 TOWN OF EAGLE LAKE

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN’S MEETING**

**Initial Budget Review**

**February 26, 2024**

1. The meeting was called to order by Board Chair, Arthur Carroll at5:30 P.M.

The Board members present included: Arthur Carroll, Wendy Dube, Jennifer Cole, Apryl

Gagnon and Denise Martin

Others in attendance were: Eagle Lake Fire Chief Robert St. Germain and Eagle Lake Town

Manager John Sutherland.

2. BOARD OF SELECTMEN’S INITIAL REVIEW OF THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET

John presented copies of the Manager’s Initial Proposed 2024-25 Municipal Budget to the

Board of Selectmen. Eagle Lake Fire Chief Robert St. Germain was also in attendance to

discuss items that he is requesting for the Eagle Lake Fire Department. Robert presented

items to the Board of Selectmen needed to outfit six new firefighters including turnout gear,

helmets, boots, gloves and Novex hoods to protect their necks and shoulders. Chief

also had pricing for an infra-red camera, radios and a multi gas detector. He had three bids

from $20,019 to $28,441. A radio quote was for an additional $10,483.20. The Board

thanked Robert for his efforts and discussed looking at using ARPA funds to help offset the

cost of the need items.

Moved by Wendy Dube to have Eagle Lake firefighters sign for the clothing and equipment

that they receive. When the items are returned, they can be signed off by the Eagle Lake Fire

Chief when a fire fighter resigns. The form is then placed in the employees personnel file.

**Salaries and Wages:** John explained that the minimum wage increased to $14.15 an hour in

Maine. The Board discussed a cost of living increase based around a COLA that is currently

3.2%. John informed the Board that he did a salary survey of local municipalities. He stated

that the amounts he submitted are in line with what other municipalities are paying their

employees. John added that being competitive will help us keep the employees we have and

help us if we need to recruit to fill a vacancy.

John recommended a total line item of $185,780 for Salaries and Wages. The Board agreed

to review the budget and come back to this line.

**Mileage:** There was no funds approved for Mileage.

**Benefits**: John stated that Maine Municipal informed him that Health Insurance would

incur a modest increase of 4.2 % for January to December for the Year 2024 He stated that

based on the amount spent for this year he is recommending the amount of $ 37,500 for

Health Insurance is suffice. Due to the increase in Salaries, he is recommending increasing

Social Security to $15,000 for the upcoming year. The Board approved John’s

Recommendations of $ 57,560 for Benefits.

**Auditor:** John informed the Board that due to the grant amounts that Eagle Lake secured for

the Water and Sewer District, Eagle Lake Auditor Tim Poitras informed John that Eagle

Lake should budget $14,500 for auditing for the upcoming year. John stated that he is

recommending $ 14,500 for the Auditor. John added that the additional amount should be

reimbursed by the grants. The Board approved the amount of $ 14,500 for the Auditor.

**Planning and Development:** John stated that due to the increase from the County, he is

reducing the amount for Salary to $1,000 and recommending that we keep $500 in

advertising due to the need for public hearings to adopt the new Shoreland Zoning

Ordinance. John said that he is recommending $ 1,500 for the Planning and Development.

The Board agreed and approved the amount of $ 1,500 for the Planning and Development.

**CEO/LPI/ACO:** John stated that he proposed $ 6,000 for Code Enforcement. He stated that

Code Enforcement Officer uses his vehicle for checking up on permits. John added that he

reccommends $1,000 for Licensed Plumbing inspector and $600.00 for Animal Control

Officer.The Board agreed with $8,100.00 for CEO/LPI/ACO line.

**Hydrants:** John informed the Board that this is the last year that we can use this rate for

hydrant rental. The Eagle Lake Water and Sewer District run on a calendar year. John stated

that he budgeted $92,500 for the upcoming year. The Board agreed to $92,500 for Hydrants.

**Street Lights:** John informed the Board that he is recommending $5,000 for street lights.

John stated this is the third year in a row the amount stays the same. John added that since we

own the lights, any amount needed for maintaining the lights will be our responsibility which

is why any unused amount will go into a reserve to fund the needed repairs when they occur.

The Board agreed with $5,000.

**Incidentals:** The Board reviewed Incidentals. John stated that he added for Assessing due to

due to usage of Town of Eagle Lake Assessor Steve Salley. John added that he reduced legal

and advertisements to offset the County Tax increase. John said he also reduced computers

as we could charge a new computer to the ARPA funds that we need to have expended by

December 2024. John said that Trio is phasing Sequel Operating system that we currently

are using and migrating everyone over to a new Trio World system. John stated that he

reduced Tax Maps to $2,000 based on a conversation he had with Aaron Weston. Aaron

informed John that CAI had no one on staff that could update our tax maps. John said that he

is looking at some in house options and would use the funds if software needed to be

purchased. The Board approved the line item for Incidentals at $77,250.

**Insurances:** John proposed that $24,000 be raised for Insurances. John stated that our

liability and loss control are covered under a policy with Maine Municipal Association. The

Board agreed with $ 24,000.

**Bonds and Notes:** John stated that Bonds and Notes was going to increase by $1,000 due to

the Bond payment for Pond Brook Estates. The Board approved $ $147,495.00 for Bonds

and Notes.

**Fire Department:** John stated that there is a slight increase in the Fire Department’s

budget due to the salary increase for firefighters and officers approved by the Board.

John said he is requesting $49,925 for the Eagle Lake Fire Department. The Board approved

$ 49,925.00 for Fire Department Expenses.

**Equipment Reserve:** John explained that he recommends $20,000 for the Equipment Reserve

for a new Fire Engine to replace truck 2. John stated that his goal is when truck # 2 needs to be

replaced, we will have $ 100,000 reserved for a new unit. The Board approved $ 20,000 for

Equipment Reserve.

**Capital Reserve:** John stated that last year we contributed $ 10,000 to the Capital reserve line.

We used it when we purchased the new tractor. John stated that going forward we need to look

at replacing the town pick up. In the future we will need to upgrade the zero turn mower. The

Board approved $ 10,000 for Capital Reserve.

**Fire Department Equipment Reserve:** John informed the Board that last year we put $10,000

In a reserve line to help fund the new roof at the Eagle Lake Town Office. When he originally

put the budget together, he planned on using this line to add funds for new gear for the fire

department. Since we were hit with the increase in the County Budget, John said he is omitting

the amount and asking the Selectmen to consider using the ARPA funds to fund the new gear

for the fire department.

**Road Maintenance:** John reviewed the Road Maintenance portion with the Board. Most of the

line items are as a result of bid contracts. John said that he included the contract price for

winter road maintenance for Sly Brook Road that was recently awarded to Cody Dubois. John

said he is requesting $174,100 for Road Maintenance. The Board approved $ 174,100 for Road

Maintenance.

**Municipal Snow Removal:** John stated that this line is for plowing and sanding the municipal

parking lot, the fire station and the ice skating rink. Pond Brook Estates is part of the contract,

but that portion is paid by Pond Brook Estates. John said that he is reducing this line item by

$6,000 to help offset the increase in the County Tax. That amount is what is paid by Pond

Brook Estates. The Board agreed to $8,400 for Municipal Snow Removal.

**General Assistance:** John recommends that we authorize $1,500 for General Expense. John

informed the Board that we get reimbursed seventy percent for General Expense. John added

that the State is considering legislature that will increased the reimbursement amount to ninety

percent. The Board agreed to $1,500 for General Assistance.

**Equipment Expense:** John stated that he increased line for Gas and oil to reflect current usage

and decreased Equipment Maintenance. John said he is recommending $6,850 for Equipment

and Expense. The Board approved $6,850 for Equipment Expense.

**Recreation Building:** The Board reviewed the line item for Recreation Building. John said

that he reduced electricity by $250 and increased telephone by 175 to accurately reflect usage.

$ 500.00 for miscellaneous expense and left the other items the same. The Board approved

$6,125 for Recreation Building Expense.

**Winter Trails:** The Board reviewed the budget items for Winter Trails. John said that Fred

Michaud is requesting additional funds for a bulldozer to come in and reshape a section of trail

that has a severe lean to it. John said he increased the trail maintenance line to $1,000 to help

cover the cost. The Board agreed with the manager’s recommendations of $6,000 for Winter

Trails.

**Recreation Program**: The Board reviewed the manager’s recommendation for Recreation

Program. John reminded the Board that this covers both summer and winter recreation

programs. John said that his goal is to have an active summer recreation program. The Board

approved $9,500 for Recreation Program.

**Swimming Program:** John said that the past summers we were unable to offer the

Swimming Program due to lack of instructors. John said that he believes that this is an

important program to offer especially since we are a lakeside community. The Board

approved $3,440 for the Swimming Program for the upcoming year.

**Boat Landing:** John stated that he is recommending $ 1,500 for the Boat Landing. John added

that we maintain the boat landing for the State of Maine and last year we were paid $3,800 to

do so. John said this number is the same as last year. The Board approved $1,500 for the

upcoming year.

**Public Beach and Park**: John informed the Board that the Public Beach and Park covers the

Beach, Pavilion and the Municipal Park. John recommends $ 3,610 for this item. The Board

approved the manager’s recommendation of $ 3,610.

**Tennis Court /Ballfield:** John said that we typically expend most of the funds in this account

getting the facilities up and ready for the upcoming year. He is requesting $1,000 for these

facilities. The Board agreed with $ 1,000.00 for the Tennis Courts and Ballfield accounts.

**Unclassified Accounts:** John stated that the Unclassified Accounts were the same as last

year. The total for Unclassifieds is $ 7,290.00. The Board approved the amount of $7,290.

**School Appropriation:** John informed the Board that Eagle Lake School Superintendent

Gehrig Johnson informed him that the School Appropriations for the upcoming year will be

$ 740,000. This is the same amount that it has been for the previous five years. The Board

approved $740,000 for School Appropriation.

**Aroostook County Tax:** John stated that there is a huge increase in the County Tax this year.

First John said that the County is swapping from a January to December calendar year. Our

tax for the six month period is $ 100,965. John said the Aroostook County Administrator

Ryan Pelletier informed him that the County Tax for July to June will not be determined until

May of June. John said that based on the six month model, he is estimating the 12 month

model will be around $200,000. The Board can elect to pay the six month amount over 3

years. John said that if we pay over three years. He is estimating the County Tax will increase

from $160,000 annually to $215,000. Board approved $ 215, 000.00 for the County Tax.

**NASWA:** John informed the Board that NASWA’s Board of Directors voted to keep their

yearly stipend the same as the previous five years at $ 93,925 for Municipal Solid Waste. The

Board approved $ 93,925 for NASWA to handle our municipal solid waste.

**Ambulance Service Inc.:** John informed the Board that he received quote of $ 32,500 from

ASI Director John Labrie. It represents a small increase from last year. The Board approved

$ 32,500 for Ambulance Service for the upcoming year.

**Revenues:** John informed the Board that he is anticipating $609,880 for Revenues to help

offset the Budget. Increases in Motor Vehicle Excise, Pond Brook Estates, Revenue Sharing,

Boat landing Revenue, LRAP and Undesignated are the reasons that John is optimistic about

the increase. The Board approved $ 609,880 for Revenues.

John stated that anticipated expenses increased by $ 73,635.00. Anticipated Revenues are

increased by $ 32,480. The difference is $ 41,155.00. John said that anticipated construction

will help offset the increase.

3. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business to discuss.

4 ADJOURN

The Board moved to adjourn at 8:47 p.m.