

PRELIMINARY MINUTES

**TOWN OF LUDLOW
BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

SPECIAL MEETING

January 11, 2021

ZOOM ELECTRONIC MEETING

6:15 P.M.

Join ZOOM Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89445497136?pwd=aVI5WkVKOXN3VGdGZnFBN3lvQ2ltdz09>

Meeting ID: 894 4549 7136

Passcode: 480295

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Meeting ID: 894 4549 7136

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Find your local number:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89445497136>

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Bruce Schmidt, Chairman
Scott Baitz

Justin Hyjek
Brett Sanderson

Heather Tucker

STAFF PRESENT:

Scott Murphy

Ulla Cook

OTHERS PRESENT:

Eric Alden

Sharon Huntley

Eric Chattergee (Okemo Valley-TV)

1. CALL TO ORDER

- A. Bruce Schmidt called the meeting to order at 6:15 PM. He led the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance. He said that this meeting is being conducted remotely consistent with State guidelines.

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

- A. No changes were needed.

3. POSSIBLY AMEND AND APPROVE THE PROPOSED FY 2022 LUDLOW TOWN BUDGET

- A. Scott Murphy said that they have called this Special Meeting to re-look at the budget. This board did approve the FY2022 budget at their last meeting. It had not been signed. While doing a final review, Pam Cruickshank noted that the County Tax and County Capital in the amount of \$106,136 had inadvertently not been included in the Total Expenditures. He said that we will need to reduce the budget by at least \$50,000. He put together a list of possible cuts that would not negatively impact the departments or Municipal services and would be the most efficient to cut.
- i. Cemetery – \$25,000 - Scott Murphy explained that the Cemetery Budget has not been fully used for the last few years. In last year's budget of \$111,544, they only used \$84,973, with the balance going into their Capital Account. They are the only department that has been voted to carry over funds and the end of the year to their Capital Account. This current year, their budget is \$113,887 and we project that they will only use about \$76,000. They currently have about \$67,000 in their Capital Account.
 - ii. Recreation - \$10,000 – Scott Murphy said that we could use the money from the Capital Account to cover partial resurfacing and leave it to next year.
 - iii. Police Equipment Capital Account - \$10,000 – We could use this to cover partial costs of the new cruiser. The current balance in the account is \$22,300.

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- iv. Highway Budget - \$15,000 – Scott Murphy said that Ron Tarbell said we could wait on this until next year.
 - v. Listers - \$10,000 – Scott Murphy said that the listers have not been coming in, resulting in lower salary costs. The budget is \$66,500 and the projected year end is between \$30,000 and \$35,000.
 - vi. Revenue Found - \$5,000 – Scott Murphy said that Ulla Cook noted that this was not recorded and is to be received from the Village for their share of the Wheel Loader payment.
 - B. Justin Hyjek asked when we are scheduled to get the cruiser.
 - C. Scott Murphy said after July 1, 2021. Once the voters approve the budget, we will put in the order and the trade-in.
 - D. Justin Hyjek asked the percentages
 - E. Scott Murphy said including the County Tax and Capital we are up 2.4%. (Without those, we are 1.2%) If we use the full \$75,000, it will be .6%.
 - F. Bruce Schmidt said if we don't do anything, the budget will increase 2.4%, up \$98,640.
 - G. Justin Hyjek said he would hate to see the budget increase. He said that he is on the Recreation Committee and he is not sure it will be able to secure the grants to do the project.
 - H. Bruce Schmidt said that the Cemetery is a stand-alone department and we opted to put money back in the capital account for paving. This is a good example of a budget where the money has not been spent.
 - I. Brett Sanderson said possibly they could use some of the \$25,000 but not all.
 - J. Ulla Cook said the Cemetery has \$73,000 left over to use for April, May and June of this fiscal
Bruce Schmidt asked if we can use it.
 - K. Ulla Cook said that there is \$64,000 in the fund balance and we voted to do so.
 - L. Scott Murphy said if their expenses run about the same as last year, there would be about \$5,000 more. We could take \$30,000 without affecting cemetery operations.
 - M. Bruce Schmidt said that is the better option. He said we have to have a plan and can carry over money but we have carried money over for several years.
 - N. Ulla Cook said we need to do this.
 - O. Bruce Schmidt asked board members their thoughts.
 - P. Justin Hyjek said we need to keep the tax rate as low as possible.
 - Q. Brett Sanderson asked about insurance increases and said these are uncontrollable costs.
 - R. Scott Murphy said insurance is about \$203,000, next \$182,000 – he thinks down from last year.
 - S. Bruce Schmidt said we have a \$96,000 overage, maybe we should shoot for \$50,000 or a 1.2% increase. He said that the departments did good jobs with their budgets.
 - T. Ulla Cook said that we are doing a reappraisal and possibly the Grand List will go up. If it does, the taxes will decrease.
 - U. Bruce Schmidt said that his concern is the Cemetery. He said that people ask the Select Board to manage the Cemetery, budget and we are doing what they asked us to do. We will work with the Cemetery Commission to get the things done that need to be done. If we use the full \$75,000, it will keep the tax rate down. He said that the budgets still seem healthy with the changes.
 - V. Brett Sanderson said we need to watch what we do to increase balances.
 - W. Justin Hyjek said he is okay to move forward with the changes proposed by Scott Murphy.
 - X. Scott Murphy asked for input from Ulla Cook.
 - Y. Ulla Cook said she definitely feels that the board should do the complete amount.
 - Z. Brett Sanderson asked the tax rate if they do the \$75,000.
 - AA. Bruce Schmidt said .6%.
 - BB. Brett Sanderson said and with just the \$50,000 it would be 1.2%.
 - CC. Bruce Schmidt said if there was one thing, he would leave in the department budget; it would be the crushed gravel. We would definitely be using the money to put the gravel on the roads. All of the other suggestions, might not be used and just sitting there.
 - DD. Justin Hyjek asked what Ron Tarbell said.
 - EE. Scott Murphy said that the vendor does come every few years and we could use it this year or wait.
 - FF. Justin Hyjek said the high school building is still up in the air.
 - GG. Scott Murphy said we will be getting a better handle on things after the first year.
 - HH. Justin Hyjek asked if costs will decrease next year.
 - II. Scott Murphy said possibly, but not to count on it.
 - JJ. Justin Hyjek said we should go ahead with the full \$75,000.
 - KK. Scott Baitz agreed.
 - LL. **MOTION by Scott Baitz and seconded by Justin Hyjek to approve the use of funds as proposed by Scott Murphy to cover the costs of the County Tax and Capital. Motion passed unanimously.**

4. **NOTES**

- A. Bruce Schmidt asked Scott Murphy about upcoming dates.
- B. Scott Murphy said that there may be some difficulty meeting the printers' deadline for the Town Report. It is due a week from today. Pam Cruickshank is working on it and is having difficulty getting it together. If we finalize the budget tonight, she does expect to finish it up and make the deadline.
- C. Town Informational Meeting for the budget is on February 22, 2021.
- D. Bruce Schmidt said it will be via ZOOM and they will review all of the Town Meeting items.
- E. Ulla Cook said that she has the cards ready to send out to voters to remind them to request absentee ballots for Town Meeting.
- F. Scott Murphy noted that the Village Meeting for the Bond vote for the High Street Water/Sewer/Storm water Project will be held on Tuesday, January 19, 2021 from 10:00 AM to 7:00 PM.
- G. Bruce Schmidt asked if tonight's meeting was on You-Tube.
- H. Eric Chattergee said no, but it was live on Okemo Valley TV.
- I. Bruce Schmidt asked if the meeting on February 22, 2021 will be live.
- J. Eric Chattergee said probably.

5. **ADJOURN**

- A.
- B. **MOTION by Brett Sanderson and seconded by Justin Hyjek to adjourn. Motion passed unanimously.**
- C. Meeting adjourned at 6:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisha Klaiber

Bruce Schmidt, Chairman

Brett Sanderson

Scott Baitz

Heather Tucker

Justin Hyjek