

## **Grafton Budget Committee Minutes July 20, 2023**

**Members present:** Ed Grinley (Chair), Catherine Mulholland, Bonnie Haubrich, Sandy Griffin, Russell Poitras (Select Board)

Others present: Paul Vogt

The meeting was called to order by Ed at 6:01pm. Minutes from the May 4, 2023 meeting were reviewed. Russell made a motion to accept the minutes; seconded by Catherine. All in favor.

In reviewing the departmental budgets, Sandy highlighted that we are examining only a portion of the overall budget, i.e. the revenue stream for each department is not taken into account. Ed commented that Dottie Ernst, Treasurer is working on that. Additionally, Sandy noted that while the Dispatch Fees (\$20,045.46) were included in the Summary, the fees were not included on the Selectman's budget. Russell made a notation to correct the issue with Sara.

A discussion followed regarding a CIP (Capital Improvement Plan). Russell stressed the importance of a CIP for all departments to successfully provide for items such as equipment replacement, staffing increases, etc. He is working closely with various departments and the Planning Board to encourage development of a 10 year plan. He also suggested a revolving account for the Police Department. Outsourcing police officers for safety duty could be an income stream for the town.

Russell feels the budget process should include a spreadsheet with appropriations as well as an explanatory sheet for the increases/decreases on line items. This process would provide the same information to both the Select Board and Budget Committee on which to make decisions. Russell is going to discuss this approach with the other Select Board members. Bonnie agreed that explanations are more important than basing budget decisions on historical figures. Catherine mentioned that spending should be fundamentally on need rather than category.

Ed asked Russell if there were any major concerns for the upcoming budget. Russell mentioned the Highway Department seeing a significant spike in their budget to compensate for work that was not done in past years, and, therefore, more costly now to repair roads. With a 10 year CIP provisions could be made, for example, for replacing the town's 4 year old grader; aligning wages competitively with surrounding towns; and provide adequate training for employees.

Sandy made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:23pm. Catherine seconded. All in favor.

**Next Meeting Date: Thursday, September 7, 2023 @ 6pm at Town Hall**

Respectfully submitted,  
Sandy Griffin