

**TOWN OF CLARENDON BOARD OF SELECTMEN**  
**FY26 BUDGET WORKSHOP**  
**MINUTES**

**Wednesday November 13, 2024 5:00PM Minutes**

**Attendees:**

Mike Klopchin, Chairman  
George Ambrose, Clerk  
Robert Congdon, Selectman  
Art Menard, Selectman  
Ashley Robinson, Admin Asst  
Heidi Congdon, Treasurer  
Marjorie Southard

**Call to Order**

5:05PM

**Agenda additions/deletions**

N/A

**FY26 Budget discussion**

-Treasurer Congdon begins the discussion letting the board know that due to the change in article processes for voting, the budget is set to 0. Those who wish to have an article on the ballot are now required to have signatures of registered voters in town. There also seems to be more consistency within the state and historically with prices increasing, it looks like we are better than we have been in the pasts.

-The board briefly discusses the COLA (cost of living adjustment). The increase recommended for the year is 3% and the board agrees to table to discussion of raise increases to a future budget workshop.

-A large bulk of this workshop was geared toward the transfer station budget and how the transfer station is functioning. There was a deficit of roughly \$80,000 last year and the board needs to be in contact with Casella to review contracts, as well as look into other options moving forward. This goes for the recycling, trash, metal, traffic flow, timing of operation and more.

-The board agreed to hold the next budget workshop meeting on 11/25/2025

**Public Comments**

**Recess**

The board recessed at 5:50PM with the next scheduled workshop

## Monday November 25, 2024 5:00PM

### **Attendees**

Mike Klopchin, Chairman  
George Ambrose, Clerk  
Cash Ruane, Selectman  
Robert Congdon, Selectman  
Art Menard, Selectman  
Heidi Congdon, Treasurer  
Ashley Robinson, Admin Asst  
Sarah Kumm  
Shelley Lutz  
Marjorie Southard

### **Call to Order**

Chairman Klopchin called the meeting to order at 5:05pm

### **Agenda additions/deletions**

N/A

#### **FY26 Budget discussion**

Treasurer Heidi Congdon discussed dates that were given for budgets to be due to her for workshop review. Unfortunately, the Town Clerk did not meet the deadline she was given for discussion at this meeting. Heidi did receive the budget request from the listers. The committees were asked to submit their budget requests for the next budget session, this is the recreation, community center, and highway. Selectman/Road commissioner Ruane says he has his ready for the highway department for next meeting.

#### **GENERAL GOV**

-Expenses: Chairman Klopchin decided to move forward with keeping the salary the same for the Selectmen. Heidi clarifies to have the asking amount to be the same as an article at elections, and that is agreed upon among board members.

-Salaries: The other salaries will be discussed at the end of the budget discussions, so they will be passed over this meeting.

-Selectman's Expenses: Selectman Congdon would like to leave it the same at \$600

-Website Maintenance: Heidi recommends to keep track of how many times items are asked to get posted to the website and to start keeping track of that side of it. Selectman Congdon suggests to leave the budget as is for this item.

#### **TREASURER**

-Auditing: Each Auditor gets a stipend for \$200 so Heidi requested to keep the \$600 budget. Selectman Congdon asks when our last external audit was. Heidi states in the notes that we would have an audit done in FY26 for the year we are currently in of FY25. Audits are performed every three years, and not only does it cover anything that may arise on the treasurer side, but also the rest

of the areas. Sullivan Powers has been providing the town with auditing and the plan is to continue that route. Selectman Ruane asks to clarify that the audit looks like it is \$15,000 and will happen in FY26, and the answer was yes. The nice thing with Sullivan doing the audits is that they do have a history with the town, and they have only had minor policy suggestions in the past.

-Town Report: \$1700 is requested and that should cover the increases that have happened between the years. The monies get used for the town plan printing.

-Treasurers expenses: Heidi was able to decrease this a little this year and is hopeful to be able to attend a few classes and conferences, and that is what the money would go towards.

-Annual External Audit: This is what was discussed in the other auditing portion.

## TOWN HALL EXPENSES

This is something that the board works on~

-Postage: Selectman Congdon notes that postage is continually going up and thinks at least \$4500. Currently there was only a little over \$200 spent as the clerk requested money added to the postage machine. Treasurer Congdon suggests to leave the budget at \$4000. This covers the pre-paid envelopes as well as the machine, and town report mailings.

-Town hall utilities: Phone, electrical, and heat. \$12,000 is the current year's budget, and the board agreed to keep it at \$12,000

-Town Hall maintenance: Maintenance is for smaller projects (not building fund monies). There are a few items that need to be addressed, possibly a new window in the bathroom, door for the bathroom for privacy, maybe a new coat of paint. Selectman Ambrose suggests giving the office a limit where they do not have to check with the board to get items updated. Selectman Ruane asked about heat loss and the drop ceiling. The board recalls efficiency Vermont coming in to look at heat loss. Selectman Congdon suggests having a blown in insulation person come in to look into heat loss when the siding is addressed. The board agrees to leave the budget at \$10,000 and decided on a threshold spending limit of \$

-Contracted Service: Secure shred, mowing and royal group all come out of contracted services. Selectman Congdon believes the \$6500 budget is appropriate.

-Vermont digital came out many times in the last year and ate up much of the budget. Server had to be replaced last year but came out of another budget. NEMRC comes out of this fund, and the budget is going to be left at \$8500

-Listers-\$19,000 budget with reasoning in the binder for the board to review. They are hoping for town mapping, and are requesting \$2500 for that service. The board decides to move forward with their request.

-Zoning Administrator: Fees, wages, posters and classes all come out of this budget. \$2150 is approved by board

-Abatements and refunds: leave along

## PUBLIC SAFETY

-constable is no longer in the budgeting

-Sheriff Department: They are anticipating a 5% increase on the hourly rate according to the sheriff's department. \$75,000 is agreed upon after discussion and being under previous years.

-The board leaves the remainder of the items as shown on the budget sheet

-Selectman Ambrose asks how often the tree warden is used. The monies are used for the renewal of the Vermont Woodlands Association.

-VLCT did have an increase and the fees are in the binder for review. \$4508 is the cost to the town.

The board discusses the airport industrial tax portion on the budget due to the increase from Ritter Holdings getting caught up in tax payments, and when a full year is paid the town submits what is needed to the City of Rutland.

-Airport Industrial Park Taxes: leave at \$30,000

-Contingency: Leave as shown

-Legal: leave at \$2500

-Legal Notices: Leave at \$1000.00

-Cemetery: holding off for mowing bids to be discussed

-Green-Up Day: \$150

-RRPC: increase to \$2412

-Library: The Library submitted a request for close to \$39,000 and the board is requesting the library to come to the next budget meeting to discuss before approving. The board discussed many questions for the treasurer to prepare library be aware of for the next meeting.

The next budget workshop will be December 9<sup>th</sup> at 5pm.

### **Public Comments**

### **Recess**

The board recessed at 5:57 with the next budget workshop being December 9<sup>th</sup> at 5pm before the next scheduled board meeting.

## **Wednesday December 09, 2024 5:00PM**

### **Attendees:**

Mike Klopchin, Chairman

George Ambrose, Selectman (Called-In)

Robert Congdon, Selectman

Cash Ruane, Selectman

Ashley Robinson, Admin Asst

Heidi Congdon, Treasurer

Sarah Kumm, Recreation Committee Chair

John McKenna, Planning Commission Chair

Jimmy Austin

Eddie Baker

### **Call to Order**

Meeting was called to order at 5:10

## **Agenda additions/deletions**

### **FY26 Budget discussion**

-Sarah Kumm, Chair of the recreation committee presents her budget request of \$15,000. She lets the board know how most of the budget is used for mowings. She discusses the events that they are hoping to do to bring the community together. The goal is to bring the community together. Selectman Congdon is impressed with the presentation as in the past there has been minimal presented when asked what the monies would be going toward. He suggests approving the requested amount at this time, and if there needs to be adjustments made in later workshops that is something that can happen. Sarah also lets the board know that the recreation committee has also agreed to have trees cut down that are causing safety issues between the front and back fields.

Treasurer Heidi Congdon requests the board's approval to have an article on the ballot in March to have a recreation fund so when the recreation committee is donated monies the amounts would be dedicated to the recreation fields, and not going into the general fund.

-Community center level funded

-Library will be asked to come to the next scheduled budget workshop

-COLA was set at 2.5% this year. The board decided on a 3% for budget purposes and will be readdressed at the end of the budget workshops

### **HIGHWAY**

-Salt-\$105,000 to remain the same

-Winter gravel to be set \$10,000

-Gravel Budget preset to \$ 70,000. The Board decided due to only spending \$60,000 the previous year that \$65,000 will be sufficient

-Sand to stay the same at \$30,000

-Mag-chloride for dust control \$15,000

-Resurfacing- Road Commissioner Ruane presented to board the request to budget for resurfacing from Gilman farm on Middle Road to Chambers Farm. He is also suggesting having Squires Road reclaimed and resurfaced. Ruane did some research and after getting an estimate from Tom Fuller (Fuller Sand and Gravel) Squires Road would be roughly \$175,000 with an additional \$15,000 in work from the town's road crew. Ruane is requesting the budgeted amount to stay as is. Ruane notes that unfortunately, you cannot count on grants, especially as the town was fortunate to get one the last fiscal year. Selectman Congdon recalls being on the board and getting yearly grants. Ruane believes roughly \$100,000 to do the portion of Middle Road would be a good estimate and that is the section they would apply for on a grant. There is \$124,500 remaining in the highway fund balance. Selectman Congdon suggests putting the \$195,000 in the budget for Squire, and apply for the grant for the other, and then if the grant is not approved the remaining fund balance will cover the portion of Middle Road. Plan to do both projects moving forward. The board agrees on the \$195,000 allocation. A brief talk of the Chippenhook loop took place needing to be addressed in the near future.

-Garage Utilities \$6000 to be brought down to \$5000.

-Garage Maintenance- The crew would like to concrete the remaining truck bays that are not done now. Ruane would also like to address the insulation in the working side of the building. Selectman Congdon suggests leaving the budget at \$8000.

-Vehicle Maintenance-The town needs to order a new truck to replace the Western Star that has been giving troubles since the town bought it. Roughly the price on a new truck would be \$250,000. The town also needs a new trailer. The board discusses buying new or used, and the problem with used is that you need to jump on the good ones when they become available. Waiting for approval from the board tends to make the timing not work when it comes to buying used. Moving forward on July 1<sup>st</sup> selectman Congdon proposes the option to pull from balances that haven't been expended on a new trailer. He believes that Ruane should be authorized to be able to purchase quicker than waiting for a meeting for approval.

-Equipment fund to continue to be \$105,000

-Monday the 13<sup>th</sup> of January will be the next budget workshop at 4:30pm

### **Public Comments**

#### **Recess**

Budget workshop recessed at 6:10pm until the future meeting on 1/13/2025 at 4:30pm.

### **Monday January 13, 2025 4:30PM**

#### **Guests**

Mike Klopchin, Chairman

Robert Congdon, Selectman

Cash Ruane, Selectman

George Ambrose, Selectman

Heidi Congdon, treasurer

Gloria Menard, clerk

Colombe Colvin

#### **Call to Order**

Chairman Klopchin called the meeting to order at 4:40PM

#### **Bailey Memorial library**

Colombe Colvin gave a brief staffing update as there have been changes due to health issues. They are actively seeking more children to use the library, so they are working on more children's programs particularly during the summer time when the children are out of school. There are two employees currently working – the librarian is working 22 hours a week and the assistant is working 10-15 hours a week. They currently have insurance for the contents of the facility and they have disability insurance. Their board would also like to do some painting. There were 2004 visits throughout the past year. They do hold a basket raffle a couple times per year as well as having a book sale during the town wide yard sales. The only perpetual fund held is the one by Cornelia Bailey that the town holds where interest can be drawn off to purchase books. Board overall feels need to compromise so there is not such a big increase all at once.

#### **Recreation**

Discussion regarding significant increase, but appreciate the work and detail provided in the request. Board overall feels need to compromise so not such a large increase all at once.

### **Transfer Station Expenses**

Selectman Ambrose looked at the ticket count to see how many people actually use the transfer station. Using the reports from the NEMRC system, it looks like there are about 350 folks using the transfer station. Robert stated the last time an increase happened for transfer station cards was over 10 years ago – that needs to be looked at.

### **Highway**

Equipment maintenance – significant discussion surrounding the Western Star as it has had significant issues. Looking like we wouldn't be able to have a new truck for a year and a half. After a new truck, the loader was discussed and determined we have another six years before it will need to be replaced. Slight increase to contract services for tree removal in a planned project.

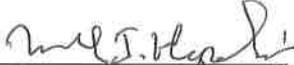
### **Treasurer's budget**

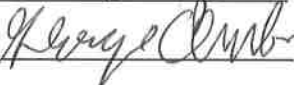
The Select board decided to forego the external audit budgeted in FY26 of FY25 and will plan on an external audit in FY27 of FY26.

The Town is looking at a 1.91 cent increase to the overall budget (increase of \$57,355.00).

### **Adjournment**

Selectman Congdon motions to adjourn the meeting at 6:00pm. Selectman Ambrose provide the second. The motion was approved by all.

SIGNED  Mike Klopchin, Chair

SIGNED  George Ambrose, Chair