Preston Board of Selectmen
Special Meeting
Budget Workshop
Thursday, April 16, 2020
Teleconference Call
6:00 pm

BOS Present: Sandra Allyn-Gauthier, Jerry Grabarek (arrived at 6:10 pm), Ken Zachem

Call to Order
1st Selectwoman Sandra Allyn-Gauthier called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm

Roberta Charpentier (recorder) stated Per Lamont’s Executive Order 7b, Participants are reminded to state your name and title before speaking. Please help us make this conference call as useful as possible by keeping your phone on mute when not speaking. We are keeping the line open to all participants by default, but if background noise becomes a problem, we will mute all participants and ask participants to use “chat” to be selectively unmuted. Also note that we will be recording this meeting to comply with open meeting requirements.

Budget
1st Selectwoman Sandra Allyn-Gauthier stated that the Town is in a different place from when the budget workshops began. The world is currently in a different place as a result of COVID-19. There is a lot of uncertainty especially financially.
1st Selectwoman Sandra Allyn-Gauthier had hoped this year's budget would focus on strategic planning, analysis and building for the future. Under normal circumstances, our budget is a reflection of our values and hopes and what we want to accomplish.

Initially the total was roughly $4,030,988, an increase of $173,000 or 4.5%. Department managers had submitted what they felt was necessary and reasonable at that time. Decisions now have to be made that may make it so we can not accomplish what we had hoped to. We also do not want to make too dramatic of adjustments because it will impact our longer term goals and strategic thinking.

Adjustments were made by looking at actuals and decreasing wherever possible. The revised total amount is 3.9 million a decrease of $98,000 from the starting point, an increase of $75,000 or 1.94% over this year's budget.

1st Selectwoman Sandra Allyn-Gauthier noted some lines where she reduced expense in the budget:
- BoS trips and meetings
- Overtime in salaries
- Fill in for the Building Inspector
- Fire Insurance
- Health Insurance
- Legal Fees
• Electricity
• Maintenance for Town owned buildings
• Equipment for computers and servers
• Building Inspector shelving
• Cemetery maintenance, dog damage
• PRA kept flat from last year
• Planning & Zoning professional development
• Board of tax review
• Amos Lake funding request
• Highway maintenance
• Fire department paid staff
• Fire alarm systems
• Public street lights
• Environmental monitoring
• Youth sports
• Senior Affairs bus wages
• Library wages kept flat, electricity reduced

A motion was made by K. Zachem and seconded by J. Grabarek to remove $7,500 from line item 3810 Capital Improvements from this year's budget.
All in favor. Motion carries.

K. Zachem asked what the final number is.
1st Selectwoman S. Allyn-Gauthier $3,945,474, up almost $67,500.

K. Zachem noted that this budget can't be cut anymore unless there are salary cuts and I am not anxious to do salaries.
1st Selectwoman S. Allyn-Gauthier and J. Grabarek agreed.

1st Selectwoman Sandra Allyn-Gauthier noted that this budget is a 1.75% increase from last year.

K. Zachem asked if the Fire Chief knows he will not be getting a full time firefighter.
1st Selectwoman Sandra Allyn-Gauthier answered that she told him it would be under discussion tonight and would probably be cut.

Public Comment
Andy Depta, Preston resident asked with the new accounting software do we need the $80,000 in data processing?
1st Selectwoman Sandra Allyn-Gauthier answered that amount includes all technology used by the Town Clerk, Tax Collector, Assessor, IT people, etc. The amount is what the total comes out to be.
A. Depta stated that the BoS did an excellent job by getting the budget down to 1.75% from 1.94%

Adjournment
A motion was made by K. Zachem and seconded by J. Grabarek to adjourn the meeting at 6:32 pm.
All in favor. Motion carries

Respectfully submitted,

Roberta Charpentier