

Town of Deering, N.H. Budget Advisory Committee (BAC)

Draft Meeting Minutes
November 14, 2023

BAC Members Present:

Stephen Fogelson – Chair
Michelle Johnson – Vice Chair
Lou Ellen Beard
Laura Martinage
Robert Carter – Secretary

Board of Selectmen present:

Jill Smith
Steve Diers
Roy Watson

Others present:

1. Meeting called to order at 6:31
2. Review of November 7 meeting minutes
 - a. S Fogelson requested adding clarification to item 4.a regarding the addition of \$1.00 to the Police Dept Line 130. Clarifying language was provided and a motion to approve the minutes as amended was made and seconded.
 - b. Minutes of November 7, 2023 approved as revised
3. The **Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA)** budget was reviewed. There was no representative from the ZBA to discuss the budget. Their proposed budget remains unchanged from 2023 at \$507.00. No additional comments or discussion by the BAC.
4. BAC recommendations for the **ZBA Budget**.
 - a. Recommend the budget as it is presented.
5. Gary Samuels was present to provide input on the **Conservation Commission** proposed budget.
 - a. The part time Lake Host budget is not going up; there is carry over from this past year given the inclement weather.
 - b. There is a request for funds for a water testing program, to start testing residential drinking water wells, on a voluntary basis. Discussion ensued as to the proper budget method of allocating funds for such a program, with a Warrant Article suggested as the best approach.

- c. Concern was expressed if this against the Town's Constitution. G. Samuels asked for permission to call the State and ask if this was a valid program. He was directed to call the NH Municipal Association.
6. The BAC recommendations for the **Conservation Commission** Budget include:
 - a. BAC suggested removing \$15,000 from Con Comm budget line 253 – Water Testing, leaving \$600 in place for that line, and moving the \$15,000 to a Warrant Article.
 - b. Line 254 is to be increased from \$500 in training and certification to \$1,150.
 - c. Line 255 postage is to be increased to \$100 after discussion of increased training
7. Carol Baker was present to provide input on the **Town Clerk & Tax Collector** Budgets.
 - a. The positions of Town Clerk and Tax Collector are combined in the Town of Deering.
 - i. The positions could be split into two distinct positions by a vote at Town Meeting.
 - b. Carol will be moving out of Town and as such is not eligible for the Town Clerk position, which is an elected position. Tax Collector is an appointed position.
 - c. The current wage rates in Town are competitive for a “new” hire, and are reasonable for “experienced” employees in the respective positions.
 - d. The positions are full time positions at 36 hours/week.
 - e. Discussion on postage and the year to year variability based on election cycles was had.
 - f. Discussion on the proposed cost of phones lines items 34 and 64, compared to the actual usage.
8. The BAC recommendations for the **Town Clerk & Tax Collector Budgets**.
 - a. Adjust the proposed phone budgets in lines 34 and 64 downward from \$1,080 each to \$840 each to be consistent with actual usage.
 - b. Adjust line 63 for postage down from \$4,000 to \$3,000.
 - c. Add a line item for the cost of a required audit which will be triggered by Carol's departure.
9. Meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.