 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.