

Temple 2023 Budget Hearing Minutes
February 9th, 2023
7 PM at the Town Hall
Presented by the Select Board

The hearing was opened at 7 PM by Select Board Chair, Bill Ezell

Select Board members present: Bill Ezell, Select Board (Chair), Ken Caisse, George Willard

BAC & CIP members in attendance: Gary Scholl (BAC Chair, CIP), Gail Cromwell (CIP Chair, BAC), Ivy Bibler (CIP), Andy Paul (CIP), Tim Fiske (BAC & CIP)

Members of the public: A few members of the public were present

Ezell noted he believed there are some amendments to the budget. Gary Scholl indicated the first change was that the Recreation Commission was not able to take \$550 from the revolving fund which was anticipated. The second change was from Greenville PD on the surplus for the police department co-op which was \$28.9K and now it is \$27,934. Scholl made the edits to the budget and noted the revised total operating budget is now \$1,362,420.

The 2023 Budget was read by Ezell who added if anyone has any questions or wants an explanation of the detail items, to please raise their hands.

Executive (Select Board) – Up for 2023. A question was asked about the contingency amount. Ezell noted they may have to refund 14K in legal fees so they have reserved this amount to cover this refund adding there is a good chance they will have to pay back some if not all of it.

Town Administration –Up mainly due to the 4% COLA increases for town employees.

Moderator – Ezell reported the amount decreased due to the fact that they will not have a national election like we did last year.

Town Clerk – The increase is due to the 4% COLA increase. A question was asked how this increase is determined. Ezell updated that the board meets and discusses what COLA percentage to give employees of the town. It was mentioned that this was not applied to the treasurer. Caisse noted the COLA is for employees, and the treasurer needs to ask for an increase.

Voter Registration & Election Administration – Down from last year. Ezell reported the amount decreased due to the fact that they will not have a national election like we did last year.

Vital Statistics – Up from 2022.

Financial Administration – Up slightly.

Data Processing & Info Systems – Down slightly.

BAC – Up to \$50 from \$0.

Tax Collector – Up mainly due to the 4% COLA increase

Assessing and Auditing – UP slightly, these are fixed contractual prices.

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Legal Expenses – Ezell noted that this line item is unpredictable and there are contingencies for this. It was asked if the amounts are broken out by which department uses it. Scholl indicated we are tracing this now.

Personnel Admin – Part of this is health insurance, not sure what it will be.

Planning Board – Increase of 5K. Scholl noted everything was itemized by the planning board. Tax map preparation and the updating of the master plan are a few of the items. Caisse noted we did receive a grant for the planning board to use towards the master plan update.

Zoning Board – Down slightly.

Government Buildings & Land – This account is up due to some maintenance items we need to take care of this year.

Cemeteries – Down slightly.

Insurance – These are fixed rates that we have no control over (Property & Liability/Workers Compensation). Caisse noted we have been getting a credit from our town insurance for being a good insurance risk town.

Dues & Association costs – Up slightly.

Other General Government – This is a catch all for a number of small things and is up from 2022.

Police Department – Revised amounts indicate a 16K increase.

Ambulance – This is up from last year and it was noted the amount is contractual. Caisse noted it is also due to the number of runs they needed to make and we were up on those numbers.

Fire Department – Amount is slightly lower.

Building Inspections – Down to 0 in 2023. This is because we changed the way we account for this.

Emergency Management – Up from last year. Ezell noted this is budgeted a bit high and like last year we will probably not use it all. Ezell added we have to budget a little high on some things because we cannot exceed our bottom line.

Town Vehicle and Equipment fuels – Up slightly. A question was asked why we think the price of Diesel will go down. Scholl noted diesel is down because we are migrating to gasoline and we are buying less diesel. Scholl noted we are doing the best to estimate in these volatile times.

Highway department – Up due to increase in salt, fuel, all across the board costs are up.

Sanitation – No change. We pay for use of the Wilton recycling center, per our contract with them.

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Animal and Pest Control – Up from 2022. A question was asked if the animal control officer will get a COLA increase. Ezell noted her pay is calculated a bit different. Caisse added Jen would need to ask if she wanted an increase, it is not automatic. Scholl noted there was also a change on how her on-call is handled which is why this is up in 2023.

Welfare and Support Agencies – These are organizations we support based on warrant articles approved at previous town meetings. Ezell added the town votes once to approve an agency and they will be paid each year they ask for a donation.

Welfare – The state laws require that we have funds available if there is a need, however this is an unpredictable item.

Recreation – Up slightly.

Library – Up 8K. Caisse noted the library handles their own business and their own increases. Ezell added we have no interaction with their personnel policies. It was asked if the Library fence is included in this budget. It was noted that this was supposed to be a warrant article but it did not get written in time. Ezell updated that since this was brought up by the Library as a safety issue, our insurance company said we need to put up the fence. Andy Paul gave a little history on this request noting the SB was first asked, then it was sent to the CIP who met with the Library trustees, then the Library withdrew their request. They initially believed they could use the ARPA funds. The CIP was expecting the SB to include the warrant article but noted it would push them over the CIP target. \$7500 was the first estimate for the fence. Caisse will be getting an additional quote. Ezell noted we can take it from the ARPA funds but we have to prioritize our purchases. Caisse noted we can use the ARPA funds if there is anything left and noted they ended up creating a warrant article for a portion of the Alarm system which they were going to use ARPA funds, so there should be money left in the fund. Ezell noted we can also amend the budget but he thinks we can use the ARPA funds.

Patriotic Purposes – Up slightly

Conservation Commission - Up in 2023

Debt Services – Is zero, we have no long-term debt. Peter Allen noted It was brought to his attention that the auditor noted that nowhere in the budget is the debt for the bond. What we owe and what we paid out, must be specified on the budget. Ezell also noted we got our auditing results and we passed. Ezell also noted we are supposed to adopt an investment policy which we need to do this year. P. Allen will follow up and forward the information to the board.

Andy Paul spoke on behalf of the CIP regarding the **2023 Proposed Warrant Articles** and summarized the process that the committee goes through when determining what warrant articles to recommend noting they are recommending 6 warrant articles this year.

Paving – Asking for \$200,000 for this year's paving projects for 2023 and future years. This year will be repair work done on several roads in town estimated at \$215,000.

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Brush Truck - Asking for \$26,000. This is a request by the Fire department. They would like to reconfigure the F550 Brush Truck as the official Rescue truck. The old truck to be disposed of, it is past its useful life.

Fire Dept Vehicle Maint & repair – Asking for \$10,000 to be placed in the Fire Department Vehicle Maintenance and Repair Expendable trust fund. The Fire department wants to increase this fund to cover repairs on aging equipment.

Highway Garage door replacement - Asking for \$15,000 to replace one of the overhead garage doors on the highway garage. The highway department requested this because one of their trucks cannot fit into the garage.

Flagpole – Asking for \$15,000 to replace the town flagpole. Caisse noted we have 2 quotes and basically we need to cut down the old one and cut the stone. The new base is too big to put the stone back which they want to save. The new flagpole will require no maintenance and will stay white and not peel.

Alarm system – Asking for \$10,000 to replace the alarm system in certain municipal buildings. The alarm systems are obsolete. Caisse noted we may use some of the ARPA funds to do a complete update to all buildings and make all 4 buildings the same. We can keep better track of activity and the security will be an improved.

Andy Paul summarized that the total of the warrant articles is **\$276,000** which is in their range adding their target for tax leveling is \$275,000.

Ezell noted the total budget including the CIP warrant articles is **\$1,362,420**. It was asked if the treasurers salary request is included in this number. Ezell noted our wage increases are only given to our hourly employees adding that anyone else requesting a rate increase should do it in advance. The treasurer commented the salary increases should run across the board to everyone just to be fair, including the select board.

Cromwell read the last warrant article which is not asking for any money, noting that the diverse town land use committee did agree on this article to vote on approving a 5-acre portion of the 65-acre town owned lot 7A-36 (Known as the Skladany land), as the new location for the Highway department. Cromwell noted if this passes, we can get the land shovel ready which is big when applying for grants. Cromwell noted this will take a few years to complete. Cromwell added the town would need to approve any money spent. Cromwell noted there is a forum in 2 weeks to discuss this and encouraged the people to attend.

Motion to adjourn made by Caisse, seconded by Ezell, hearing closed at 7:57