

Budget Recommendations Advisory Committee  
Friday, October 21, 2022  
8:15 AM  
Nowak Room, Town Offices

Members Present: Bob Kelly, Chair; Christine Soutter, Vice Chair; Andrew Elliott, Eduardo Contreras, Kathy Corson, Christopher Zigmont, Chris Newport, Enna Grazier, Judy Rowan, Anthony Zwaan

Members Absent: Liz Canada

Others Present: Town Manager Russ Dean; Finance Director Corey Stevens; Senior Accountant Laura Zogopoulos; and Select Board members Niko Papkonstantis, Julie Gilman, and Nancy Belanger.

Mr. Kelly called the meeting to order at 8:15 AM.

1. Overview

Ms. Grazier said she'll move quickly through the level-funded smaller budgets. The Department heads have a richness of knowledge in their areas and often work late or on weekends. Employee recruitment and retention continue to be a challenge, but the cost of living adjustment has been very helpful with retention.

2. Select Board

Ms. Grazier said there's a slight adjustment to General Expenses, which the Select Board uses to recognize employees and volunteers. There's also a slight decrease in insurance. Otherwise this budget is level-funded. Mr. Contreras said we don't anticipate any major budget increases or cost-saving opportunities here.

Ms. Zogopoulos said the Select Board total is \$20,968.

**MOTION:** Ms. Corson moved to approve the Select Board budget total of \$20,968. Ms. Soutter seconded. The motion passed 10-0.

3. Town Manager

Ms. Grazier said line item 55050, Conferences, Rooms and Meals, increased by \$1,000, bringing it back into line with pre-Covid events. Line item 55088, Dues, has increased slightly. Line item 55171, Legal and Public Notices, has increased by \$400 because advertising rates have gone up this year. Line item 55198, Office Equipment and Leases, is up slightly due to the cost of the contract increasing. Line item 55291, Subscription Costs, has increased.

Dr. Zwaan asked what dues are paid with the \$16,700. Mr. Dean said most of it goes to NHMA, The New Hampshire Municipal Association, which gives us representation on a legislative level and a local resource for questions about legislative matters. ICMA is the International City Manager's Association, the flagship organization for City and Town Managers, which offers a number of resources. NHAMH is Town

Managers and Assistant Town Managers. Ms. Soutter said these memberships are standard and are worth it. These organizations offer training to town staff and volunteers as well.

Ms. Zogopoulos said the Town Manager budget is \$263,231.

**MOTION:** Ms. Soutter moved to approve the Town Manager budget of \$263,231. Dr. Zwaan seconded. The motion passed 10-0.

#### 4. Tax Collection

Ms. Grazier said line item 55224, Postage, has increased due to rate increases. The Tax Collector position is open, but we do have some candidates. The benefits budget is at the high estimate pending the position being filled. Ms. Corson asked how long it's been open, and Mr. Dean said a month. We're optimistic we'll be able to fill it soon.

Mr. Contreras asked what town employees get when they leave. Mr. Dean said they're only paid for any vacation and personal leave they've accrued. Retirees have their pension paid by the retirement system, not the town, but if they've worked for us for 20+ years we buy back half their sick leave accrual, up to 60 days.

Ms. Zogopoulos said the Tax Collection total is \$114,508.

**MOTION:** Ms. Soutter moved to approve the Tax Collection budget of \$114,508. Dr. Rowan seconded. Dr. Zwaan abstained. The motion passed 9-0-1.

#### 5. Assessing

Town Assessor Janet Whitten was present to discuss the budget. Ms. Grazier said line item 55088, Dues, increased to \$290. Line item 55180, Mapping, and line item 55224, Postage, increased as costs increased.

Ms. Zogopoulos said the Assessing total is \$241,473.

**MOTION:** Ms. Soutter moved to approve the Assessing budget of \$241,473. Dr. Zwaan seconded. The motion passed 10-0.

#### 6. Legal

Ms. Grazier said the Legal budget is proposed level-funded, with no changes. She looked back at actuals from the last five years, and \$80,000 is right in the middle. Mr. Contreras asked what a high year looked like. Ms. Grazier said the highest in the last four years was \$102,000, and the lowest was \$70,000. Mr. Dean said last year we had four bargaining agreements, so used more legal counsel.

**MOTION:** Dr. Zwaan moved to approve a budget of \$80,000 for Legal. Dr. Rowan seconded. The motion passed 10-0.

#### 7. Transportation

Ms. Grazier said the COAST budget is funded from the Transportation Fund, which comes from auto registrations. This is a separate placeholder of \$1. Mr. Dean said the fund gets \$3.75 out of each registration.

Ms. Gilman said when we did the original warrant article, the fund was for transportation for the elderly and people in need, but according to legislation it can also

go towards sidewalks and other infrastructure needs. She's personally disappointed in COAST's service and doesn't think Exeter is well-served.

Mr. Contreras asked why we put in \$1 instead of \$100. Mr. Kelly said it's a placeholder. If we took this away, we wouldn't have any way to fund it.

Mr. Dean said COAST has a Board of Directors that meets every month. We have two representatives there, Dave Sharples and Kristin Murphy. If there are issues of service with Exeter, we can raise it there.

**MOTION:** Dr. Zwaan moved to approve the Transportation budget of \$1. Dr. Rowan seconded. The motion passed 10-0.

#### 8. Debt Service

Ms. Grazier said there was an increase in Debt Service for the Rec Building and Westside Drive Engineering. Mr. Kelly said there's no changes that we can make to this budget.

**MOTION:** Dr. Zwaan moved to approve a Debt Service budget of \$1,507,570. Mr. Kelly seconded, but Ms. Corson said the Chair can't second. Ms. Soutter seconded. The motion passed 10-0.

#### 9. Human Resources

HR Director Melissa Roy was present to discuss the HR budget.

Ms. Grazier said the Employee Reclassifications line which was in this budget has been moved to the General Fund. Ms. Roy said there's a line that has typically been carried each year so that Department heads can request a reclassification. If approved by the Town Manager and Select Board, that money can be added to the Department's budget. The Select Board approved a reclassification study from ARPA funds; we haven't done it since 2014, and it's recommended every 5 years. We contracted with MRI to do that process. That money has been moved to the Benefits line. We're looking to implement changes over the next few years. Mr. Dean said this is a market study with an internal equity component. It's meant to bring us in line with comparable communities. We're hoping to get a result in Jan/Feb of next year. Ms. Roy said each year the line is \$15,000 and this year it's \$40,000, but that doesn't mean it will get spent. We will go through the process and see where we stand. Mr. Dean said we used \$31,500 from ARPA for MRI. Ms. Roy said the study will re-evaluate all of the responsibilities of 140 non-union employees and 30 SEIU members. It will look at our steps and wage classification plan. The \$40,000 is separate, and would be divided out to the Departments to correct wages according to the study's recommendations.

Dr. Zwaan said \$40,000 seems too low, and should be increased. Mr. Kelly said our role is not to micromanage, it's to review the budget. If this isn't enough, none of us are qualified to say what enough is. The budget was \$15,000 and we're increasing it to \$40,000, and that might be a problem for taxpayers. Mr. Zigmont said if the acquisition of new employees is more expensive than retention, it's in the best interest of taxpayers to make these recommendations.

Mr. Dean said ARPA funds could be a revenue offset over several years, through 2026.

Mr. Kelly said this is important, but it's important to buy a new fire truck too. He recommended approving the \$40,000 and letting the Select Board take the BRC discussions into account.

**MOTION:** Ms. Grazier moved to support \$40,000 for line item 55371, Employee Reclassifications, as an incremental number which is likely to increase further. We recommend that the Select Board and the Town Manager work on raising that as needed. Ms. Soutter seconded. The motion passed 10-0.

Ms. Grazier continued discussing the HR budget. Line item 55091, Education/Training, has been reduced because the training around the MUNIS transition was paid for in 2022. Line item 55200, Office Supplies, has been reduced because the Department is working to reduce the amount of paper used and do more online work.

Mr. Newport asked why the budget went from \$115,000 to \$188,000. Ms. Grazier said because of the proposed part-time position. The HR Department works on administrative/compliance with employee records, employee development and training, addressing complex individual issues, archives, and benefits administration. The HR Director's time is consumed by administrative tasks, which shortchanges employee development and archive work. The purpose of the new 20 hour/week position is dealing with benefits and payroll, communication, and helping with the MUNIS records. This will allow the HR Director to accomplish our expectation of managing more complex issues. The subcommittee supports creating this position.

Ms. Roy said previously, the Department was barely functioning. HR is really challenging right now. Some of her work takes months, fending off lawsuits with the town and supporting employees. For tasks that need to be filed, she's working nights and weekends, because there's not enough time. She's also been assisting the Town Manager. The 20 hour/week position, which would be hourly and not benefits-eligible, would give employees more support. Right now we're not being proactive, we're just being reactive to crises. If we make a mistake because of lack of time or resources, there could be a lawsuit.

Mr. Zigmont said he's surprised that it's not a full-time request, because this Department is critical for retention and employee support.

Dr. Zwaan said we have Ms. Roy's position and a full-time position already. What is the ask for next year's budget? Ms. Roy said it's for an additional part-time person at 20 hours a week.

Dr. Zwaan said he sees a conflict in having the HR Director also be the Assistant Town Manager. Mr. Dean said he worked in this split position when he was with another community. It's not unusual for another Department to function as an Assistant Town Manager. In our case, it's working very well.

Mr. Dean asked the committee to add \$700 to the line item 55088, Dues, for ICMA dues for the Assistant Town Manager. The new total would be \$1,334.

Dr. Rowan asked what work has been missing with the staff. Ms. Roy said training and development. Right now we're not able to do employee relations activities. We need to start focusing on DEI [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion], mental health and

balance, and support. The work environment and people's requirements have changed a lot in the last five years.

Dr. Zwaan asked about the EAP [Employee Assistance Program]. Ms. Roy said that's a program we provide, but people have to come in to initiate it.

Mr. Zigmont asked why the budget for Ms. Roy's position is all in HR. Mr. Dean said that's historically how it was broken up, but we could look at it a different way.

Mr. Elliott asked if the 20 hour position is permanent, and Ms. Roy said yes, it would be for the long-term. There's an ongoing need.

**MOTION:** Dr. Zwaan moved to revise line item 55088, Dues, to \$1,334. Dr. Rowan seconded. The motion passed 10-0.

Ms. Zogopoulos said the Human Resources total is \$180,786.

**MOTION:** Dr. Zwaan moved to approve the Human Resources budget of \$180,786. Mr. Elliott seconded. The motion passed 10-0.

#### 10. Town Clerk

Town Clerk Andie Kohler was present to discuss the budget. Ms. Grazier said the Town Clerk budget is level-funded. The subcommittee recommends supporting this with no changes.

Mr. Kelly asked for an update on the archival project. Ms. Kohler said the Department tries to restore a book every year. We reduced that line item to \$2,500 but we're still progressing.

Ms. Zogopoulos said the Town Clerk total is \$385,342.

**MOTION:** Dr. Zwaan moved to approve the Town Clerk budget of \$385,342. Ms. Corson seconded. The motion passed 10-0.

#### 11. Elections

Ms. Grazier said there's only one election next year. The town has purchased 10 Poll Pads, which are being paid for by a Parks surplus.

Ms. Kohler said with the Poll Pads, the Ballot Clerk asks to scan your license, or you can manually input your information. Your name comes up with your address and party affiliation. We print out a ticket, and you take the ticket to get the ballot. There's no waiting in alphabetical lines. We should get these in time for the March election, hopefully in December. We may do a mock election at Town Hall.

Ms. Kohler said in line item 55323, Voting Machines Maintenance, we need to add \$3,000 for the Poll Pads, for a total of \$3,900. There's maintenance starting in year 1 and ongoing.

Ms. Corson asked if having these would reduce workers, and Ms. Kohler said it could. We have 14 - 16 ballot clerks at elections, and the Checklist supervisor will have an extra person in some years. In the future, we may only need 6 people instead of 12. Mr. Zigmont said there will be some additional assistance needs. Ms. Kohler said any reduction will be over time. At the last election primary, we didn't have enough people to work.

Ms. Corson asked about new ballot counting machines, and Ms. Kohler said the State is looking at new machines that are slow and cumbersome. We don't have to use them, and we would rather stay with LHS because they're local and responsive. We don't know if the LHS machine has been approved by the State yet.

Dr. Zwaan asked if the Poll Pads would be supplementing the physical checking of the list. The security of elections is a concern. People might be skeptical. Ms. Kohler said by law we still have to maintain a paper checklist. You check in with the Poll Pad and get a ballot, and people in the back check it off on the paper checklist. It reduces human error because they don't have someone standing in front of them while they do the checking.

**MOTION:** Ms. Grazier moved to increase line item 55323, Voting Machines Maintenance, by \$3,000, making the total \$3,900. Ms. Corson seconded. The motion passed 10-0.

**MOTION:** Mr. Newport moved to approve the Elections budget of \$15,533. Ms. Soutter seconded. The motion passed 10-0.

#### 12. Town Moderator

Ms. Grazier said like Elections, this budget has been reduced in line with the number of elections.

**MOTION:** Dr. Zwaan moved to approve the Town Moderator budget of \$754. Mr. Zigmont seconded. The motion passed 10-0.

#### 13. Information Technology

IT Director Andy Weeks and Network Administrator Steve Bailey were present to discuss the budget.

Ms. Grazier said everything in this budget follows previous years. It's not level funded, but there are no huge changes. They're finalizing a server upgrade but are still waiting on parts. The next server upgrade will be in 5 years or so.

Mr. Bailey said there was an overall budget increase, but we had a lot of projects paid by ARPA funds last year. We're almost underbudget from what we had last year. The cost of services is going up.

Ms. Grazier said line item 55048, Computer Software, was lower in 2022 due to use of ARPA funds.

Mr. Contreras asked about Aristotle. Mr. Bailey said we had a security audit completed in 2021. One recommendation was to get a logging service which correlates logs from all of the servers, networking devices, and PCs, and provides a single location for us to look at the logs daily. If we had a hack or ransomware, we could figure out where that came from.

Dr. Zwaan asked if the actuals don't show what came from the ARPA funds, and Mr. Dean said yes, last year it was removed from the budget. Ms. Roy said \$75,000 of the IT budget last year was paid for by ARPA, approved by the Select Board.

Mr. Contreras asked if IT has a plan to accommodate public internet access. Mr. Bailey said we have public wifi in the Town Offices, which is separate from our internal

network. Ms. Corson said during Covid, the library increased the outside access to their internet due to being closed.

Ms. Grazier said the budget had small increases here and there, mainly due to service cost increases. The cost of Zoom has gone down because we're not using so many Zoom meetings.

Mr. Newport asked about phone services. Mr. Bailey said most phones are VOIP/digital, but we do have 18 copper lines coming into our buildings, and 12 of those are leased and have increased. We have an audit with our phone rep next week to see what we can do to bring down the costs. 8 of those lines are at the Public Safety Complex.

Ms. Zogopoulos said the IT total is \$331,562.

**MOTION:** Ms. Soutter moved to approve the IT budget of \$331,562. Mr. Elliott seconded. The motion passed 10-0.

#### 14. Planning and Building

##### a. Conservation Commission

Natural Resources Planner Kristin Murphy was present to discuss the budget. Ms. Grazier said there was a small surplus as interns were not hired in 2022, but the subcommittee recommends keeping that in the budget because they will be hired in 2023. This committee has support from community volunteers, who are essential to maintaining the trail network. Raynes Barn work was on last year's CIP, but we have been unable to find a contractor, and we're anticipating that costs are rising.

Ms. Murphy said we issued two RFPs with no response. She spoke with the Contractor who did our initial quotes and repair needs, and he may be available to help us work on the project, but costs have gone up \$74,000. We did find a grant opportunity for \$50,000. We would have to eliminate items to stay within the budget; we would only be able to repair and paint two sides of the barn. The additional \$50,000 would allow us to do all repair and painting, which would keep the barn in good condition. We would eliminate treatment for the silo and the installation of a fire detection system. Grant proposals are due at the end of December, and we would know within 60 days. If approved, the project could start in the spring. The project involves a grant from LCHIP, so we need to have conversations with them on modifying the current budget. If we don't get the grant, there's a Moose Plate grant of \$20,000 we could apply for. With that budget, we could get the structural repairs complete and treat two sides, the south and east side.

Mr. Newport said that he mountain bikes and helps maintain the trails, which are an enormous asset to the town. Mountain bikers spend money in town.

Ms. Zogopoulos said the Conservation Commission total is \$10,089.

**MOTION:** Mr. Zigmont moved to approve the Conservation Commission budget of \$10,089. Ms. Corson seconded. The motion passed 10-0.

Ms. Grazier said for the CIP, the Conservation Commission proposes a fund allocation of \$50,000, which would help us be ready for land acquisition and grant matching funds. Mr. Elliott asked about the current fund value, and Ms. Murphy said this

\$50,000 would bring it to \$150,000. Ms. Grazier said we will discuss this further with the CIP.

b. Planning

Town Planner Dave Sharples and Natural Resources Planner Kristin Murphy were present to discuss the budget.

Ms. Grazier said the changes in this budget are mainly due to the newly full time Natural Resources Planner, which is in its first year. The reduction in PT is due to that change. There's an Admin Assistant who has a 4 day work week of 20 hours, which is working well.

The Sustainability Committee has not used the full amount budgeted in line item 55384, so the staff advised reducing it to \$1,250. Mr. Dean said when we got the initial budgets in August, we reduced budgets by \$372,000 prior to bringing it to the BRC. Mr. Kelly said this line item provides educational opportunities and training for committee members, so they should be using this funding. Mr. Zigmont, who is on the Sustainability Advisory Committee, said there is a lot of internal expertise in the committee. The projects that we've looked to address haven't aligned with training, but we should look to use the funding. Mr. Sharples said some will be expended by 9/30. There was a conference last week that multiple folks attended.

Ms. Grazier said line item 55050, Conference/Rooms/Meals, has increased, due to post-pandemic travel and conference attendance. Line item 55088, Dues, has increased. This is calculated based on Exeter's growing population.

Mr. Sharples said the budget is minimally changed; we're basically level funded. The Admin Assistant was budgeted 30 hours when he [Mr. Sharples] started here, but we worked to determine what was actually needed. 20 hours can handle the workload.

Dr. Rowan asked who is looking at Climate Change mitigation and impacts. Mr. Sharples said himself, Kristin Murphy, the Sustainability Advisory Committee, and the Energy Committee. We've done several studies, such as comparing stormwater regulations and peak flooding, and there is a flood and freeboard zoning amendment possible in 2023. Ms. Murphy said we have a lot of data modeling sea level rise in Exeter, which is informing the proposed zoning changes to accommodate it. Public Works is well-informed on what our future conditions may be. Paul Vlasich works to incorporate that into new proposals. We worked with UNH and had a sustainability fellow do a study, which she [Ms. Murphy] is undergoing training to do annually. Mr. Berube is working on an asset analysis on the risks of climate change to our wastewater facility.

Ms. Zogopoulos said the Planning total is \$281,534.

**MOTION:** Ms. Soutter moved to approve the Planning budget of \$281,534. Ms. Grazier seconded. The motion passed 10-0.

c. ZBA, Historic District, Heritage Commission



Ms. Grazier said the ZBA has a level funding request. The subcommittee recommends the budget of \$4,326 without changes.

**MOTION:** Ms. Soutter moved to approve the ZBA budget of \$4,326. Dr. Zwaan seconded. The motion passed 10-0.

Ms. Grazier said the Historic District Commission is level-funded.

Mr. Elliott said the 2022 actuals are slightly lower than the budgeted numbers. Is that normal? Mr. Kelly said the grant matching hasn't been used, but someday it will be.

Dr. Rowan said regarding line item 55171, Legal Public Notices, the actual was \$859, but the budget request is \$100. Mr. Kelly said line items are estimates, and can get moved around. Ms. Grazier said we did have to do something that wasn't budgeted for. Is that what to expect moving forward? Mr. Sharples said legal public notices are a function of the amount of applications we receive. The applicant pays for them, so there's a revenue offset.

Mr. Dean said this is a coding issue, and the notices should be in the ZBA budget.

**MOTION:** Dr. Zwaan moved the Historic District Commission budget of \$2,825. Mr. Newport seconded. The motion passed 10-0.

Regarding the Heritage Commission, Ms. Grazier said the budget is level-funded and the subcommittee recommends funding it.

**MOTION:** Ms. Soutter moved to approve the Heritage Commission budget of \$893. Ms. Grazier seconded. The motion passed 10-0.

Ms. Grazier said the Renewable Energy budget is a \$1 placeholder.

**MOTION:** Mr. Zigmont moved to approve the Renewable Energy budget of \$1, Ms. Soutter seconded. The motion passed 10-0.

d. Planning CIP

Ms. Grazier said there are two CIP requests in Planning. The first is a request for \$50,000 for a Capital Reserve Fund for ADA improvements. Mr. Sharples said we brought this forward to voters. There are federal audits on grants and we need to meet certain requirements. We didn't have an evaluation and transition plan. We expected a study at \$35,000, so we asked for \$50,000 to pay for the study and to have seed money for improvements. That got taken out and we had a \$35,000 warrant article. We hired Disability Access Consultants at \$19,400. They created a report in the DACTrak software with hundreds of recommendations from small to large. Now we meet the legal requirements. There's no requirement to actually do these improvements, but we should start funding some of these. He recommends establishing a capital reserve fund with an annual appropriation.

Dr. Rowan said we should make it clear that this money is for the implementation, not the study.

Ms. Grazier said the second CIP request in Planning is for a Downtown Traffic Parking and Pedestrian Flow analysis. Mr. Sharples said this is different from the possible 2024 "Complete Streets" study and the Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan which is underway. The downtown study's purpose is to focus primarily on downtown traffic management and parking. We don't manage our parking right now, there's no enforcement. There's about a 75% utilization rate. The Planning Board supports this. They've been approving new units and there's no parking for these places.

Mr. Dean said he wanted to acknowledge Mr. Sharples' work on grants, which has gotten hundreds of thousands of dollars for Exeter. Mr. Sharples has also been the point person on our solar array and Public Safety building.

e. Code Enforcement

Code Enforcement Officer Doug Eastman was present to discuss the budget. Ms. Grazier said it's a level funding request, which was supported by the subcommittee. This is a Department with a wealth of knowledge in one person, Mr. Eastman, who is the Code Enforcement Officer and also the Electrical Inspector.

Mr. Eastman said Barb McEvoy runs the whole department and works with the HDC and Zoning Board. Mr. Eastman is the Chairperson of the E911 Committee, which meets once a month. To do the DACTrak project, we had to have an ADA coordinator, which Mr. Eastman took on as well. He's meeting with Jeff Beck in Maintenance on tackling these projects.

Mr. Elliott said it would be helpful for the public to see these projects being tackled, even a yearly update. Mr. Dean said the report is on the website but we'd have to create a report on updates.

Mr. Contreras asked about the E911 committee. Mr. Eastman said this is something that came from the State. Police and Fire needed to coordinate their address system. We changed a few street names and address numbers to a more standard addressing system.

Ms. Zogopoulos said the new Code Enforcement total is \$285,195.

**MOTION:** Dr. Rowan moved to approve the Code Enforcement total of \$285,195. Mr. Elliott seconded. The motion passed 10-0.

15. Economic Development

Economic Development Director Darren Winham was present to discuss the budget. Ms. Soutter said this was a newly created position 8 years ago when we hired Mr. Winham. The budget is level-funded. There's still investment in town. It's a desirable location for business and residential.

Mr. Winham said things are excellent in this town. Some spaces need rehab, but there are not a lot of vacant spaces. We have great schools and access to the highways and train. One thing we don't have is a Property Maintenance Code which would give us a tool to enforce improvements.

Mr. Kelly asked about the Consulting Services budget. Mr. Winham said that, working with other local communities, we put an ad in the Patriots Yearbook this year.

Ms. Grazier said line item 55050, Conferences/Meals/Education, was not spent this year because the cost of travel in 2022 was so high that Darren postponed his plan to finish his Economic Development training. It's now in the budget for next year.

Dr. Rowan said this position was controversial, but now we're reviewing this budget in minutes thanks to the clear evidence of its benefits to the town.

Ms. Soutter asked about upcoming projects in town. Mr. Winham said part of Osram was sold to a company that will add 45 employees and expand to 100,000 square feet. Glerups is a shoe company out of Denmark and is going onto Continental Drive.

Mr. Dean said the TIF [tax increment financing] project on Epping Road has been a financial success.

Ms. Zogopoulos said the Economic Development total is \$159,558.

**MOTION:** Dr. Zwaan moved to approve the Economic Development budget of \$159,558. Ms. Grazier seconded. The motion passed 10-0.

Ms. Zogopoulos said the Total Planning and Development budget is \$744,422.

#### 16. Finance

Finance Director Corey Stevens and Senior Accountant Laura Zogopoulos were present to discuss the budget. Mr. Kelly mentioned that Mr. Stevens was a long-time member of the BRC.

Ms. Grazier said this department is basically level-funded. Any changes are just due to staffing changes and an increase in bank fees because of implementing additional safeguards such as real-time reporting. This is reflected in line item 55017, Bank Fees. Mr. Stevens said that if there were an issue that needed to be paid attention to, it would be found in hours rather than days. It's about greater safeguards and making sure the Department is aware.

Dr. Rowan said over the years, there have been concerns about the MUNIS software and computer systems in Finance. Where are they now? Mr. Stevens said MUNIS is a software that we haven't had the opportunity to completely unpack. It's complicated, but it does what we need it to do. We need to train others in town on how to use it. There's a major upgrade we're implementing in 2023, and the newer version has a better interface. Once we learn it better, it should be just fine.

Ms. Zogopoulos said the new Finance total is \$342,588.

**MOTION:** Ms. Soutter moved to approve the Finance budget of \$342,588. Ms. Grazier seconded. The motion passed 10-0.

#### 17. Treasurer

Ms. Grazier said the Treasurer budget is a level-funded request. There was a slight drop in supplies because we are saving on paper.

**MOTION:** Mr. Zigmont moved to approve the Treasurer budget of \$9,692. Ms. Corson seconded. The motion passed 10-0.

Ms. Zogopoulos said the overall Finance total is \$708,260.

18. Trustee of Trust Funds

Ms. Grazier said this budget is level funded. Mr. Dean said these are custodians of the capital reserve funds and others. Mr. Zigmont said this is an elected position, an outside person to keep an eye on these funds.

**MOTION:** Ms. Grazier moved to approve the Trustee of the Trust Funds budget of \$891. Ms. Soutter seconded. The motion passed 10-0.

19. Benefits and Taxes

Mr. Kelly said we reaffirm our support for the \$40,000 request for line item 55371, Wage Reclassifications. There was a reserve for Health Benefits increases which came in lower than expected. Mr. Dean said the rate depends on claims that come in within the pool.

**MOTION:** Ms. Grazier moved to approve \$211,929 for Payroll Taxes & Benefits. Ms. Soutter seconded. The motion passed 10-0.

20. Unemployment

**MOTION:** Ms. Corson moved to approve the Unemployment budget of \$2,320. Dr. Zwaan seconded. The motion passed 10-0.

21. Worker's Comp

Ms. Zogopoulos said the new total is \$232,160.

**MOTION:** Ms. Corson moved to approve the Worker's Comp budget of \$232,160. Ms. Grazier seconded. The motion passed 10-0.

Dr. Zwaan asked if the decrease reflects unfilled positions. Mr. Kelly said no, it's about risk. There were not a lot of claims. Mr. Dean said our premium went down 7.3%.

Ms. Zogopoulos said the new Insurance total is \$77,629.

**MOTION:** Ms. Corson moved to approve the Insurance budget of \$77,629. Ms. Grazier seconded. The motion passed 10-0.

Ms. Zogopoulos said the overall Taxes & Benefits total is \$524,038.

22. Meeting Calendar

Mr. Kelly said the next meeting is Wednesday October 26 at 6:30 to discuss Police and Fire. Dr. Zwaan said the Select Board is meeting on Monday and the BRC has been invited. There will be an updated presentation on the Public Safety Complex.

23. Adjournment

Mr. Kelly adjourned the meeting at 12:19 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Joanna Bartell  
Recording Secretary