

**PRELIMINARY MINUTES**

**TOWN OF LUDLOW  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

**Special Meeting  
November 28, 2022**

**HEALD AUDITORIUM  
6:00 P.M.**

**Join Zoom Meeting**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81468174000?pwd=N1lsRDhkOWVzVIYrdGRQTXFzQlJJQT09>

**Meeting ID: 814 6817 4000  
Passcode: 760686**

**One tap mobile**

+13017158592,,81468174000#,,,,\*760686# US (Washington DC)  
+13126266799,,81468174000#,,,,\*760686# US (Chicago)

**Dial by your location**

**Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81468174000?pwd=N1lsRDhkOWVzVIYrdGRQTXFzQlJJQT09>**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Bruce Schmidt, Chairman	Bob Brandt	Brett Sanderson
Scott Baitz	Justin Hyjek	

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Scott Murphy	Kevin MacPherson	Ron Tarbell
Stephanie Grover	Nick Miele	

**AGENDA**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

- A. Bruce Schmidt called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. He led the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**2. CONSIDERATION OF ANY CHANGES, ADDITIONS OR REMOVALS TO THE AGENDA**

- A. Scott Murphy said that no change is needed, but suggested that the board review the Highway budget first as Ron Tarbell has to leave.  
B. Bruce Schmidt asked that the board add "OTHER BUSINESS".

**3. REVIEW FY20224 DRAFT BUDGET**

- A. Ambulance  
i. Scott Murphy said that they have the new ambulance included in the FY 2023 budget. It is on order.  
ii. Stephanie Grover said it is expected between January and March.

- iii. Scott Murphy said that labor increased \$37,800 over last year. We did not run a deficit.
- iv. Stephanie Grover said they have prepared all summer for this coming winter. They have been working with the Okemo Ski Patrol, learning each other's' jobs. She said that she goes there every day for communication. They have shared each other's employees. This weekend, we were able to cover 2 of the three calls we received.
- v. Justin Hyjek noted that the budget for Health/Dental/Life is \$135,000.
- vi. Scott Murphy said we picked up employees. He said as we grow staff, with higher certifications, we upgraded current staff. We have raised medical response with better service and we are moving to a more full-time staff. He said that Ambulance is a proprietary fund and we would have to ask the voters if we want to move it into the general fund. He said the tax payers would be able to see it more as a town department. Also, the Ambulance employees will feel more comfortable as a town employee. We are rebuilding the Capital fund and staff.
- vii. Bruce Schmidt said if it were a town department, it would be easier to move funds. In the past, when it had revenue, we couldn't move any of it.
- viii. Stephanie Grover said it would be good to look at it as a town department, like the police.
- ix. Scott Murphy said now that they are pulling their weight, it will benefit the town.
- x. Bruce Schmidt asked if they have a separate check book.
- xi. Scott Murphy said no.
- xii. Bruce Schmidt said it would give us more flexibility.
- xiii. Justin Hyjek said if it is always at a loss, he is against putting it into the general fund. As a resident I could vote on an article.
- xiv. Bruce Schmidt said people still vote on the budget. Why would we do any different with the ambulance than any other department.
- xv. Stephanie Grover said the Ambulance is not a revenue generator for the town, like highway, police and buildings and grounds.
- xvi. Justin Hyjek said that every year, Ambulance is a hot topic when we go over the budget. He asked if we are up to staffing. The survey said we should have 6 FT employees, if we had that, could we cut OT and PT.
- xvii. Stephanie Grover said we have 4 full time employees, including herself. We hire as we get applications and Okemo wages, we have to do the same.
- xviii. Justin Hyjek said that FT employees is up \$39,000 and OT up \$40,000.
- xix. Scott Murphy said that 2 to 3 years ago, we had 1 -2 FT, and lower wages. As we increase our capacity, we provide better medical service. He added that, even though the survey suggested 6 full time employees. He said we do not intend to hire more full-time employees. They are running well.
- xx. Justin Hyjek said OT is \$60,000.
- xxi. Stephanie Grover said the number is skewed because a standard shift has OT built in. Our pay is lower than Okemo's starting pay, I encourage them to advance to the next level, then higher their pay. We are still on the low end of average.
- xxii. Bruce Schmidt said the board may want to commit \$25,000 for a study for a regional ambulance. We should look at Springfield.
- xxiii. Stephanie Grover said they tried with Chester and Springfield. Springfield is busy on its own and Chester is not interested for about 5 years.
- xxiv. Bruce Schmidt asked if we want to do this at the Select Board level and talk to Rutland Regional Ambulance about how they set this up. Our costs won't go down. We will need to upgrade the facility – people spend the night there. He asked board opinions – department or proprietary
- xxv. The board was in consensus - department. It will not mean additional costs to the town.
- xxvi. Scott Murphy said they would have to put it to a vote at town meeting.

- xxvii. Bruce Schmidt said he would like to put this on the agenda for the next meeting.
- xxviii. Justin Hyjek asked if they had a new stretcher.
- xxix. Stephanie Grover said 2. She thinks they were paid for by grants. They are under warranty, but by the end of FY2024, we will need to start a preventive maintenance program.

B. Buildings & Grounds

- i. Scott Murphy said that he moved the line items for Library Fuel/Utilities and Museum Fuel/Utilities from appropriations to Buildings and Grounds to put them nearer to the Senior Center Ops/Utilities. He said there is a big change in Senior Center (\$4,600) due to need for new A/C Unit. The existing one is leaking.
- ii. Kevin MacPherson said he expects the costs to be about \$10,000 to \$20,000.
- iii. Bruce Schmidt said is this for the upper level or both.
- iv. Kevin MacPherson said just the upper; we will wait to work on the lower when it goes.
- v. Bruce Schmidt asked about window units for the upstairs. He asked what the newspaper pays for rent.
- vi. Scott Murphy said he thinks \$800 to \$900.
- vii. Kevin MacPherson said they have closed off the unused spaces. They could use window units.
- viii. Scott Murphy said he would look into costs of window units.
- ix. Justin Hyjek asked if they have checked the inverter.
- x. Kevin MacPherson said the rep hadn't come.
- xi. Justin Hyjek said if the inverter is bad, it will cost more. He asked about Fuel oil.
- xii. Kevin MacPherson said that is for Town Hall, Community Center, West Hill and the back garage.
- xiii. Justin Hyjek asked if they could consider individual line items. He said it would be a better gauge for each location.
- xiv. Scott Murphy said that once you start the split, you would lose some continuity. He said that the Library and Museum were already separate line items. He said we started that when the town assumed the fuel costs for the Library and Museum.
- xv. Bruce Schmidt said that those buildings are not owned by the town and should not be under Buildings and Grounds. He said that the library asks for appropriations and so does the Academy. People need to know. He is not in favor of moving these to B&G. It is easier for the voters to see at town meeting. We shouldn't lump them into B&G. They should stay in appropriations. We own the Senior Center.
- xvi. There was consensus among board members not to lump them into B&G.
- xvii. Justin Hyjek noted that Cell Phones are up \$685.
- xviii. Kevin MacPherson said he uses his own phone and keeps it for repair or replacement. He pays his own bill.
- xix. Justin Hyjek asked who the on-call employees that have phones are.
- xx. Scott Murphy said some have work phones or pagers.
- xxi. Justin Hyjek asked if cell phone companies have special plans for municipalities.
- xxii. Scott Murphy said yes, they are slightly different.
- xxiii. Bruce Schmidt said we should research this and establish an ordinance, have a stipend. Cut the line item back to \$175.
- xxiv. Justin Hyjek asked about Town Hall Facility rental in revenue.
- xxv. Scott Murphy said we are trying to take charge. We usually don't charge for non-profits.
- xxvi. Bruce Schmidt said we need to review utilities, cell phones, fuel oil and gallons/price. Changes in library and academy. Park bandstand charges.
- xxvii. Justin Hyjek asked about B&G Assistant in FY 2023.
- xxviii. Scott Murphy said that Kevin MacPherson is the supervisor and there is seasonal labor also.

- xxix. Justin Hyjek said that the B&G Assistant for the Community Center should not be listed as B&G Assistant.

C. Highway

- i. Scott Murphy said that salaries are a major impact. He said that fuel and salt are also up. He said that the big item is the Grader that is listed under Capital and will be subject to town vote. He said that the costs for Crushing has been moved to Capital for this coming budget. It is a one-time move – \$30,000.
- ii. Bruce Schmidt asked if this has been done before.
- iii. Scott Murphy said yes, about 7-8 years ago
- iv. Ron Tarbell said we did it to crush the pavement from the Walker Bridge project. We bring the crusher in.
- v. Bruce Schmidt asked if the auditors have noticed this.
- vi. Scott Murphy said they haven't flagged it.
- vii. Bruce Schmidt said it is really operating expense.
- viii. Scott Murphy said he would highlight it and check with the auditors. He said that the paving will be on Red Bridge and Dug Roads and – depending on costs – either East Hill or Bixby.
- ix. Bruce Schmidt asked if we looked at the traffic mileage use. West Hill Road gets more traffic.
- x. Scott Murphy said that Red Bridge was on the list for last year. It would be from Route 100 to East Lake Road.
- xi. Bruce Schmidt asked about the fluctuation on salaries – 4.6 to 5%.
- xii. Scott Murphy said they used 5%; inflation is about 7 to 8%. He said that we have staff leaving and going to private industry and private industry is increasing benefits and retirement, as well as rates.
- xiii. Bruce Schmidt said he would like them to look at positions and various salary ranges. He said we provide insurance with no deductible and we are still losing people. He said we did a large increase last year.
- xiv. Ron Tarbell said private industry is “beating us up.”
- xv. Justin Hyjek noted that Vehicle Maintenance FY2022 Actual was \$81,000 and the FY2024 budget is \$60,000. Is that due to the new truck?
- xvi. Ron Tarbell said there are 2 new trucks and we have the warranty.
- xvii. Bob Brandt asked about garage fuel.
- xviii. Ron Tarbell said we are not sure where it will be. We have an oil furnace and only run it in coldest weather. We have no control over it.
- xix. Bruce Schmidt asked about Road Cuts in revenue - why the large jump.
- xx. Ron Tarbell said it varies with contractors and private owners.
- xxi. Bruce Schmidt asked if they can get a list of road cut permits for this board.
- xxii. Scott Murphy said that FY2023 year to date is \$12,750.00. We can't predict it.
- xxiii. Bruce Schmidt asked about the side walk on Pond Street.
- xxiv. Ron Tarbell said that the local contractor hasn't gotten here yet.
- xxv. Bob Brandt said he was told they would be here Tuesday or Wednesday.
- xxvi. Bruce Schmidt asked if the board could hold back on the bond. They dug it up and then nothing for 2 weeks. It looks ridiculous – but it is a Village issue. We charge him to sure pack, then dig it up again and concrete in the spring.

D. Recreation and Parks Department

- i. Scott Murphy said there is only a nominal change of 2.8% increase in expenses. He said that they have discontinued the \$15,000 transfer from Capital to Recreation Revenue. We need to start rebuilding the capital account. The current balance is \$41,700 and we have committed

- \$20,000 to the skate park. This would leave us \$6,700. The big question is the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Fireworks. Last year it was at Okemo and Magris sponsored it. Nick Miele would like to move it back to West Hill.
- ii. Nick Miele said that in 2019, we had revenue of \$1,500. We had a bank, food trucks.
  - iii. Scott Murphy said we don't have buses anymore and would have to rent them. The cost for the fireworks has increased to \$12,500 and Magris will contribute \$7,500.
  - iv. Scott Baitz said that West Hill fireworks had better attendance.
  - v. Scott Murphy said he has spoken to the Chamber about funding for buses and they think this can happen.
  - vi. Nick Miele said the buses are about \$100/hour, we need 2 buses at 6 hours each. The big concern is getting people back down after the fireworks.
  - vii. Scott Baitz said people usually trickle in for 2 to 3 hours. He added that the Rec. Committee wants to bring back vendors.
  - viii. Justin Hyjek said it is a fun, community event and that Magris will sponsor is great.
  - ix. Nick Miele said it is a good opportunity to generate additional revenue with raffles and selling stuff.
  - x. Justin Hyjek asked about the \$500 increase in Concession Stand – is that West Hill or Dorsey.
  - xi. Nick Miele said we want more at the basketball games.
  - xii. Justin Hyjek asked about Dorsey Park playground.
  - xiii. Nick Miele said he put information in their packets.
  - xiv. Bruce Schmidt said we will not discuss it tonight because it is not on this budget. He asked why for FY2022 the budget capital was \$15,000, but the actual was \$5,845. It must have been spent, somewhere. He asked if we can roll it over to the next year.
  - xv. Justin Hyjek said to rollover capital, do we have to encumber it before it expires.
  - xvi. Scott Murphy said he will check with Ulla Cook. This year, we need to ask the voters for \$10,000 for the Rec. Facility.
  - xvii. Justin Hyjek said we need to discuss the Capital fund.
  - xviii. Bruce Schmidt said we will discuss it at the next meeting. He said he doesn't like the idea of moving line items around. It confuses it for next year. We need to get an understanding of capital costs for Parks and Recreation.
  - xix. Justin Hyjek asked how they plan to do improvements.
  - xx. Nick Miele said he will develop a list of 7 to 10 items and the value and look at which projects look better financially.
  - xxi. Justin Hyjek asked about \$10,000 for Rec. Facility for FY2024.
  - xxii. Nick Miele said the number has to build the fund back up. That's how other towns fund their projects.

#### 4. **POSSIBLE ITEMS AND DATES FOR NEXT MEETING**

- i. Next Regular Meeting - Monday December 5, 2022.

#### 5. **OTHER BUSINESS**

##### A. Wages

- i. Bruce Schmidt suggested that the board consider hiring someone to handle grant programs. We should also review all wages – across the board and why we are losing staff.

B. Rental Registry

- i. Bruce Schmidt said we need to start a conversation. We need to come up with a way to understand. No analysis on the Village. The Trustees have no desire for a rental registry and we shouldn't use town funds on Village properties if the trustees don't want a registry.
- ii. Justin Hyjek said that the \$26,000 is for the entire town.
- iii. Bob Brandt said we did not vote on a rental registry, just to collect information.
- iv. Scott Baitz asked if the trustees want to contribute.
- v. Bruce Schmidt said if we do have a rental registry, it is not fair for the town taxpayers to have to pay. They should do an ordinance in the village. He is not sure if a town ordinance super cedes a Village ordinance. We need a legal opinion. He said that not everyone is in favor of this. We need to do what's right. We shouldn't spend town money if the village doesn't do anything. We need to tell people to go to the trustees' meeting. We need to find out the legal ramifications. We need to find out if the Trustees want a registry that would cover all of the properties in town
- vi. Justin Hyjek asked who is giving feedback:
- vii. Bruce Schmidt said 2 residents and one not a resident, but a property owner.
- viii. Justin Hyjek said the mapping service, is GIS.
- ix. Scott Murphy said we can segregate and pull out the village properties.

6. SIGN WARRANT ORDERS

- A. Bruce Schmidt said that warrant orders have been signed.

7. ADJOURN

- A. MOTION to adjourn by Bob Brandt and seconded by Scott Baitz. Motion passed unanimously.
- B. Meeting adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisha Klaiber

---

Bruce Schmidt, Chairman

---

Justin Hyjek

---

Scott Baitz

---

Brett Sanderson

---

Bob Brandt