

Town of Brentwood Municipal Budget Committee
Minutes of January 15, 2024 regular meeting, held at Brentwood Town Office

Members: Jack Mitchell (chair), Michelle Siudut (secretary), Alina Arida, Letty Bedard (Swasey rep). *Absent:* Anthony Phillips, Jon Morgan, Gabbie Kelly
Guests: Stefanie Lewendon, Karen Clement, Chief John Ventura, Wayne Robinson, Joyce Keegal

Jack called the meeting to order at 6:11 pm. The pledge of allegiance was recited.

Meeting Minutes

Motion by Letty, seconded by Alina to approve the committee meeting minutes from December 18, 2023 as amended; passed 4-0

Motion by Letty, seconded by Alina to approve minutes from the meeting the committee attended at Swasey school on January 8, 2024; passed 4-0

Selectmen's Report - None present

Swasey School Board Report - Letty Bedard

Swasey school board approved some warrant articles, however Letty does not have official language. We will discuss them at the Budget Committee meeting scheduled for Feb 5 at 7 pm. Letty met with Heather Murray, HR person for SAU regarding the potential to combine health insurance options for school and town employees. Heather will reach out to her agent to discern options/impacts. The town currently has 30 (25 full time, 5 regular part time) employees who are eligible for health insurance.

Warrant Articles

It was noted there will be no ARPA funds used for any budgets or for any warrant articles.

Warrant Article 2 is a combination of 5 CRFs totaling of \$180,000.

CRF IT Hardware \$30,000 - There is currently \$78,253 in this Fund. The town has approved \$25K annually since 2020. This fund covers replacement of server, all computers and laptops for all departments on 5-year schedule. The higher requested amount this year is due to the increased cost of computers.

CRF Revaluation \$25,000 - There is currently \$118,085 in this Fund. The Town has approved \$25K annually since 2016. The last revaluation cost \$125K; the next valuation will be 2025. We have 300 additional parcels, which will add \$55 ea. Abatements are likely to increase, which will require additional money for legal.

CRF Maintenance of Town Buildings \$50,000 - The goal is to have \$100,000 in the Fund; it currently has \$95,555. This is for big-ticket items, not general maintenance which is part of

the Government Buildings budget. The increased request is due to the Rec Center needing to replace windows and a furnace this year.

CRF Fire Vehicles \$50,000 - There is currently \$292,000 in this Fund. The Town approved \$50K in 2022 and 2023. Chief is hoping to purchase a new truck in 2026 at a cost \$800-900K.

CRF Maintenance of Town Owned Bridges \$25,000 - There is currently \$21,000 in this Fund; the goal is \$50K. We have not added to this Fund since 2021.

Motion by Letty, seconded by Alina to approve \$180,000. After discussion, the members wanted to vote on each CRF separately; Letty withdrew her motion. Motion by Letty, seconded by Alina, to separate each CRF and voted separately; passed 4-0.

CRF IT Hardware \$30,000 - Motion by Letty, seconded by Alina to approve \$30,000; passed 3-1.

CRF Revaluation \$25,000 - Discussion to reduce the amount based on the fact that we do not have an accurate revaluation cost. Karen explained increases for additional parcels added since last valuation and unknowns for abatements. Motion by Alina, seconded by Jack to approve \$25,000; passed 4-0.

CRF Maintenance of Town Buildings \$50,000 - Looking to replace windows and furnace at BRC; there is not enough money in their revolving fund for this. Motion by Michelle to approve \$30K; there was no second. Motion by Letty, seconded by Alina to approve \$50,000; passed 3-1.

CRF Fire Vehicles \$50,000 - There is hope for a grant to help fund this purchase in 2026. Motion by Letty, seconded by Alina to approve \$50,000; passed 4-0.

CRF Maintenance of Town Owned Bridges \$25,000 - This amount would likely only cover engineering study. Motion by Letty, seconded by Alina, to approve \$25,000; passed 4-0

Warrant Article 3 CRF Police Facility request for \$25,000. This Fund was established for engineering design & construction. There is currently \$111,165 in the Fund. Motion by Michelle, seconded by Letty, to approve \$25,000; passed 4-0.

Warrant Article 5 CRF Public Safety Radios request for \$30,000. This would establish a new Capital Reserve Fund. Currently department budgets have small amounts for radio repairs, but not enough for replacement. Last year we raised \$168,000 by warrant article to replace the radios for the Fire Department. The Police Department needs \$55K, Highway Department needs \$17K to replace radios. There is an eight year life cycle for radios; each department would be on different year replacement schedule. Motion by Letty, seconded by Alina, to approve \$30,000; approved 4-0.

Warrant Article 6 CRF Highway Vehicles request for \$150,000. There is currently \$129,583 in the Fund. There are currently 4 6-wheelers; need another 6-wheeler. Will need to replace 3 trucks over the next 3 years at a cost of \$290,552 each (quote from July 2023). Wayne has spent over

\$20K to keep current trucks running. Trucks have lasted over 20 years, but we shouldn't expect that going forward. Motion by Alina, seconded by Letty, to approve \$150,000; approved 4-0.

Old/Other Business

Letty asked how to find encumbrances. Karen said the Town Report shows expense amount and shows the amount appropriated in the audit report.

Letty asked where the safer road money came out of; Karen said it was appropriated from several different budgets. Karen said historically the BOS does not want to see negative lines within a budget. The budget committee is less concerned about the appearance of a negative line, and more concerned about expenses being allocated to appropriate lines, to provide a clearer understanding of expenses and a more accurate year over year comparison.

Bylaws. Jack asked Michelle to send a complete set of bylaws with the signature page to Karen for posting on the website.

New/Other Business

Jack asked Karen if there is going to be child care at Town Meeting. Karen said Andy is working on that; she will confirm with Jack.

Karen stated the Town Report will be available March 5.

Stefanie Lewendon and Letty Bedard presented 3 drafts of what they would like to create as a Voter Companions, which were fantastic!

Motion by Michelle to adjourn; meeting adjourned at 8:53 pm.

Upcoming Meetings. The following schedule has been revised since our last meeting.

*Feb 5 2024 at 7 pm, Town Office: Budget Committee Meeting to review warrant articles

Feb 12 2024 at 6 pm, Rec Center: Budget Committee Meeting

Feb 12 2024 at 6:30 pm, Rec Center (snow date Feb 14): Budget Committee Public Hearing

Mar 6 2024 at 6 pm, Swasey School gym: Swasey School district meeting

Mar 12 2024 from 7 am to 7 pm, Swasey School gym: voting for town offices and co-op

Mar 16 2024 at 9 am, Swasey School gym: Town Meeting

Respectfully submitted,
Michelle Siudut, Secretary