

THE TOWN OF FORT FAIRFIELD
TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS
First Public Budget Hearing 2022/23 Budget
April 28, 2022

Town Council opened the Public Hearing at 6:00 p.m.

All Councilors are present.

Staff: Andrea Powers, Town Manager and Neadra E. Dubois, Town Clerk, Tony Levesque, Darren Hanson, Ella Leighton, Dep. Chief Fenderson, Jennifer Gaenzle, Kevin Senal

Citizens: Tammy Deschesne, Chris Perkins, Paula Perkins, Gary Sirois, Sharon Ouellette, Thomas Towle

Budget Advisory Committee: Pat Canavan, Kevin Bouchard, Aaron Brown

Mr. Kilcollins

that to 22-

had,

could get the answers. Also, we have our Budget Committee present. I think if we could get a raise of a

Mr. Pelletier

Mr. Kilcollins

?

Ms. Powers

Mr. Kilcollins

considering for budgets and can work through this, and, and hopefully make this work for everybody at this time. Do we move on to what you have? I know Code Enforcement and Tax Assessor and

Ms. Powers

Mr. Kilcollins

Ms. Powers

Mr. Kilcollins

Basically, I know a lot of

Ms. Powers

budget

Mr. Kilcollins

Ms. Powers Are you ready, Chairman? Okay. If you break down the Consolidated Expenses, County Tax is \$277,209.00

used last year s number, which is \$2,142,385.00, and the Municipal share of that is \$5,925,540.00. We bring in an income of \$6,325,908.00. So, you

present to you is not just the Municipal Budget no control over, and the County Tax Budget, which we have no control over. That would actually leave us with an overlay of \$400,368.00. The County Tax and the School Administrative District also have incomes that come in, and what they send to us for a bill is above what they bring in for revenue. So, we are responsible, the Municipality is responsible for making up their difference, their deficits. So, our actual income, the \$6,325,908.00 more than covers what the municipality is asking for, which is \$5,925,540.00. So, it is very daunting when you look at that. And, I understand that because it gets very confusing if you do not understand the Municipal Budgets and you do not understand where these

he left-hand side, the back page of the Consolidated Expenses, you will see the County Tax and the School Administrative District is also in there. And, you have to subtract those from the actual final budget for what the Municipality is actually responsible for, and that has a lot to do with when we give out the percentage of where the money is

When you get your tax bill, it tells you [inaudible] mil rate of 19.5, the County was responsible for 7.38 percent of the tax bill, the School was responsible for 59.07 percent of the tax bill, and the Town was only responsible for 33.55 percent of the tax bill. So, I think, when we have these conversations about

County Tax from that bottom line. So, yes, it shows a deficit of the \$2,019,00 and change, but we have to lity. You have to, the County Tax and the School

pre but these are the numbers that are coming into us and it is irresponsible of us not to inform you of what those costs are and the rise in the costs.

less than 24 hours for fuel. So, we have to keep in mind that changes are happening all around us and, yes, we are going to be as responsible as we possibly can be wi tTax from 0 G[(yes)3(w5B134[(yes)3(w5B134[(yes)3(w5B

Those numbers have not changed from the last

Council, ready to

Dave Dorsey

Mr. Kilcollins

got anything, stand right up Mr. Dorsey.

Mr. Dorsey

years. It amounts

30,000 a

carrying 42, \$462,000 on an accounts receivable, current accounts receivable. Accounts on current receivable are ca

. Now

ut it represents a hell of a chunk of

yea

your Annual Report

million dollars out of our capital, the, the value, an

ye

Ms. Powers

Mr. Dorsey

Ms. Powers

the Auditors to ask them what is the best solution for the Town, but the Council, not this particular Council, but the Fort Fairfield Town Council

Mr. Dorsey

Ms. Powers

Mr. Dorsey

start looking

of expenses so I guess I get a little bit testy, but when I see somebody up here with a big increase in the

Mr. Dorsey

Mr. Levesque

Mr. Dorsey
somebody really does a job at

I hope that the next time we get together, that

Ms. Powers I

Mr. Dorsey
look down here and I ran the percentages this af
things that stick out. You get a Recreation Department that

Ms. Powers y have
a Rec Department, so we went after them hard last year, and we have a full functioning Rec Department

Mr. Dorsey , I
that we want to liv
been short on your budget for two years

Mrs. Libby

Mr. Dorsey
and in the last year, your revenue was \$5,900,000, and you spent \$600,900,000. You spent a million

Ms. Powers

here, but

Mr. Dorsey

Ms. Powers al versus Actual numbers. So Capital, Capital versus Actual
numbers is not the same thing, and, as I said at the beginning, Council traditionally does not budget
Capital Expenses higher than what we should be doing to made sure that, that, and those numbers that
you see there, change

Mr. Dorsey ut as our Capital decreas

Mr. Dorsey

Ms. Powers

Mr. Dorsey

Ms. Powers

Mr. Dorsey Yea

Ms. Powers

Mr. Dorsey

ng to cost less than \$70.00 per

Ms. Powers

Mr. Dorsey

Ms. Powers

Mr. Dorsey

Mr. Butler

ith

Mr. Dorsey

the Town Council in Presque Isle today and they told me
going to

Mr. Butler

with before and we

School Department last year, she gave the figures, so I figured out the last three years, okay, and we

citizens. In my last three years on my taxes alone, I paid

Mr. Dorsey

Mr. Butler

Okay, so the services that I do need you want to cut that service that I do and you want me to pay more for the services I

Mr. Dorsey

Mr. Butler

Mr. Dorsey

Mr. Sirois

Mrs. Libby

Mr. Kilcollins

Mr. Dorsey

Mr. Levesque

Mr. Kilcollins

Mr. Levesque

Mr. Sirois

Mr. Levesque

Mr. Kilcollins

Mr. Levesque

several times before it is adopted which is not going to happen until the summer meeting. So, again, to

Mr. Sirois

Mr. Levesque

can go get the notice

Mr. Kilcollins

anna to be tough and I think that we, we can make budgets work this year, provide applicable service for everybody in our community and we can put this behind us
just a projected budget, we had to start somewhere and to keep this, which than

we can all learn from it.

Ms. Powers

Roof repair and what that would be, and she as placed that in there for you. And, we also have had the request, based on our insurance provider for liability, in the community like the Library, Town Office, any of those places without staff present, so this also reflects adding an additional 20 hour a week person for that, so that people can use the Community Room.

Mr. Sirois

Ms. Powers

Mr. Sirois

Ms. Powers or an additional person

Mr. Sirois

Ms. Powers

Mr. Sirois

Ms. Powers

Mr. Stratton

A good example

w

hours of the day and night. Why must the Library now have an employee there at the time

Mr. Kilcollins

Mr. Towle

Ms. Powers

g through the book with the Council. [inaudible] If

Mr. Towle

Ms. Powers

Mr. Kilcollins

Ms. Powers

of the budget itself, and this was given by Director Senal to give you information about the other

service for
a lot less. So, when you have a chance to go through theirs, I would encourage you to see that and your

e of these budgets are due to fuel costs, most specifically. Any

we provide through the

Mrs. Libby

through and looked at any increases from last year

Rec Department, I mean the biggest chunk of the increases is, you know, obviously we have another

Ms. Powers

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Mrs. Libby

Ms. Powers

books and information and taking that over

Mrs. Libby

Ms. Powers Oka

asking for in the Reserve side.

Mr. Sirois -

Mr. Kilcollins

Mr. Sirois - the biggest increase in that Department is for employees. Will somebody tell me how many

Deputy Chief Fenderson

Mr. Sirois -

Deputy Chief Fenderson -

Mr. Sirois

Ms. Leighton - Plus they now have to be compensated for one hour for every 40 hours that they work.

Deputy Chief Fenderson -time staff. Every part-time Staff member makes minimum wage plus they get incentives for any education and training they have so every one of those 14 others had to have their wages increased as well, but two Career Staff, who do this as their only job had to

Ms. Powers

Mrs. Libby

Ms. Powers

Mrs. Libby

Ms. Powers

spending for [inaudible] Engine Tanker, that does more than one job, and with Senator Collins Office, so because we are working with very aged equipment

Mr. Pelletier

Ms. Powers

Mr. Kilcollins

Ms. Powers

USDARMD, so hopefully we are successful with that one. Because we need it very badly and that would

Mr. Sirois

Mr. Kilcollins

Mr. Sirois Income for EMS Ambulance Service/Fire Department is the same as last year,

Deputy Chief Fenderson

to what has been stated tonight here, we did not buy all new things to start with. The only things we had brand new were Ambulances, and if you ask anybody that actually works with an ambulance in Presque Isle, they can tell you how great used ambulances are and how they last for maybe a year before you have to buy another

take out more loans out to replace the things we have now. Our fire trucks are well beyond their useful life. Our SCBA Packs have a set time frame on them, we have of you may remember a few years ago we were in that same boat and had to come up with a large chunk of cash. Just so you know the price of those has already gone up one-third in three years, so the amount in there for Air Pack replacement is just to have the amount of money we spent three years ago on

about the large purchases because the large purchases is what is causing a lot of the animosity at these

about
that.

Mr. Kilcollins Thank you.

Mr. Pelletier

You, yo

Deputy Chief Fenderson

Mr. Kilcollins

Deputy Chief Fenderson Presque Isle Fire has 18 full-time Firefighter/Paramedics, a Deputy Chief and a Chief. They have four ambulances. We do not staff that. We do not compare. One of the other

where it had to start over, so I, I just want to let everybody know that you can almost look at this as a, as

Ms. Powers

significantly from last year to this year, and that is because we have to send one of our Staff to the Academy. \$18,000.00 to send an individual to the Academy to earn their Blue Pin. And then, the other

increase there. The overall increase, in general, is indicative of having almost fully staffed police

Mr. Sirois

Ms. Powers

Mr. Sirois

Ms. Powers

Mr. Kilcollins

Ms. Powers

Mr. Kilcollins I think, yeah,

Ms. Powers

Cummings is not here, he is at the Academy right now.

Mr. Kilcollins

Ms. Powers if Council turns to tab six for Highway/Public Works. These numbers reflect the Union Contract that was agreed to for the three-year Contract. And then, the only other, of course paving increase, those costs, fuel costs go up, paving increase goes up as w only significant increase. -time costs that are

inc

Director Hanson

Mr. Kilcollins

Director Hanson

g around. I assume, because of

times. Fuel, our cost of fuel in the last two days has gone up 70 per.. 70 cents a gallon. I wish I could get a [inaud

Mr. Kilcollins

from the truck to him, \$6.29 a gallon for

diesel at his facility

Director Hanson

presented you tonight, that we will still have to curtail services in some way, shape or form by late next

Ms. Powers

short staffed for two year

Mrs. Libby

Ms. Powers

able to do that. We stopped some projects in order to be able to better service our citizens because

we are a very busy, high . So we, yes, we are a small town but

Ms. Dubois

Ms. Powers good year, because we were so short staffed. Any other questions for Admin? Okay, tab eight, which is your Other Expenses and

Community Center, this building here, safety and sanitation, which is a public fire, street lighting, street light repair, AWS, and other. You notice our Workers Comp has skyrocketed. Where we were in 2020 to

to cut back on unemployment, insurance, liability, the bond, all of those things are costs that are given to us that we must pay, and as

Mr. Kilcollins

when it

-aids over th

Ms. Powers

Mr. Kilcollins

-aids been done even before Andrea started as Town Manager

Ms. Powers

the cost of fuel and heating oil continuously rising, we, we may

Mr. Kilcollins

one day, if you had

ghly, unexpectedly, in your

budget, if you set your

Director Hanson

Mr. Kilcollins

Director Hanson

Mr. Kilcollins

Director Hanson
was spent. And,

Mr. Kilcollins

Director Hanson

Mr. Kilcollins

Ms. Powers

Mr. Pelletier

is it just

Ms. Powers

Mr. Pelletier

Ms. Leighton

Ms. Powers

Mr. Pelletier You know what our Mod rate is right now

Ms. Leighton

Mr. Pelletier

Mrs. Libby

Ms. Powers

Ms. Leighton

Mrs. Libby

g what we should be doing.

Mr. Pelletier

Mr. Kilcollins

Ms. Leighton

Ms. Powers

Ms. Leighton

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Mr. Kilcollins

Mr. Pelletier

Ms. Leighton

de

Ms. Powers

do have control over. However, I caution Council, these are entities that we actually work very closely with and have citizens that are benefited by all of these agencies. And then our other costs, at the bottom, ; County Tax, Maine Municipal Association, The Meadows, Northern Maine

Mrs. Libby

Mr. Kilcollins

Ms. Powers

Mrs. Libby

Ms. Powers

Mrs. Libby

Ms. Powers

Mrs. Libby

Ms. Powers

Mrs. Libby

Ms. Powers

Mrs. Libby

Ms. Powers

Mr. Kilcollins

Ms. Powers

year-to-date behind the information on the Reserve Accounts. Council have any questions on those?

Mr. Kilcollins

Ms. Powers

Mr. Kilcollins

Ms. Powers One of the ones I can point out

the Pandemic put a stop to the direction that we were heading with the Paving Reserves at the 2020/2021

Director Hanson

Ms. Powers

Director Hanson

Ms. Powers

Director Hanson

need a shim and an overlay to get 10 years out of our
of it,

Ms. Powers

Mr. Butler

Mr. Kilcollins

Director Hanson

would have done, a million dollars worth of paving three years ago
somewhere over a hundred dollars a ton now.

Mr. Kilcollins

Director Hanson

, what, what
ars. so every, everyday, every minute, every week, every year that

worse, and that costs you more as well. You know, the worse the road gets, the more the shoulders lay
over, because, you know,

Mr. Pelletier

Director Hanson

ing

Mr. Pelletier

Director Hanson

, really hoping for that. But the scope of those is narrow, it will be on
flood areas where we can raise the road and that will be full base construction the whole deal, which will
be Riverside and Russell. I

Many people talking [inaudible]

Ms. Powers ve also put in for, from McShea Siding Bridge down Presque Isle Street, through the
light to Main Street to Sam Everett Road, including

Director Hanson

and

Mr. Kilcollins

Ms. Powers

he Consolidated Expenses.

Does Council have any questions on any of the Departments Consolidated Expenses, their final lines? So

of the Department it does not, it should not include the Reserve Account because we have a total Reserve Account on the other, the second page.

the cost of the slate roof for the historical part of the building, as well as her regular Reserve Account number and then her number for the Library without the Reserves. If that helps you read that. Did Council have any questions on the Potato Blossom Festival. This is our 75th Anniversary, so you do see a difference in th -time cost for a lot of those things. And, again, through the Pandemic, things were taken out of the Festival that we normally would have had in there, so we put back in this year. And, so, these Consolidated Expenses are compilation of the final costs that are being presented to Council throughout each individual budget and this just compiles it all together for you, so you have it all. [inaudible] And, just a reminder that, that gra

get to the number that I gave you earlier, so that you have the municipal cost versus the, the total number there, for the, the total b

Mr. Butler

eficit,

Ms. Powers

total that you see \$8,345,135, that includes the School and the County Tax, so we can remove those two

Mr. Butler

then that would be off, be off the eight

million, right? So it

Ms. Powers

Mr. Butler

Ms. Powers

bill that we get is in addition to. So, for us, the bill that, that, if we were just doing the Municipality, and . So if you take the County Tax out and you take the School, you

are asking for as a Municipality in order to provide the services that we provide for our citizens. And, if you take our income, which is the \$6,325,908 and you subtract what we are asking for which is the \$5925,540.00, you actually have an overlay of \$4

Mr. Sirois

out of the

Ms. Powers

Mr. Sirois

Mr. Butler

Mr. Sirois

other revenue in the

Ms. Powers he

Mr. Sirois

Mr. Butler
distributed and

Mr. Sirois

Mr. Butler

Mr. Sirois

Mr. Butler

Mr. Sirois

you go down to the School Budgets.

Mrs. Libby

Mr. Sirois

Mrs. Libby

Mr. Sirois

Ms. Powers

there, the same meeting

Mrs. Libby

Mr. Sirois

Mrs. Libby

Deputy Chief Fenderson

to touch on something we just discussed, things we need to pay. By law, you are required to fund Fire Protection. By the end of this Legislature cycle you will be required, by law, to provide ambulance service, required by law. Some of our expenses in our

ting for everyone, all of the Town employees to deal with

Mr. Kilcollins

Ms. Powers

Consolidated Income. And, we have gotten as close to these numbers as we possibly can with the known numbers that we have, keeping in mind, we are still waiting to hear from billing on the Fire Department [inaudible], The excise, pretty spot on, every

Mr. Sirois

Ms. Powers

much on that, they give us an income of that amount

Mr. Sirois

Ms. Powers

Fort Fairfield Housing

Authority. The only one that really has not been significantly addressed and has remained a PILOT, which is a Payment In Lieu Of Taxes, in case any of the Councilors are unaware of that, is AWS. And, since our reveal I feel like it would be significant to ask them for an increase in the Payment In Lieu Of

Mr. Levesque

was a Coordinate Discussion on how much services they were requiring from the Town and how much value they had in the property we can renegotiate because the agreement is antiquated.

Ms. Powers

are in a position where we can do that. And, then of course, these are just the postings for the two of our
n ready for you. And then pages at the end. So, I will, I know
everyone

and, honestly, for me, the Mil Rate is one of the last things that I deal with because
that until September. And, for me the Budget starts in November, once we receive the Audit the next

enabl
And, reval has not

Mr. Levesque

Ms. Powers orking through that process of the new information we have, but I will tell

19 and a half Mil Rate, 1.44 of that Mil goes towards the County Tax, 11.52 of the 19.5 Mil Rate goes
towards the School and 6.54 of your Mil Rate goes towards the Municipal Budget, so percentage is easier
for some and some prefer to hear where the number of the Mil is going. But 1.44 Mils worked out to
\$267,563. So, the stateme

Mr. Towle, if I could

Ms. Powers

Mr. Levesque

Ms. Powers

Mr. Towle

Ms. Powers -look at our budgets, re-value what it is we
would like to accomplish this year, given the inflation rates, cost of living is now at 8.5 percent, but

that you spent for groceries for a full cart of groceries is not even a third of your cart anymore. So th
something that we have to keep in mind as well, so we will and it is not something we are unaccustomed

that next Thursday is the Second Public Budget Hearing at 6 pm here in the Council Chambers and any

a look at
in the information that I handed out to you when you received your information.

Mr. Kilcollins

Mrs. Deschesne

just like clarification. When the Department Heads do their budget, they have to try to figure out what the cost is going to be for fuel for the year coming, they have, and, and health insurance, if anything increases they have to put that in their budget to be passed for the next year?

Ms. Powers

going to be and as we get that information, we put that into the budget for the Council, for them to take a look at and decide ted. So we present, they present to me, I kick it back to them and we go back and forth for several months over their budgets, and then we have the Department Head Budget Presentation in March and then we have the First Public Budget Hearing in April, Second Public Budget Hearing in May, and then June Council Meeting is the Budget

Mrs. Deschesne o

s in this Town is to

Ms. Powers

Mrs. Deschesne

Mr. Kilcollins

Mr. Dorsey

ergy. Have we considered hiring a large firm, law firm

Ms. Powers

Mr. Dorsey

Ms. Powers

Mr. Kilcollins

could forward some business plan on that

Mrs. Libby say

Mr. Kilcollins

Mr. Sirois

ollected taxes of much less than

Ms. Leighton

Ms. Powers

Mr. Sirois

Mr. Kilcollins

Mr. Dorsey

Ms. Powers

Mr. Kilcollins

of information in a short period of time, but hopefully what you have for literature, you can review and

Public Hearing Adjourned at 7:35 PM