

**Beacon Falls Board of Selectman  
Beacon Falls Board of Finance  
10 Maple Avenue  
Beacon Falls, CT 06403**



**BEACON FALLS BOARD OF SELECTMAN  
BEACON FALLS BOARD OF FINANCE  
VIRTUAL Special Monthly Meeting & Budget Workshop  
February 16, 2021  
MINUTES  
(Subject to Revision)**

**1. Call to Order / Pledge of Allegiance**

Members Present: G. Smith, M. Krenesky (7:02 PM), C. Bielik, T. Pratt, S. Leeper, K. Brennan, D. Fennell, W. Hopkinson

Members Absent: J. Carroll

Public Present: Finance Manager N. Nau, Library Director E. Setaro, Building Inspector Jim Baldwin, P&Z Chair D. Molleur, Fire Chief/Fire Marshal B. DeGeorge, Asst Chief/Asst Fire Marshal C. Brennan, Fire Admin J. Weid, Elio Gugliotti of the Citizens News.

G. Smith and T. Pratt called Special Meeting/Budget Workshop of the Boards of Selectmen and Finance (respectively) to order at 7:00 PM. G. Smith led the assembled in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**2. Budget Transfers:**

- a. Board of Selectman: There are 4 budget transfers being presented this evening as follows.



**TRANSFERS**

02/11/2021

#	Transfer From	Transfer To	Amount	Description
1	10.90.83.1170 Contingency	10.90.39.1440 COST,	\$ 250.00	Unbudgeted membership dues increase. Just made aware.
2	10.90.83.1170 Contingency	10.90.15.1042 Wages - Assessor Clerk	\$ 5,000.00	Position moved from 25 hours to 35 hours/week. Police Clerk removed from transfer.
3	10.90.83.1170 Contingency	10.90.53.1040 Wages - Police Clerk	\$ 2,200.00	Wages for position increased by \$3.00/hour on 2/8/21
4	45.90.59.1001 Jib Pole Project	45.90.57.1001 Side Conveyor Project	\$ 3,200.00	Side conveyor project was underbudgeted, while jib pole has fund remaining.
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$ 10,650.00</b>	

**C. Bielik made a motion to approve the transfers as presented. G. Smith seconded the motion. 2 ayes.** M. Krenesky abstained as he had just logged into the meeting. The motion passes.

- b. Board of Finance: **S. Leeper made a motion to approve the 4 budget transfers as presented. K. Brennan seconded the motion. All ayes.**

### **3.Budget Workshop Discussion**

- a. Library: Library Director E. Setaro reviewed her operating budget in detail. She is requesting increases to the PT Wage line to meet minimum wage increases, to the Computer Software/IT line, so the library can add new databases and expand IT. Department Supplies and Professional Development lines have been kept flat. E. Setaro spoke about the success the Library has had with "Make and Take" programming, as they are reaching more people during the pandemic with take home activities that are not limited by space. Therefore, she is requesting an increase to their Programming line. M. Krenesky asked if the library has included 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary programming and there is one program planned which is included in the budget. G. Smith noted that any other 150<sup>th</sup> programming would be under the budget for that event. G. Smith applauded the library for their outreach during the pandemic and encouraged continuation of these programs, even after the library reopens to the public. E. Setaro stated the library plans to continue these programs, as their mission is to reach as many people as possible and the take home programs are convenient and well received. They hope to reach 150 children with the summer reading program and plan more outreach to senior patrons. T. Pratt complimented the Library Director and staff for an outstanding job. N. Nau noted the Library has added their performance metrics to their operating budget request and E. Setaro added the metrics are for items that the library tracks regularly.
- b. Capital Requests for the Library: E. Setaro has 2 Capital requests for the Library, an air purification system which would be installed in the 2 air handlers for the library, as a safety measure for patrons and staff. When asked about maintenance of this UV system, S. Leeper noted that the UV bulb would be replaced every 2 years, at minimal cost. The second request is to complete the finish on the new shelving which the library purchased with the State Everybody Learns Grant. The request would improve the look of the shelving in its space. N. Nau encouraged E. Setaro to review her IT needs, as the Finance Office is compiling an IT capital project list.
- c. Land Use- Building: Building Inspector Jim Baldwin reviewed his operating budget in detail. He noted that with the pandemic, he is using a mail-in system with permits which is working well. Major projects in town, including Chatfield Farms and O&G, have led to an uptick in permit volume this year and he is quite busy. He is proposing a salary increase, based on an 18-hour work week. The budget has lines for phone, mileage, and miscellaneous expenses. He has added lines for the ICC membership and CT Code Cycle books, as these are updated every 2 years and he expect to

purchase these books after October 2021. He added a line for the Land Use Administrator at 10 hours per week, as the new position which began February 1<sup>st</sup>, will have hours that will reside in his budget. Revenues have been very good and his projections for FY2022 are strong. He expects the Land Use Admin position will contribute to the operations of his office, as the Building Department ensures compliance and provides a valuable service to the community. T. Pratt asked if 18 hours is sufficient, and J. Baldwin noted that if another large residential project kicks off soon, it will strain the department. He is employed by 2 towns and balances his time. Seymour has also provided him with a Town vehicle, so to use the municipal vehicle in Beacon Falls an MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) must be worked out between the 2 towns, in place of mileage for his personal vehicle. G. Smith will reach out to Seymour on this matter.

- d. Planning & Zoning: Don Molleur – P&Z Chair spoke regarding the Planning & Zoning Commission budget, which has the ZEO wages based on 20 hours per week. He asked where the ZEO mileage is located and it is currently paid from miscellaneous expenses. He asked if P&Z legal fees could be tracked in his budget and asked for more detail on permit revenue. The Finance Office can provide the revenue and legal expenses detail. In working with the ordinance committee and reviewing fees in surrounding towns, P&Z is far behind with their fees. D. Molleur plans to present a new fee structure to the P&Z commission this Thursday night, and hopes for a vote to change fees by the April meeting. This will increase revenue from P&Z. G. Smith and M. Krenesky noted that both legal and engineering costs are summed in one line in the budget and the town is inclined to keep those costs together. The Land Use Admin position will work to develop a permit tracking system, where every permit is assigned a unique number and data is in a complete cohesive format. The Boards thanked Jim Baldwin and Don Molleur for their input and participation.
- e. Fire Department: Fire Chief/Fire Marshal Brian DeGeorge began by reviewing the operating expenses and lines where increases are requested:
- Vehicle Fuel – The Fire Department is seeking an increase to provide fuel cards to their members as an incentive, as volunteers are responding to emergencies using their own vehicles.
  - Mandatory Vehicle Maintenance & Equipment Testing – The line-item increase is to cover new NFPA requirements on tire replacements. Beacon Hose are seeking to take some of the peaks and valleys out of the maintenance budget, with more regular replacement cycles.
  - PPE – The Cancer bill for the Fire service has increased requirements for gear replacement. W. Hopkinson asked about the cancer bill and Chief DeGeorge explained that the State bill requires new gear which fits better and is replaced more often to reduce cancer risk in first responders. It also requires some responders to have duplicate sets of gear, such as hoods. The gear is replaced more frequently, provided to probationary responders, and washed regularly. PPE replacement is on a 10-year cycle.
  - Hose Replacement – The current Hose Replacement amount is not keeping in pace with the amount of hose line that BHC needs to replace each year. The increase is to avoid mechanical failures in older hoses and due to price increases. They are replacing all types of hose – attack hose to supply hose.

- Air Bottle Replacement/Air Pack Replacement – The operating budget has a line item for air bottle replacement and BHC is proposing an operating line for air pack replacement. BHC also has a Capital Request included for 23 air bottle replacements this year at 4500 psi. The NFPA has changed the bottle size requirements to 45-minute bottles from 30-minute bottles. Beacon Hose will be phasing out the 30-minute bottles, although they can still be used for training. J. Weid explained that in the past air bottles were all purchased at one time, so spacing out the replacements is the plan moving forward. The air packs that BHC owns, are two cycles behind the current ratings, and they are getting harder to repair. The new operating line for air packs will replace 3 packs per year. Packs are also replaced with vehicle purchases, so as new vehicles come online, packs are part of outfitting the vehicle, which will keep the replacement cycle manageable.
- Building Maintenance – There is a one-time increase in this budget for a renovation of the office to allow shared space with the Fire Marshal office. The project is split between Fire Department and Fire Marshal budget. Finance will move this project to make it a capital request. C. Bielik noted the project is a good candidate for LOCIP grant funds.

#### Capital Projects –

Vehicle Replacement: Chief DeGeorge noted that Vehicle Replacement is the biggest area of concern for the Beacon Hose. The Fire Department has been looking at their apparatus for efficiency, practicality, and usage. They would like to replace the 1995 Engine 2 with a pumper and a tanker. This vehicle was due for replacement last year. Engine 3 is a 1999 engine which is next on the replacement list. BHC is asking the town to establish a revolving vehicle replacement fund, which can be funded each year to cover the lease purchases of these vehicles. Pushing off the replacement of the older vehicles will lead to a backlog. BHC is also looking to extend the life of the 2012 Dodge Ambulance to put the ambulances on a 5-year rotating replacement cycle. They are seeking an investment of \$25,000-\$30,000 in the suspension of this ambulance to prolong its life. The request outlines contributions to a Vehicle replacement fund with a 2022 contribution of \$415,000 and \$150,000-\$165,000 contributed over the next 2 years. B. DeGeorge feels the lease purchase program is the way to make the cycle of vehicle replacement work, leveling out the costs and ensuring vehicles are replaced on time. He stressed the time sensitive nature of vehicle replacement.

Brush Truck Engine 5 Replacement: Chief DeGeorge has another vehicle replacement proposal involving selling the Engine 5 and replacing it with a Chevy Silverado, a trailer, 2 UTVs and 2 skid pumps. The project is \$96,000, but he expects the town could receive proceeds from the sale of Engine 5 in the amount of \$15-\$20,000.

Paratech Struts – Capital project request for vehicle stabilization kits for \$28,899. This project has been requested in the past and is a potential AFG grant application. The struts that the department currently uses do not meet the same weight requirements for lifting heavy vehicles.

Spreaders/Cutters/Rams - This is also a repeat request for new extrication equipment replacing equipment which is 15-30 years old. N. Nau noted that this equipment can be packaged with the Struts in a grant application as it has a similar function.

T. Pratt added that if the AFG grant for the Compressor is not approved, then the Compressor replacement will be a capital project for FY2022, as the compressor is broken and BHC is currently filling their bottles at neighboring departments.

Generator – The final capital request is a new 60Kwh generator at the Fire Department, which serves as the EOC and services the Senior Center which is the shelter for storms. The current generator is 30 years old and recently required expensive repairs.

- f. Fire Marshal – C. Brennan joined the conversation regarding the operating budget for the Fire Marshal and the advances that this department has made Over the past year. In operating, the Department is seeking wage increases for all positions, and in their Expense line they have a project for the Office Renovation. The Fire Marshals are now inspecting businesses on a yearly cycle and they have begun community outreach program of installing smoke detectors. The Deputy Fire Marshal is budgeted for 10 hours per week, so he is seeking an increase to his hours. For Capital they are seeking a town vehicle for the Deputy, as the position often is hauling equipment, and use of a personal vehicle is not optimal. B. DeGeorge and C. Brennan spoke about the advancements of the department, the commercial inspections which have taken numerous hours, the regular annual inspection cycle. They have begun to bring in inspection revenue. Rather than imposing fines, C. Brennan noted they are working with businesses that have violations to produce a plan which will bring them up to code and move them towards compliance. The progressive plans are working well, and a safer community is the result. B. DeGeorge noted that the outreach into homes is very helpful for the department to assist homeowners with potential fire hazards. K. Brennan spoke in support of the progress that the department has made, their service to the community and accountability standards the office is setting. The Boards thanked B. DeGeorge, C. Brennan and J Weid for them through presentation and for their participation.

2. Adjournment:

**C. Bielik made a motion for adjournment of the Board of Selectmen at 9:18 PM. M.**

**Krenesky seconded the motion. All ayes.**

**W. Hopkinson made a motion for adjournment of the Board of Finance at 9:18 PM. K.**

**Brennan seconded the motion. All ayes.**

Respectfully submitted,

Erin A. Schwarz  
Finance Assistant