

**TOWN OF BROWNVILLE**  
**BOARD OF SELECTPERSONS & BUDGET COMMITTEE**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**Tuesday, January 10, 2023 ~ 6:00p.m.**

*American Legion Post 92 - 67 Railroad Ave. Brownville*

1. Chairman of Board of Selectpersons opens meeting: At 6pm- Byron Weymouth

**Selectpersons Present:** Byron Weymouth, Shelly Ekholm, Kevin Emery. (Absent Jim Hartin and Dean Bellatty)

**Budget committee members present:** Jeff and Leesa Coates, Marie McSwine, Gary Chapman And Lynn Weston. (Absent: Mike Washburn)

**Employees Present:** Shawn Mitchell, Kevin Black, Alicia Harmon, Felice Lyford, Chris Crockett, Autumn Chadwick.

**Others Present:** N/A

2. 2023 Department Head Budget Presentations –

**Public Safety**

Shawn Mitchell, Fire Chief/EMA Director & Kevin Black, Public Safety Officer/Asst Fire Chief/Deputy EMA Director available to answer questions. Budget Committee asked about the number of air packs we have on hand and the fact that many are due to be replaced. We are applying for a grant to replace some in 2023, but will not hear until spring. Turnout gear – we have 32 members on our roster at this time, not all are interior firefighters (about 21 are active). New gear generally replaces interior first and older gear cycles down thru the roster (exterior, rehab, flaggers, pump operators etc). Last year we obtained 9 new complete sets thru ARPA funding. 3 other sets are in great shape and some are good (not needing replacement quite yet). About 15 sets are still old and should be replaced (20 yrs). National standards say they are good for 10 years. Budget philosophies vary. Could use Fire Sm Equip reserve to purchase turnout gear or budget for 2-3 replacement sets/year to cycle thru. Shawn applied for a grant for turnout gear but was denied. He is still looking at other opportunities. Discussed adding \$7,500 to the turnout gear line. Also, the fire auxiliary has been a phenomenal support system, giving more than \$20k for equipment, formal uniforms, jackets, and some “wish list” items. Although the fire budget shows an increase over \$17k, we continue to log an extraordinary amount of “volunteer hours”. In 2022 there were 2105 hours which saved the Town \$26,838 in wages. Question raised about any unexpended funds for EMS at year end and whether or not they roll to the Fire Reserve like the FD funds do. Felice will make that request with the auditors.

**Administration**

Felice Lyford, Town Manager and Alicia Harmon, Office Manager were available to answer questions. Discussion around the increase in Code Enforcement Officer and the need to have someone with regular office hours, records kept at the town office and availability to taxpayers. We have seen an increase in enforcement issues related to dangerous buildings, junkyards and other violations that may have been handled in the past with the help of law enforcement and the Town Manager. This change was discussed with the current CEO and agreed upon in December to offer on average 1 day per week (less in the winter, more in the spring/summer). Formerly, this was a stipend position with the CEO mainly working from home. We also added \$1,500 for another computer workstation at the Town Office as he uses his personal laptop at home. This would have our property software and town record access loaded on it for documentation purposes. The retirement request increased due to an increase in wages. This number is completely offset by the same amount of revenue that comes from money previously set aside to pay for employer contributions from MSRS.

### **Public Works**

Kevin Black, Operations Director available for a brief overview and to answer any questions.

### **Parks & Recreation**

The Rec Director was unable to attend as it was her first class to become an EMT. She had requested to add a line for internet at Davis Field for security and safety reasons. There is continued vandalism that could possibly be averted and/or offenders being held accountable with access to real time security camera footage. Director requested not to have a raise so she could add this service. Budget Committee and Board agreed Rec Director deserves the raise and should also have internet for security cameras and in case of an emergency as there is no cell service at Davis Field in the event of an emergency.

### **Unclassified**

Felice Lyford, Town Manager & Autumn Chadwick, Library Board Member were available to answer questions. In 2022 the library had 1600 patrons and they were open minimal hours with minimal staffing, the increased request reflects additional staffing and programs offered and accommodates the increase in minimum wage. Jeff Coates recommended checking with our senators as they sell made in the USA flags and could possibly be cheaper than what we currently pay.

**General Assistance** – No comments

**Assessments** – The only figure available for assessments was the County Tax at \$120,301. Education isn't set until the summer and overlay is set when commitment is done in July.

**Special Projects** – No comments

**Reserves** – Briefly discussed the recommended amounts do not differ from 2022; however, the Budget Committee would like to review the Capital Replacement Plan at the next meeting.

**Debt** – Manager distributed a breakdown of the Town's debt. We paid off our paving loan in 2022. All the remaining debt is in the Water & Sewer Departments and falls within the responsibility of the rate payers.

**Overall** – the budgets presented, without considering an increase in Education, reflect anywhere from 1.5-2 mil increase (also depending on how conservative we estimate our revenues).

3. Open Session – No comments

4. Future Budget Meetings Schedule

- Tuesday, January 24<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, January 31<sup>st</sup> at 6:00 p.m.

Closed Budget part of meeting at 8:35 pm

5. Board of Selectpersons Opened meeting at 8:36 pm

- Possible Purchase of Used Holder - Found a used Holder Sidewalk Plow in good condition on market place at the price of \$8,500 in Concord, NH. Would like authority to purchase, so long as it's in good condition and meets the needs of PW Dept.  
*Motion to purchase the Holder at \$8,500, plus travel expenses for 2 men to go pick it up, not to exceed \$10,000 (All inclusive), to be used from Highway/Public Works reserves, was made by Shelly Ekholm, Second by Kevin Emery, All in favor.*
- Roof Repair/Replacement at Snack Shack- The roof on the Snack Shack at the ball field has had shingles blown off (more than once) recently and it really needs to be replaced. Have an estimate/quote of \$2200 from Seth Lagoy/Plumblin Carpentry LLC to put a metal roof on.  
*Motion to move forward with replacing the roof on the snack shack by Seth LaGoy/Plumblin Carpentry for \$2,200 with funds to come from Town Owned Property made by Kevin Emery, Second by Shelly Ekholm, All in favor.*

- Special Town Meeting Warrant for 1/17/2023 - Solar Farm Moratorium  
*Motion to approve and sign warrant to hold a special town meeting on 1/17/2023 regarding Commercial Solar Facilities Moratorium Ordinance, made by Shelly Ekholm, Second by Kevin Emery, All in favor.*
- Engagement of Audit Firm for 2023 – Felice presented the agreement from James Wadman CPA to conduct the audit of 2022 financials. Need approval and signature.  
*Motion to engage James Wadman, CPA to conduct 2022 audit, made by Shelly Ekholm, Second by Kevin, All in favor*
- Review & Approval of Corrected Minutes from 3/15/2022 Meeting. The Maine State Retirement representative was conducting their year-end audit and asked about the additional ARPA premium pay and a copy of the vote where the Board approved it. We couldn't locate it in the minutes, but were able to pinpoint when it took place. Leesa looked back through her handwritten notes for that meeting and discovered the motion was documented on the spreadsheet I had passed out to everyone.  
*Motion to except corrected minutes with additional information and motions included from 3/15/2022 was made by Shelly Ekholm, Second by Kevin Emery, All in favor.*
- *Motion to sign Piscataquis County Assessors return of \$120,301 made by Shelly Ekholm, Second by Kevin Emery, All in favor.*

6. Adjournment at 8:50PM

*Motion by Kevin Emery, Second by Shelly Ekholm, All in favor.*

*Respectfully submitted,  
Leesa Coates, Selectperson Secretary*

**Selectboard:**

  
Byron Weymouth, Selectboard Chair

  
Shelly Ekholm

  
Kevin Emery

James Hartin

Dean Bellatty

**Budget Committee:**

  
Gary Chapman, Budget Comm Chair

  
Marie McSwine

Michael Washburn

  
Lynn Weston

  
Leesa Coates

  
Jeff Coates

