

# ASHLAND BUDGET COMMITTEE

## DECEMBER 21, 2023

Members present: Hughes, Lyford, Ruell, Barney, Coleman, Unangst

The meeting was called to order in the conference room at 6 Collins Street at 6:03 p.m.

Meeting Schedule. Hughes explained that the first meeting with the school board would be on January 4, not January 2. We will meet on January 9 for the school budget, and on January 10 to consider warrant articles. (The deadline for petitioned warrant articles is January 9.) The public hearing on the town and school budgets and the warrant articles will be on January 11 in the school cafeteria. (School budgets were delivered by the Superintendent during the meeting.)

Revenues. The selectmen have not yet approved estimated revenues.

Budget votes.

On a motion by Ruell, seconded by Barney, it was voted 5 to 1 to recommend \$189,773 for Executive.

A motion by Ruell, seconded by Unangst, to recommend \$2500 for Election & Registration-Deputy Town Clerk failed on a tie vote of 3 to 3.

A motion by Lyford, seconded by Coleman, to combine the Town Clerk's salary and longevity in Election & Registration, with a recommendation of \$29,047 for the salary and \$0 for longevity, failed on a vote of 2 to 4.

On a motion by Ruell, seconded by Unangst, it was voted 6 to 0 to recommend \$56,552 for Election & Registration.

On a motion by Ruell, seconded by Unangst, it was voted 5 to 1 to recommend \$1000 for Budget Committee Expenses in Financial.

On a motion by Ruell, seconded by Unangst, it was voted 5 to 1 to recommend \$165,851 for Financial.

On a motion by Ruell, seconded by Lyford, it was voted 6 to 0 to recommend \$15,101 for Property Taxation.

On a motion by Lyford, seconded by Barney, it was voted 6 to 0 to

recommend \$30,000 for Legal.

On a motion by Ruell, seconded by Unangst, it was voted 6 to 0 to recommend \$569,389 for Personnel Administration.

On a motion by Lyford, seconded by Barney, it was voted 6 to 0 to recommend \$14,030 for Land Use Boards.

On a motion by Ruell, seconded by Unangst, it was voted 6 to 0 to recommend \$43,626 for General Government Buildings.

On a motion by Ruell, seconded by Hughes, it was voted 6 to 0 to recommend \$1 for Cemetery.

On a motion by Hughes, seconded by Barney, it was voted 6 to 0 to recommend \$86,571 for Insurance.

On a motion by Ruell, seconded by Unangst, it was voted 6 to 0 to recommend \$1 for Economic Development Committee.

A motion by Coleman that the Board of Selectmen renegotiate the contract with the Police Chief and give him a \$5000 salary increase in 2024 did not receive a second.

A motion by Coleman that the salary of the Police Lieutenant be increased by \$5000 did not receive a second.

On a motion by Ruell, seconded by Unangst, it was voted 4 to 2 to recommend \$591,098 for the Police Department.

On a motion by Lyford, seconded by Unangst, it was voted 6 to 0 to recommend \$40,664 for Ambulance.

On a motion by Ruell, seconded by Lyford, it was voted 4 to 2 to recommend \$432,679 for the Fire Department.

On a motion by Lyford, seconded by Ruell, it was voted 6 to 0 to recommend \$32,469 for the Building Inspector.

A motion was made by Lyford, seconded by Unangst, to recommend \$3000 for Emergency Management, but it was withdrawn after discussion. On a motion by Unangst, seconded by Ruell, it was voted 6 to 0 to recommend \$1000 for Emergency Management.

On a motion by Lyford, seconded by Unangst, it was voted to have the Finance Director review the Public Works budget Union Employees Salary line. No action was taken on the Public Works budget.

On a motion by Unangst, seconded by Lyford, it was voted 6 to 0 to recommend \$266,992 for Highways and Streets.

Lyford made a motion that the Town Mechanic Salary line be \$72,483, but

there was no second. The consensus of the Committee was that clarification was needed for the salary lines in Public Works and Town Mechanic. No action was taken on either budget.

On a motion by Lyford, seconded by Barney, it was voted 5 to 1 to recommend \$186,263 for Transfer/Recycling Facility.

A motion to recommend \$2355 for Health Officer was made by Ruell and seconded by Barney, but no action was taken on it. A motion by Lyford to increase the Health Officer salary line to \$2060 did not receive a second. On a motion by Ruell, seconded by Unangst, it was voted 3 to 1, with 2 abstaining, to recommend \$2355 for the Health Officer budget. (Note: the Vice Chair presided over the Health Officer portion of the meeting, as the Chair is the Health Officer.)

On a motion by Ruell, seconded by Barney, it was voted 6 to 0 to recommend \$1133 for Animal Control.

On a motion by Ruell, seconded by Barney, it was voted 5 to 1 to recommend \$21,827 for General Assistance.

On a motion by Ruell, seconded by Unangst, it was voted 5 to 0 (with one abstention) to recommend \$62,621 for Park & Recreation.

On a motion by Ruell, seconded by Unangst, it was voted 5 to 0 (with one abstention) to recommend \$16,760 for Park & Recreation-Campground.

On a motion by Ruell, seconded by Unangst, it was voted 5 to 0 (with one abstention) to recommend \$78,467 for Park & Recreation-Summer/Vacation.

On a motion by Lyford, seconded by Hughes, it was voted 5 to 0 (with one abstention) to recommend \$26,378 for Park & Recreation-After School.

On a motion by Ruell, seconded by Unangst, it was voted 6 to 0 to recommend \$661 for Memorial Park.

On a motion by Hughes, seconded by Barney, it was voted 6 to 0 to recommend \$104,046 for the Library.

On a motion by Unangst, seconded by Ruell, it was voted 6 to 0 to recommend \$1201 for Patriotic Purposes.

On a motion by Hughes, seconded by Barney, it was voted 6 to 0 to recommend \$1 for Conservation Commission.

On a motion by Barney, seconded by Ruell, it was voted 6 to 0 to recommend \$1 for Tax Anticipation Notes.

On a motion by Hughes, seconded by Unangst, it was voted to adjourn at 8:20 p.m.

David Ruell, acting Secretary