Middlesex Budget Committee
Ad Hoc Meeting
Thursday, January 2, 2025
4:00 PM

Present: Zara Vincent, Mark Harris, Elias Gardner, Samantha Beaudoin

Meeting Minutes

4:03 Call to Order - Amendments - none added
4:05 Other Business:

- Review Draft FY 2026 Budget for reductions -
    - Round Robin for suggesting potential cuts ($5K or greater) - by Line # and Amount
        - Zara's thoughts on budget items -
            - With Sarah retiring, should more thought be given to salaries?
            - Line 60 - Computer Maintenance - amount seems excessive
            - Line 83 - Speed Enforcement - the contract hasn't been signed
            - Line 161 - Specialized Services - could cut here
            - Line 216 - Ledge Removal - could cut this, if needed
            - Line 218 - Mud Season Mitigation - could also reduce this
        - Sam -
            - Sam gave more background on Line 57 - Lister NEMRC - she felt pretty comfortable with cutting some of these $$, as she hadn't seen any used in her 10+ months as a Lister
            - Line 39 - Lister Wages - SAme gave some background on prior estimates and rationale for the higher wages for next year
        - Elias -
            - Salaries & Health Insurance for employees should remain as-is
            - Line 39 - Lister Wages - questioned the significant increase, and Sam provided the background for the increase
            - Line 57 - Lister NEMRC - felt this could be reduced
            - Line 60 - Computer Maintenance - reiterated that going to Cloud computing would likely save significant $$ in this category
        - Mark suggested the following, noting that to get down to a 10% increase for FY 26, approx. $105,000 needed to be cut -
            - Line 57 - Lister NEMRC, cut $20,000
            - Line 60 - Computer Maint, cut $10,000
            - Line 104, FD Stipends, cut $4,000
            - Line 137, Summer Road Gravel, cut $40,000
            - Line 161, Specialized Services, cut $10,000
            - Line 209, Grants/Town Match, cut $25,000
            - Total reduction of $109,000
    - Consolidate responses - most saw Lister NEMRC and Computer Maint as items to find savings
    - Find consensus on a set of reductions -
        - Agreement was reached to move forward with the $109,000 in reductions

        - This would bring the budget increase down to 9.76%
        - Zara had mentioned additional possible reductions in Highway, with Ledge Removal and Mud Season Mitigation as examples, and Mark suggested keeping those in reserve for Tuesday's SB meeting
    - Memo to Select Board -
        - Mark will write, and copy the group
        - Will be sent to the SB by Friday morning (1/3/25)
        - The memo will be the starting point for the SB discussion on the budget.
- Annual Budget Committee Report - Mark will draft this, along with the Budget section of the SB report, as soon as the budget is finalized.
- Other matters that may come before the committee - none discussed

Meeting was adjourned at 5:13 PM