

Approved 11/06/2019

Present: Mary Jo Holmes, Michael Nygren, Joshua Yokela, Gorden Muench Steve Bonaccorsi, Joe Miccile, Gene Cordes, Heidi Carlson, Leon Holmes Jr, Nicole Cloutier and Shawn Perreault.

Chair Holmes called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm in the basement meeting room at the Fremont Town Hall. All rose for the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Operating Budget 4312 – Highway Department**

Road Agent Leon Holmes Jr met with the Committee to present the 2020 Highway Department budget and Warrant Articles. Winter Sand costs are up and he has spoken to four different vendors. The increase is due to distance the companies have to travel to obtain the sand. Gristmill Road (Phase II) and Jacobs Cove will become Town roads and increase the Equipment hire line. The tree storm cleanup from Chester Road was approximately \$16,000 and was a hit on the budget.

Holmes is asking for three days per week of part-time help, used during paving projects, traffic control, and general maintenance. He has removed traffic control from the road projects line, as the Town can do this in-house with current staff more effectively. Road Agent compensation of \$4,500 is a stipend and he is available 365 days a year. Roads are being paved so he doesn't need as much gravel as prior years. They also save by rescreening dirt from ditches.

Plow Maintenance is up because they are just finishing rebuilding a plow instead of buying a new one. He has budgeted what he feels is adequate for maintenance of equipment. Truck maintenance is up by \$4,000; it now also includes the Town's 6 wheeler. Due to age, the vehicles require more up keep, but he feels it is cheaper than buying new. Due to the bottom line budget with storm expenses, he didn't do a lot of crack sealing.

Reconstruction work and binder coats of pavement are planned for Hooke Road and Ann Lane next year. To keep the budget down they will plan to do the final overlay the following year (2021). Each of these roads are 30+ years old. Painting lines is up due to his plan for repainting some white fog lines, which people have been asking for. The only yellow lines are on Beede Hill Road. Tree work is up due to the micro bursts that came through, and trying to have enough in this line to deal with this type of work.

Miccile asked if the Warrant Article for Chester Road would complete it. It does not, this is Phase II and Holmes Jr has a proposed number he brought to the Board of Selectmen of \$215,000. The Board of Selectmen's recommendation based on the amount of requested expense in 2020, was to do binder only on this half of the road. Holmes Jr agrees with the Board of Selectmen on the recommendation. Miccile asked if waiting a year will raise the cost. Holmes Jr said he could not predict as we are at the end of our current GMI paving contract.

He spoke of how the numbers were put together and his adjustments some of the contingencies. He said removing the contingency in the Beede Hill Road Warrant Article was a mistake. If there is any money left at the end of a Warrant Article project, it goes back to the general fund.

Nygren asked how much it will cost to finish Hooke Road and Ann Lane. Holmes Jr indicated it would cost an additional \$80,000 to finish both. Miccile asked about the rationale to only do a portion of the work. Holmes Jr said it is best to let the roads sit for a year before the wearing coarse of pavement. He further said Beede was done all at one time due to the amount of traffic the road sees. Cordes said the Board would rather have part of the work done as opposed to having the whole thing turned down by the Town. He is trying to do a mix of keeping up with Main Roads and fix/repair of the side roads. Cordes encouraged the Committee to travel Hooke Road and Ann Lane to note their condition.

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There was discussion about last minute changes to the Warrant such as last year relative to the Bridge and other changes on the floor of Deliberative Session. This led to discussion about the Sandown Road Bridge project and the Town's work on the next bridge, which is Martin Road.

Carlson outlined updated information on the Town's location in the Bridge Aid Program and that we would be eligible for reimbursement funding as of 07/01/2020. We do not have updated engineering and construction numbers yet.

NH Highway Block Grant revenue to Fremont is \$121,931.38 next year. This would offset the budget's tax impact from \$625,558 to \$503,628.

There was continued discussion about the micro burst storms which hit a couple of times this summer and how to fund for such occurrences. There was discussion about Capital Reserve versus Town Expendable Trust Funds. The town is looking at a Town Expendable Trust Fund for weather emergencies (different than the Winter TETF that exists). This would be spent for emergencies and wouldn't need to be funded every year. This led to discussion about how often such storms happened and the overall budget impacts.

Yokela asked if Holmes felt Hooke and Ann were the worst roads. Holmes Jr said they were and detailed issues.

There was then lengthy discussion about the trucking damage on roads (referring to Shirkin Road) and why it had deteriorated faster than the planned 20 year cycle of a road. There was lengthy debate about the standards and how road construction is undertaken now versus years past. There was also discussion about the ongoing commercial development in Epping, which Fremont has no knowledge of generally until after the fact, nor can we predict.

There was also discussion about the Town's Class VI portion of Shirkin Road, which is the only commercially zoned area in Fremont.

Holmes Jr was thanked for his time, and he offered to come back if the Committee had additional questions. The Committee is leaning toward voting on this budget with the other larger departments in December.

### **Parks & Recreation Commission (4520)**

The Committee had asked the Parks & Recreation Commission to come to provide more information about the Camp Fremont plans for 2020 and the overall budget. Chairperson Nicole Cloutier joined the Committee meeting at 8:00 pm.

Chair Holmes asked about holding Camp at the Fields and how that will work. Cloutier detailed the proposed purchase of a 20x20 tent to provide shade or protection from weather. They can make a gym day plan with the school if needed. The tent could be used by other groups as well. Cloutier feels that the Camp hasn't been used as much in some years because it wasn't long enough and parents still had to find programs for their children to round out the summer or camps that lasted longer. Using the fields would allow the fields and the concession stand to be used more as well. She envisioned the tent being on the left of the basketball court. The cost of the proposed tent is \$1,400 including shipping. The tent would be put up before the start of camp and taken down as soon as camp was over.

Cloutier said she would like to see 30-35 kids and feels offering the longer number of weeks will be more appealing to someone looking for summer work. This would provide a week off after and before school. There was discussion about returning counselors, and there is some from year to year. With no camp this

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year, it may not happen as readily, but those positions will be advertised after there is a Director and Assistant.

Cloutier said that speaking as a parent, she had to use a different camp the year Ellis was closed, and her kids expressed a desire to be with their friends and not in another town. She feels that is what makes Camp Fremont a success because kids get to do what they love with their friends. There is no plan for before and after care and Camp hours will be 8:00 am to 4:00 pm.

Cordes reiterated that the Director/Assistant jobs are posted and the goal is to make sure we have interest and personnel to commit to doing this before year end. The Committee asked about how to gauge the community's interest and Cloutier said the goal is to have the answers early enough so parents can sign up for camps not later than early spring (planned by February vacation). She feels people would rather be here, so getting the answers early will help us from them going some where else. Cordes said that if we move this forward and we have staff to meet the minimum goal, everyone would understand that employment would depend on enrollment.

Nygren felt we really should do a survey to make sure we have the interest. He feels we need to have feedback to make sure this program is going to be a success before we hire people and then find out we don't need them. Cloutier said the program has not run because we didn't have kids, it's been lack of staffing. The max number would be about 40 kids, this number depends on bus capacity and number of staff. The Camp is open to kids who have completed kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

Questions were asked about the default line (amount) for mowing and labor, and Carlson will have to check into that.

Because we didn't have Camp in 2019, \$21,000 was not used in the Park & Rec line and Carlson stated that this was isolated out, and the revenue proposed will be used an offset for the setting of the tax rate.

Cloutier then proposed updating the Director's salary line to \$7,600 to cover approximately \$20 per hour (as a plan) for the Director's position. This includes all of the planning and execution of the Camp Program.

Cloutier then talked about her plans for a Pavilion Warrant Article. Cloutier has talked with Renee King who works at Home Depot and is talking to people in order to get all the details and quotes. Carlson said she had collected some information from other towns as well. Cordes felt we really need to know the details before talking about it and asked when the details would be ready. Cloutier said she will try to have the information next week. She feels we have great community members that will donate time and resources to help us save on this. She would like to have the worst case and then hope we don't need all of the money. Holmes asked for clarification of the Warrant Article passing and the need for a tent. Cloutier said they would buy the tent regardless if we get the pavilion or now because we don't know when it will be done or if it will pass.

Cloutier was thanked for her time and left the meeting at approximately 8:35 pm.

**4313 Bridges:** Carlson said \$1,500 has been included in this line to maintain the warranty on the new bridge deck, and this covers an annual engineering inspection.

**4316 Street Lights:** Carlson detailed that \$5,940 is the annual cost for all of the Town's street lights.

Holmes said they would vote next week.

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Carlson also detailed out a \$1,000 reduction in the request for the Executive budget, based on being able to purchase the QuickBooks renewal this fall with the other ongoing computer work. She will provide an updated expense sheet next week.

**Direct Assistance 4442:** Carlson circulated current expense reports showing the welfare budget is greatly overspent already in 2019. The Coordinator has asked to raise the budget by 10% over current expense. The cases might not have increased, but the needs have. This is required by law and we are the last stop after State and/or Federal Programs have been accessed. Holmes asked about Raymond Community Action, and Carlson said they are still a resource. Miccile made a motion to recommend \$20,580 for Direct Assistance. Muench seconded and the motion passed 7 Yes – 0 No – 0 Abstain.

Motion was made by Cordes to approve the October 23, 2019 meeting minutes as amended, seconded by Bonaccorsi. Motion passed 6 Yes – 0 No – 1 (Muench) Abstain

Holmes moved the *Rules of Procedure* discussion to the next meeting.

### **School Budget if any follow-up**

Muench said the School Board is working to get their budget done by the Budget Committee's deadline. Holmes received an email from Sue Penny about the process, but the School Board just got their books last week. Next Tuesday at 6:00 pm there will be the public meeting in the basement of the Town Hall for a presentation of the budget and the Budget Committee is invited to attend.

On November 12<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm at the Ellis School Library there is a public hearing to discuss options for the future of Fremont high school students.

Motion made to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 by Yokela, seconded Cordes. Motion passed 7 Yes – 0 No - 0 Abstain.

The next meeting will be held at 7:00 pm on Wednesday November 6, 2019 in the main floor meeting room at the Town Hall, for review of the School District budget.

Respectfully submitted,

Shawn Perreault  
Recording Secretary