

Town of Wiscasset
Budget Committee
Meeting Notes 7/28/2021

Budget Committee Attendees:

- Bill Maloney
- Katharine Martin-Savage
- Kim Dolce
- Anna Ridle
- Sharon Jacques
- Tom Joyce

- Dennis Simmons

Minutes:

- Meeting called to order at 6:00 pm on 7/28/2021 by Dennis Simmons.
- Introductions
- Congratulations to Anna Ridle, Katharine Martin-Savage and Tom Joyce for their appointment to Budget Committee.

- 1st Order of Business: election of officers - Chairman and Clerk
 - Chairman
 - Motion by Katharine Martin-Savage to elect Bill Maloney
 - Seconded by Sharon Jacques
 - Approved 6-0
 - Clerk
 - Motion by Bill Maloney to elect Tom Joyce
 - Seconded by Kim Dolce
 - Approved 6-0

- 2nd Order of Business: Discussion and recommendation of budget articles for the upcoming Special Town Meeting:
 - Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate \$51,402 for the Police Department School Resource Officer (SRO)? This appropriation will be partially offset with a contribution of \$10,000 from the School Department.
 - The vote by the town had previously failed. The rationale and process for voting on this again at the Special Town Meeting was explained by Dennis Simmons and discussed.
 - Sgt. Hatch is the current SRO. He also augments the police department resources in summer and at other times. 17% of his budget is paid by from the town budget for this work, the balance coming from the school budget. In the future he may move back to a full time police role in the town and this appropriation request is budgeted to support hiring of a replacement should that occur.

- Sharon Jacques commented that as a parent she views Sgt.Hatch as providing great value to students and said she has heard this from other parents. Others committee members concurred.
 - Bill Maloney called for a motion.
 - Motion by Katharine Martin-Savage
 - Seconded by Tom Joyce
 - Approved 5-1
- Shall the Town vote to appropriate an amount not to exceed \$55,000 from the Capital Reserve Account for the purchase of a Police Cruiser
 - The vote by the town had previously failed by less than 10 votes. The rationale and process for voting on this again at the Special Town Meeting was explained by Dennis Simmons and discussed.
 - Feedback from some voters who voted against was concern that the town had just bought a cruiser last year. The town keeps 3 cruisers. Two are high mileage cruisers that have required significant and expensive repairs. The objective is to get 6 years out of a cruiser and buy one every other year.
 - Tom Joyce asked about the rationale and process for getting a second vote at a Special Town Meeting. The answer was that this is a critical need, it was approved by the town meeting and there has been concern that the budget request and criticality of the issue had not been well understood.
 - Tom Joyce asked if we are confident that this appropriation is sufficient to buy the cruiser. Dennis Simmons said yes.
 - Kim Dolce asked if we only had one working cruiser when the other one was in the shop. Dennis Simmons said yes.
 - Bill Maloney called for a motion.
 - Motion by Sharon Jacques
 - Seconded by Anna Ridle
 - Approved 6-0
- Shall the Town vote to appropriate the sum of \$5,000 from the Undesignated Fund Balance
 - Background was provided about how the Schoonerfest project and funding request has developed over time.
 - Early on there was an understanding that this event would not cost the town. The Schoonerfest committee had difficulty raising funds and requested \$12K from the town. This was brought forward after the budget process was completed.
 - This was to come from town Celebration account. There are questions about whether it is appropriate to use the Celebration account for this. The other option is the Undesignated Funds account and the new request is \$5K. Appropriation from Undesignated Funds requires voter approval.

- Budget Committee members expressed multiple concerns. This is not a town sponsored event. There are other unknown costs to the town. It is unclear how many attendees will show up. The legal structure of the Schoonerfest organization, potential liabilities and insurance situation was not clear to the members.
 - Budget Committee members stated that this event is an attractive idea but should not cost the town.
 - Bill Maloney stated that he would abstain because he is a member of the Friends of Wiscasset organization which is involved with Schoonerfest, and called for a motion.
 - Motion by Tom Joyce
 - Seconded by Katharine Martin-Savage
 - Failed 0-5-1 Bill Maloney abstaining
- Other Business
 - Bill Maloney asked if the financial spreadsheets he has worked on with Dennis Simmons are ready to be sent to the other committee members. Dennis Simmons said there are a few updates that are required first.
 - Anna Ridle asked about the status of the Maine Art Gallery lease. Dennis Simmons said this is on the agenda for the Select Board to discuss the status and options.
 - Kim Dolce proposed that the Budget Committee, Select Board and other committees conduct workshops to work on a 5 year budget plan for the town.

 - Motion to adjourn by Bill Maloney at 7:15 pm
 - Seconded by Tom Joyce
 - Approved 6-0