

**Town of Brentwood Municipal Budget Committee**  
**Minutes of January 13, 2025 Meeting held at Town Office**

*Members Present:* Michelle Siudut (secretary), Gabbie Kelly, Kat Niemiroski, Jennifer Jones (Selectboard rep)

*Members Remote:* Jack Mitchell (chair)

*Members Absent:* Alina Arida, Brian Duffy (excused)

After a slight delay awaiting a quorum, Michelle called the meeting to order at 6:13 pm. The pledge of allegiance was recited.

Motion by Gabbie, seconded by Jennifer to allow Jack to attend remotely; Jennifer-aye, Gabbie-aye, Kat-aye, Michelle-aye.

**Meeting Minutes**

Motion by Jennifer, seconded by Gabbie, to approve the December 16, 2024 meeting minutes as amended; Jennifer-aye, Kat-abstain, Gabbie-abstain, Michelle-aye, Jack-aye; passed 3-0-2.

Motion by Jennifer, seconded by Michelle to re-open the December 9, 2024 minutes. A change was discussed and made regarding the number of police cars. Motion to approve minutes, as amended; Jennifer-aye, Kat-aye, Gabbie-abstain, Michelle-aye, Jack-aye; passed 4-0-1

For clarification on the above discussion, Jack asked the following be included in tonight's minutes: "There are 9 vehicles in current use, including 4 patrol cars used daily, one cruiser for details as a backup vehicle, one K9 cruiser, one vehicle assigned to Lt Doty, one vehicle for the supervisors and one pickup truck used for drug enforcement and training. There will be no additional vehicles added, however they would like to have the cruisers on a replacement schedule."

**Selectboard Report** - Jennifer Jones

Jennifer announced the new Town Administrator Andria Hansen will begin on January 20, 2025.

**Swasey School Report**

Brian Duffy was not present, no report.

**Budgets**

Jennifer said the Selectboard voted to modify 26 budgets, most of which were reductions. Jennifer noted there were some lines that were left slightly over-budgeted, as a cushion. Jack asked if the Selectboard is comfortable with the cuts in the event of unexpected expenses; Jennifer said yes.

Motion by Jack, seconded by Gabbie, to open all budgets for review; Jennifer-aye, Kat-aye, Gabbie-aye, Michelle-aye, Jack-aye; approved 5-0

*Executive Office:* Reduction in Selectboard line as one member does not take salary; other decreases for recruitment and advertising. Motion by Jack, seconded by Kat to approve \$20,905, a reduction of \$4,100

from our previously approved amount and a 16.4% decrease from 2024 budget: Jennifer-aye, Kat-aye, Gabbie-aye, Michelle-aye, Jack-aye; approved 5-0

*Town Administrator.* Reductions in salary line and related costs. Motion by Gabbie, seconded by Kat to approve \$121,942, a reduction of \$13,124 from our previously approved amount of \$135,066 and a 4.2% reduction from the 2024 budget: Jennifer-aye, Kat-aye, Gabbie-aye, Michelle-aye, Jack-aye; approved 5-0

*Town Clerk.* Reduction in office supplies. Motion by Michelle, seconded by Jack to approve \$93,839, a reduction of \$200 from our previously approved amount of \$94,039 and an increase of 22.5% over 2024 budget; Jennifer-aye, Kat-aye, Gabbie-aye, Michelle-aye, Jack-aye; approved 5-0

Michelle reworked some salary lines to provide a simple 2.5% increase to reflect social security increases and because many positions have had substantial increases over the last few years. She offered to put forth these numbers, IF the Committee would be open to discuss. They were not.

*Election.* The police detail line was removed, reductions in advertising and general supplies. Motion by Gabbie, seconded by Kat to approve \$6,552, a reduction of \$2,749 from our previously approved budget and a 62.56% decrease from 2024 budget: Jennifer-aye, Kat-aye, Gabbie-aye, Michelle-aye, Jack-aye; approved 5-0

*Tax Collector.* Reduction in the general supplies. Motion by Gabbie, seconded by Kat to approve \$94,938, a reduction of \$200 from our previously approved budget of \$95,138 and a 22% increase over 2024 budget; Jennifer-aye, Kat-aye, Gabbie-aye, Michelle-aye, Jack-aye; approved 5-0

*Information Systems.* Reduction to software. Motion by Gabbie, seconded by Jack to approve \$84,225, a reduction of \$617 over our previously approved budget and an 11.8% increase over 2024 budget ; Jennifer-aye, Kat-aye, Gabbie-aye, Michelle-aye, Jack-aye; approved 5-0

*Finance.* The cost for outsourced reconciliations was moved from the wages (Jillian) line to the Treasurer (Ambrose) line. There is no deputy treasurer at this time, but Jennifer has authority to sign checks. New accounting software may decrease treasurer hours. Motion by Jack, seconded by Gabbie to approve \$125,790, an increase of \$3,045 over the previously approved budget, and a 10.35% increase over 2024 budget: Jennifer-aye, Kat-aye, Gabbie-aye, Michelle-aye, Jack-aye; approved 5-0

Gabbie suggested moving Jillian's wages from the Finance budget to the Town Administration budget.

*Budget Committee.* Reduction in wages and associated costs. Motion by Michelle, seconded by Gabbie to approve \$67, a decrease of \$433 over the previously approved budget, and a 86.6% reduction from 2024 budget; Jennifer-aye, Kat-aye, Gabbie-aye, Michelle-aye, Jack-aye; approved 5-0

*Legal.* Reduction in engineering/surveying. Motion by Michelle, seconded by Kat to approve \$34,002, a reduction of \$43,125 from the previously approved budget, and a 8.4% reduction from 2024 budget; Jennifer-aye, Kat-aye, Gabbie-aye, Michelle-aye, Jack-aye; approved 5-0

*Planning Board.* Reductions in engineering/surveying, legal services and advertising. The Master Plan line was reduced to \$1 with the hope of creating a CRF so the plan can be revised all at once, rather than section by section. Motion by Gabbie, seconded by Michelle to approve \$114,707, a reduction of \$11,397 from the previously approved budget, and a 1.7% reduction from 2024 budget: Jennifer-aye, Kat-aye, Gabbie-aye, Michelle-aye, Jack-aye; approved 5-0

*ZBA.* Reduction in legal services. Motion by Gabbie, seconded by Kat, to approve \$404, a \$997 reduction from the previously approved budget and a 71% reduction from 2024 budget: Jennifer-aye, Kat-aye, Gabbie-aye, Michelle-aye, Jack-aye; approved 5-0

*Government Buildings.* Reductions in electric, heat, fire alarm, telephone, custodial, fire station, highway, recreation. Motion by Gabbie, seconded by Kat, to approve \$82,302, a reduction of \$25,769 from the previously approved budget and an 18% reduction from 2024 budget: Jennifer-aye, Kat-aye, Gabbie-aye, Michelle-aye, Jack-aye; approved 5-0

*Cemetery.* Reduction in land maintenance. Motion by Michelle, seconded by Gabbie, to approve \$13,740, a reduction of \$1,000 from the previously approved budget of \$14,704 and a 4% reduction from 2024 budget: Jennifer-aye, Kat-aye, Gabbie-aye, Michelle-aye, Jack-aye; approved 5-0

*General Government.* Reductions in travel, grant writer, postage, office supplies. Motion by Gabbie, seconded by Kat, to approve \$111,826, a reduction of \$11,110 from the previously approved budget and a 64% increase over 2024 budget (which includes \$20K for Brentwood Newsletter).

Jim Berlo suggested the town hold off on hiring a grant writer, as with the new administration grant opportunities may dry up, especially government funded grants. Jennifer said the grant writer has already been hired, we'll see how she works out, but she is not full time and has no benefits.

Voting were Jennifer-aye, Kat-aye, Gabbie-aye, Michelle-aye, Jack-aye; approved 5-0

*Police.* Reductions in officer wages and related costs, training. Motion by Kat, seconded by Gabbie, to approve \$1,400,987, a decrease of \$36,259 from the previously approved budget and a 11.5% increase over 2024 budget: Jennifer-aye, Kat-aye, Gabbie-aye, Michelle-aye, Jack-aye; approved 5-0

*Fire.* Reductions in overtime, training, heating, dues, vehicle repairs, vehicle fuel. Suggestion to pull the protective gear line and create a CRF. Suggestion to take out the new Deputy position and put before the town as a warrant was rejected.

Resident Liz Faria asked why the protective gear line was so high when we only have 4 staff; Jennifer responded the gear is also for part time and per diems.

Resident Jim Berlo asked if Equipment line could be removed and instead use the revolving Ambulance Fund. Jennifer said 2 recent pieces were purchased out of the Ambulance Fund; a fund balance goal and what that fund is for should be clarified; it was originally used to buy Ambulances. Motion by Gabbie, seconded by Kat to approve \$1,256,541, a reduction of \$41,220 from the previously approved budget and an increase of 24.7% over 2024 budget. Jennifer-aye, Kat-aye, Gabbie-aye, Michelle-aye, Jack-aye; approved 5-0

*Joint Loss Management.* Reduction in supplies. Motion by Gabbie, seconded by Kat to approve \$2, a reduction of \$239 from the previously approved budget and a reduction of 99% from 2024 budget: Jennifer-aye, Kat-aye, Gabbie-aye, Michelle-aye, Jack-aye; approved 5-0

*Emergency Management.* Reduction in general supplies, telephone. Motion by Michelle, seconded by Gabbie to approve \$4,627, a reduction of \$1,749 from the previously approved budget and a 69% reduction from the 2024 budget: Jennifer-aye, Kat-aye, Gabbie-aye, Michelle-aye, Jack-aye; approved 5-0

*Mosquito.* Motion by Gabbie, seconded by Kat to approve \$29,200, a reduction of \$1,000 from the previously approved budget and a 3% reduction from the 2024 budget. Resident Jim Berlo asked if there is data to support this expense. Jennifer mentioned neighboring towns which had casualties and Brentwood did not; she suggested he create a warrant article if he wants to remove the item from the budget.

Resident Liz Faria asked what the water treatment is; Jennifer referred her to Dragon Mosquito Control. Voting were Jennifer-aye, Kat-aye, Gabbie-aye, Michelle-aye, Jack-aye; approved 5-0

*Highway.* Reductions in electric, heating, vehicle repairs, vehicle oil, hand tools, signs, care of trees. Motion by Kat, seconded by Gabbie to approve \$812,637, a reduction of \$23,600 from the previously approved budget and a .7% reduction from the 2024 budget. Jack asked if the new building has been insulated; Jennifer was unsure but said that would come out of Government Buildings budget. Jennifer-aye, Kat-aye, Gabbie-aye, Michelle-aye, Jack-aye; approved 5-0

*Snow and Ice.* This budget has historically been overfunded. Some monies will be encumbered for sand/salt/cold patch. Motion by Michelle, seconded by Gabbie to approve \$96,784, a reduction of \$45,626 from the previously approved budget and a 58% reduction from 2024 budget: Jennifer-aye, Kat-aye, Gabbie-aye, Michelle-aye, Jack-aye; approved 5-0

Resident Jim Berlo questioned the legality of encumbering funds after end of fiscal year. Jennifer said they have not closed out the year and that encumbrances have historically happened in January. Gabbie asked for confirmation on the legality of this practice.

*Recycling.* ARPA funds are being used for this reduction; funds will also go towards this budget in 2026. Motion by Gabbie, seconded by Kat, to approve \$99,421, a reduction of \$43,629 from the previously approved budget, and a 41% increase over 2024 budget: Jennifer-aye, Kat-aye, Gabbie-aye, Michelle-aye, Jack-aye; approved 5-0

Michelle suggested encouraging residents to be conscious of what is purchased/disposed of and urge repurposing and/or donating items. Gabbie said her suggestion of a compost committee was turned down.

*Welfare.* Motion by Gabbie, seconded by Kat, to approve \$18,907, a reduction of \$1,500 from the previously approved budget, and a 25.5% decrease from 2024 budget: Jennifer-aye, Kat-aye, Gabbie-aye, Michelle-aye, Jack-aye; approved 5-0

*Debt Service.* Impact fees will be used to pay down the fire station bond. Motion by Michelle, seconded by Kat to approve \$215,100, a reduction of \$10,000 from the previously approved budget, and a 13.87% increase over 2024 budget: Jennifer-aye, Kat-aye, Gabbie-aye, Michelle-aye, Jack-aye; approved 5-0

Jennifer stated the Selectboard had hoped to offer a \$200,000 decrease, but achieved a \$319,631 reduction. This is a \$528,281 or 8.39% increase over the 2024 budget.

Gabbie left at 7:33.

Jack requested information on warrant articles; none at this time.

Doug Finan applauded the reductions; and asked what happens if the budget is overspent. Jennifer did not know the specifics, but there is a whole process we would need to go through for that situation.

Motion to adjourn 7:35 pm.

#### **Upcoming Meetings**

Jan 27 2025 at 6 pm: Regular Meeting

Feb 3 2025 at 6 pm: Regular Meeting

Feb 10 2025 at 6 pm: Regular Meeting

Feb 10 2025 at 6:30 pm: Public Hearing

Mar 3 2025 at 6 pm: School District Meeting at Swasey School

Mar 11 2025 7 am to 7 pm: Town Election

Mar 15 2025 at 9 am: Town Meeting

Respectfully submitted,  
Michelle Siudut, Secretary