

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



**BEACON FALLS BOARD OF SELECTMAN
BEACON FALLS BOARD OF FINANCE
Joint Budget Workshop
February 22, 2022 MINUTES (Subject to Revision)**

1. **Call to Order / Pledge of Allegiance:** M. Krenesky called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM and led the assembled in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members Present: P. Betkoski, M. Krenesky, T. Pratt, W. Hopkinson, K. Brennan, S. West, G. Smith (7:05 PM), D. Fennell (7:25 PM)

Members Absent: J. Carroll

2. Others Present: Finance Manager N. Nau (7:10 PM), One member of the public
3. **Approval of Minutes:** P. Betkoski made a motion to approve the 2/8/2022 Budget Workshop minutes. M Krenesky seconded the motion. All ayes. K. Brennan made a motion to approve the 2/8/2022 Budget Workshop minutes. W. Hopkinson seconded the motion. All ayes.
4. **Public Input:** E. Schwarz read Al Banyancsky's public input form which was sent in through the Town website, regarding the Parks budget. Mr. Banyancsky requested that monies be dedicated to the Matthies Park house and to security cameras at Matthies Park and Toby's Pond, as discussed in previous budgets.
5. **Budget Discussion:**

G. Smith would like to begin by going through the Capital Requests for this meeting, so we can schedule the large departments to come back and speak to their requests. The bulk of the capital project numbers have been inputted by Finance, which full descriptions to follow:

- a. Town Clerk: The Town Clerk has submitted a \$5,000 project for Ordinance Codification. This is in addition to the open project which he has in place. The \$5,000 project will cover the codification of recent ordinance revisions, as several ordinances are currently under review by the Ordinance committee and awaiting a Town Meeting to revise. (From Town Clerk Fund)
- b. Finance: Accounting Software project: The Finance Office is using the open balance of this project for additional software modules and the asset tagging project. There are no new funds being requested, just a note that this project is ongoing.
- c. N. Nau entered the meeting and began the discussion with Fire & EMS:
 - i. N. Nau has submitted an AFG Grant for Extrication equipment and it totals \$64,464. The Town's match for the AFG Grant (\$1967) was budgeted in large part last year. There is a small additional match required now that we have the final grant application figure (\$251).

- ii. Painting of the Firehouse: This project is for \$7,260 coming from Undesignated Fund Balance.
- iii. Rope Rescue: This \$8,455 project is a potential grant application for the renewal of rope rescue equipment and is currently set to become a Grant Application.
- iv. Station 2 – N. Nau explained that this project has spanned several years. The current plan for the building puts the entire project at \$53,500. We have allocated funds in past years, so the delta is \$7,511, needed to complete the work as quoted. The State is reviewing this project which has been expanded to design the workout room. The boards agree, before an investment of this size takes place, the town should retain ownership of the building. N. Nau reviewed the history of Station 2, and the Town has spent \$55,000 in investments made into this building to date. With this project, the Town would have spent a total of \$105,000 on the building.
- v. Mezzanine for the Firehouse: This \$45,000 project is for use of the space at the Firehouse more efficiently. There is a quote behind this. N. Nau asked does this mezzanine have cancer prevention storage, separating gear from the apparatus floor? The Chief confirmed that this project did not have a cancer prevention component. AFG has made Health & wellness initiatives a priority for Firehouses, but they will not allow you to significantly change of the footprint of the building. BHC should include these Health & Wellness priorities, for cancer prevention, in their future.
- vi. Lease Payments: The new tanker and the engine will have a lease payment of \$163,000 for the first year coming from Fund Balance.
- vii. Ambulance Financing: This is another non-negotiable lease payment on the existing ambulance for \$44,158. There is an opportunity to pay off this lease with no penalties, and we are eligible to pay this off at any point in time. It would behoove us to use the insurance proceeds which are in undesignated fund balance to pay off this lease. N. Nau will pursue a payoff figure for the current ambulance lease
- viii. Vehicle Replacement Fund – BHC is proposing an annual contribution of \$185,000 to the Vehicle Replacement Fund for Fire vehicles. This amount does not take into account vehicle replacements for any other departments. The Vehicle Replacement Fund is not specifically for fire apparatus but would serve all the Town department vehicle needs.
- ix. Replacement of Engine 5 with Trailer and quads: \$98,500 project - BHC is proposing the trade in of Engine 5 for new vehicles to be used in firefighting brush fires.
- x. Ford Transit Van – \$52,000: This vehicle would carry all the traffic control equipment for Fire Police traffic control.
- xi. 2012 Ambulance Replacement – BHC is proposing the replacement of the 2012 Ambulance with an ambulance identical to the 2020 version. Production time for the new ambulances is 18 months, so they are proposing this replacement now due to the wait time. T. Pratt noted that there was a decent amount of investment in repairs to the older ambulance, and what is the state of the older ambulance. Vehicle costs are high at present, and would it be worth waiting, if feasible, for the costs to come down? \$50,000 project for down payment.

- d. Fire Marshal:
 - i. Fire Marshal vehicle: \$27,000 additional funds; This is a continuation of the project from last year, increasing the budget for the vehicle as costs for vehicles have increased significantly. N. Nau will be looking at the State contract pricing for these trucks.
 - ii. Fire Extinguisher Training: N. Nau has applied for a FEMA FP&S Grant for this training equipment totaling \$34,212. If the grant comes through this would be an additional money owed for the Town's match to the grant for \$388. The grant application was submitted recently, and awards would be issued by September 2022. The life expectancy of the equipment is a decade, without many recurring costs.
- e. Planning & Zoning: G. Smith noted that the POCD is required every 10 years. The Town will be working with the NVCOG, town staff and P&Z commission to update the document which was created 10 years ago. The Town plans to work on this project as a joint effort. Last time the POCD was completed by a third-party consultant, and we will be building off this original document. With NVCOG, Town Planners and input from Enforcement Officers, Boards and the Land Use Committee, which is reforming, the \$24,000 project budget should be adequate.
- f. Police:
 - i. The carport from last year's budget is an outstanding project which should be completed in the spring. At present, there are no new monies requested.
 - ii. The Police have added an Interceptor SUV as a \$54,969 project for this year. The quotation is from the State contract. The vehicle would be replaced using Private Duty Fund monies. N. Nau needs to ensure a radio for the new vehicle is included in the price.
 - iii. Body Cameras/Dash Cameras: D. Fennell asked about this project and this large expense has been included as a operating budget addition. The cameras would be on a 5-year lease and become a revolving operating expense for the Town.
- g. Parks & Recreation: 3 projects submitted
 - i. TPA Plan – This is a repeating project; They have requested an update to the plan that we have for Matthies Park which was created in 2009 for \$12,900.
 - ii. Playscape - Additional playground equipment which would include a glider and slide. This project is eligible for a K. Matthies Grant. Project total is \$10,000.
 - iii. Storage Shed – The Parks & Rec needs a new shed for storage of camp equipment, and they were quoted \$9,000. The town has a building at WWTP, which was meant to house a sewer pump. The Parks staff is currently inspecting the WWTP building for salvage for the shed.
- h. Public Works:
 - i. Lease payment on Freightliner Plow Truck: We are in the 3rd year of this lease for \$36,551. N. Nau will seek a payoff number for this lease.
 - ii. Replacement of 2001 Plow truck: T. Pratt is inquiring about the life of the oldest vehicle and noted that the truck had some fuel issues this winter. Public Works believes that if they spend \$10,000-\$15,000 on new injectors, the truck will last. T. Pratt added that the Town should start to think about funding for the replacement of the vehicle. There are only 2 large trucks that do the hills in town, and this is one of them. P. Betkoski noted that it would make sense to refurbish the truck now and put aside \$50,000 for the next truck moving forward. This truck may be eligible for partial VOX or DERA funding from the State.

- iii. Town Garage: Project for \$61,500 to replace rotting panels on Town Garage.
 - iv. Bobcat: This is a repeating project for the replacement of 2002 Tractor for \$47,605.
 - v. UTV: This is also a repeating project which includes a plow and heated cab to plow the walking pathways at Pent Road during the winter for \$19,000.
 - vi. Volvo Loader: Repaint and repair this 2012 equipment for \$11,000. Finance will review the monies remaining in Vehicle Maintenance for this year's Public Works operating budget.
 - vii. Transfer Station Permit Renewal: In past years the Town appropriated \$10,000 for the application fee for transfer station permit renewal. SLR will take the lead on the renewal process, as they did with WWTP, and for now we will keep the budget to a minimum. There are safety concerns at the transfer station, but the Town does not know what the State will require at this point. The State is behind in this process due to COVID.
 - viii. N. Nau looked at past Public Works project requests which were not put forward this year. In addition to the Transfer Station improvements, The Parking Lot of Town Garage, and the Traffic light on Burton Road are past unfunded projects for consideration. G. Smith noted that Sqaure footage at the transfer station comes into play for improvements and paving. The parking lot at the Town Garage would be a reconstruction. Several parking lots in town need to be reviewed and addressed: Pent Road, Fire Department, Senior Center. Would the traffic signal on Burton Road be LOTCIP eligible and can it be included in the LOTCIP grant for Burton Road?
- i. Road Projects:
- i. Bonded and ARPA: The Finance Office met with G. Smith regarding the use of our Bonded funds for roads and the second round of ARPA monies which will be used largely for water and sewer projects. We are finalizing the projects to be addressed. The bonded funds have been allocated; the ARPA funds can be allocated as part of the budget.
 - ii. Engineering for Stormwater \$30,000: This is another State mandate for Stormwater MS4 reporting. Most towns are behind with these requirements and G. Smith noted that this MS4 process may be regionalized through the NVCOG. The project sets aside engineering funds for the study.
- j. Senior Center:
- i. Replacement of the Windows and Flooring at the Senior Center: \$9,773 project. These are LOCIP eligible projects, which would be completed later in the fiscal year when LOCIP funds are available: Spring 2023. T. Pratt noted that the windows are from 1973 and are single pane. The flooring project would be a vinyl floor on top of the existing floor at Senior Center.
 - ii. Concrete Repairs: \$24,500 T. Pratt noted that the set of stairs going out of the kitchen and the rear stairs and ramp, and railings are unsafe. The project is for complete replacement of steps and ramps, and they could take the existing rails to save funds. T. Pratt does not think this project can be put off due to safety concerns. The contractor would rip up the sidewalk at the same time. It is highly recommended that Town use a different salt for the concrete, instead of using the road salt mix.
 - iii. Carport: This \$28,000 project is a pavilion for the parking lot to house the buses and to be used as an outdoor space for the spring and fall. N. Nau noted that an AARP Grant would be an option for this project.

k. Town Hall:

- i. Assembly Room: No additional monies are requested, but this is an open project for furnishings and technology to upgrade the Assembly Room. For the project to move forward, the files cabinets in that room need to be addressed and cleared out.
- ii. Main Street Improvements: The Connectivity Grant for \$600,000 is for improvements connecting Main Street to services. The match for the project is \$224,111 based on the original scope of the grant. G. Smith noted that he may be seeking to change and expand the scope of work with the grantor. The grant focuses on South Main Street, and he would like to link North and South Main Street. He is working with SLE Engineering and TPA Group, so that we can stretch the Bonded funds to make Main Street pop. He is bringing the engineers in to see if we can connect North and South Main and address sidewalks from the Police Department to the bank. This type of work is very expensive, and this grant must be spent on Main Street. We hope to stay in spirit of the original application. The project calls for crosswalks, sidewalks, bump outs and will tie into the Burton Road project. The design has South Main going from 2 lanes to 1 lane, which is one way to control the speed on Main Street. G. Smith was asked how the road would be plowed with one lane, and he noted that is why he is bringing in engineers who are design experts.
- iii. O&G Data Center: This large project will require town funds dedicated to legal work and engineering. Road engineering can be included as a bonded project and West Road and Rimmon Hill will be roads involved in the planning stages of this project. The legal work on O&G Data Center will be in the operating budgets for attorneys.
- iv. ARPA monies for FY2023 – We are also looking at completing the WWTP digester project and cameraing piping under the roads, to determine which sewer/water pipes can be addressed using ARPA funds.

l. Safety:

- i. Emergency Lighting: The Fire Department submitted a project to complete their emergency lighting. T. Pratt noted that we are looking into quotes from the emergency lighting vendors on the State contract for both the Firehouse and the Town Hall to replace emergency lighting at that location.
- ii. Town wide AED Replacement: \$27m171 This project is LOCIP eligible, but very timely and therefore, should be addressed using Fund Balance funds. (LOCIP funds will not be available until March 2023.) The quote provided is for replacing the AEDs in all the Town's AED units with additional batteries included, which are a decent amount of money. The board decided to address the 2003 AED full replacement. The newer AEDs can be factored into later budgets or replaced through grants.

m. Wastewater Treatment:

- i. The Electrical Upgrades and Generator Project is moving forward using \$1M in bonded funds. N. Nau noted that we will be going out to bid and begin work on this project in FY2023.
- n. N. Nau reminded the board members that all the capital requests and quotations attached to these projects are available on the FY2023 Budget SharePoint site for their review. She encouraged them to explore all the materials in there. The Finance Office has included operating budget projections and analysis on the site as they come in from vendors. The Town is still waiting for Region 16's budget figures, as well as projections for other agencies, such as the Health Department, 911 Services, etc.

- o. Revenue: T. Pratt inquired about positive news on the Revenue side and currently the Governor has proposed Motor Vehicle Tax Sharing Reimbursement from the State which, if approved, would amount to a \$344,000 State grant to the town. This proposal is still in legislation, along with his proposal to cap the mill rate at 29 mills for Motor Vehicles. K. Brennan added with the mill rate set to decline, due to the 22% increase in the Grand List, if the Motor Vehicle 29 mill rate cap were imposed, it would have less impact on the Town's tax revenue, as our mill rate goes down. N. Nau added that the Assessor has more appeals than she has ever had, which will impact her final Grand List figures.

6. **Next Budget Workshop** will be March 8, 2022, in-person at the Town Hall Assembly Room. G. Smith requested that the boards invite; Police, WWTP, Public Works, Fire & EMS which are the largest town departments, so we can discuss their big tickets items and we can digest them right away. Questions will arise on the floor of this meeting for these departments.

7. **Adjournment**: P. Betkoski made a motion to adjourn the Board of Selectmen at 9:06 PM. M. Krenesky seconded the motion. All ayes.

D. Fennell made a motion to adjourn the Board of Finance at 9:06 PM. W. Hopkinson seconded the motion. All ayes.

Respectfully Submitted,

Erin A. Schwarz

Finance Office