I've left this line in for one more year because it was part of the approved budget for the past fiscal year.

Workers Compensation – The proposed figure is actually down from the current budget by \$500 based on the 5-year average and a modest increase. It's a guess.

Volunteer Coverage – A \$25-dollar decrease is proposed. This cost has been fairly steady.

Unemployment – A 25% increase is proposed based on the potential increase due to the pandemic. That amounts to \$100-more.

Deductible Fund – The fund has about \$9,800 in it as of this writing. Another \$500 would give us \$10,300, which would be a comfortable amount in case we have a few claims.

Total Insurance – This total will vary a bit depending on FICA & Medicare in final budgets. As of this writing, the proposed increase is \$931.82 or 2.75%.

EQUIPMENT

Hardware/Software – Our accounting and anti-virus programs are now annual subscriptions. We will likely update the town clerk's computer in the coming fiscal year as well. Overall, this would represent a \$500 reduction.

Other – This line has been used for peripheral equipment in the past. A new printer may be in line for the clerk's office for the upcoming fiscal year.

TOWN HALL MAINTENANCE

Furnace Maintenance – The proposed \$100 is for the annual cleaning. The furnace should be in great shape. The higher actual cost for FY 20 was for some changes to the furnace required by state rules on propane furnaces.

Lighting – This line will be eliminated from the budget. No lighting fixtures are proposed for the fiscal year. Bulbs will come from office supplies.

General Maintenance – No change is proposed. The high average comes from the cupola project which was put into this line. The town hall is in pretty decent condition and I don't anticipate any big maintenance projects at this time.

Grounds – A slight reduction is proposed in this budget based on the actual costs for the past few years. It's slightly lower than the 5-year average.

Keys & Locks – The \$100 is basically a place holder. This would partly cover a change of locks and keys to the building if needed.

TOTAL MAINTENANCE – A \$300 decrease is proposed – basically all in grounds and lighting.

TOTAL ADMINISTRATION BUDGET – Depending on the FICA/Medicare situation, the administration budget is proposed to grow by \$6,140.58, or 2.48%. Roughly 83% of the increase is for personnel costs.

Respectfully submitted,

Stu Marckoon, Adm. Asst.