



**Beacon Falls Board of Selectmen
Beacon Falls Board of Finance
10 Maple Avenue
Beacon Falls, CT 06403**

**Joint Budget Workshop
March 5, 2024, MINUTES (Subject to Revision)**

1. Call to Order / Pledge to the Flag: G. Smith called the BOS workshop to order at 7:02 PM. K. Brennan called the BOF workshop to order and G. Smith led the assembly in the pledge.

Members Present: G. Smith, M. Krenesky, K. Brennan, S. Leeper, W. Giglio, K. Lembo, B. Catanzaro, J. Carroll

Members Absent: P. Betkoski

Others Present: N. Nau, J. Piccirillo, R. Pruzinsky, G. Mays

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes – **M. Kerensky made a motion to approve the 2/20/24 Workshop minutes as presented. G. Smith seconded the motion. All ayes. W. Giglio made a motion to approve the 2/20/24 Budget Workshop minutes. K. Lembo seconded the motion. J. Carroll abstained from the vote, but all other BOF members voted aye.**

3. Public Input – Webform submissions – There have been no webform submissions to date. They are directed through the town website to K. Brennan, N. Nau and E. Schwarz's email addresses.

4. Department Budget Review:

- a) **Police Department:** Corporal J. Piccirillo of the Beacon Falls Police Department reviewed his operating budget requests with the Boards.

- In addition to the requested increases, Finance raised concerns about the computer support line and Vehicle Maintenance line. Computer support now needs to include dash camera modems and the Police Dept now has more vehicles. This year's vehicle maintenance budget was not sufficient. J. Piccirillo will review the modem bill and he believes with the newer vehicles, the maintenance costs will decrease.
- Regarding Part Time Patrol and Overtime wages the 2024 budget lines are insufficient and Finance is recommending a significant increase to those lines. Significant transfers will be needed in this year's budget. The proposed budget is based on fifteen part-time 8-hour shifts per week. G. Smith concurred that it is worth the cost for increased police protection filling shifts round the clock with part-time officers.
- **Capital Projects:**
 - New Police Vehicle: G. Smith asked if J. Piccirillo had investigated a police truck, and J. Piccirillo advised that they are not readily available, with long lead times. He is using State Contract pricing through MHQ which has set cost increases each year.
 - License Plate Readers: J. Piccirillo has been working with Flock on a proposal for license plate readers for high traffic areas in town. He is proposing eight cameras at pinpointed locations in town: Route 8 entrances, town line entrances: Seymour, Oxford, Bethany, and Beacon Valley Road. The cameras cover two lanes of traffic and read plates in both directions. They are solar powered and cellular driven, and installation and maintenance are part of the contract. They only capture the rear of the vehicle and plate, flag the police when there is no plate and can read



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bumper stickers and defining marks on the rear of a vehicle. They integrate with other towns and work with AXON's evidence.com site. Flock will provide a 30-day trial and a website link for transparency. Eight cameras would have an initial cost of \$29,200 and ongoing costs of \$24,000 each year. Data is stored for 30 days.

- N. Nau noted that a license plate reader grant program has been introduced in the State legislature, so funds may be available for FY2025, but it is early in the process at the State. M. Krenesky noted that it is time that the town invested in what is needed. J. Piccirillo provided a list of towns in the State using Flock cameras, which includes Prospect and Cheshire. The Route 8 corridor towns and adjacent towns do not have these cameras. J. Piccirillo will explore what adjoining towns are doing, because the cameras integrate and are located at the town lines, there is the potential for costs to be shared.
- The two remaining capital projects are a new sign at the Police station and two new radios. There were no questions on these projects.
- PPD (Police Private Duty) Fund – The Police Private Duty rates for the town did not increase this year, due to the additional fees being charged by Extra Duty Solutions. Profits in the Private Duty fund is not as robust this year, due to the amount of Town roadwork being completed, and higher pay rates this year. The Boards will need to consider increasing the PPD rate being charged to contractors starting in July 2024. J. Piccirillo noted that the Town may want to add a cruiser fee. M. Krenesky noted that for 7/1/24; if Beacon Falls is out of line with other towns that should stop, he encouraged charging a cruiser fee. J. Piccirillo will research the Private duty rates of surrounding towns. The boards thanked Corporal Piccirillo for his appearance.

b) **Public Works:** R. Pruzinsky and G Mays reported on the operating and capital requests from Public Works:

- Operating budget: R. Pruzinsky noted that snow removal and vehicle maintenance are the largest increases this year. Last year both lines were reduced, and salt costs rose to over \$100/ton. His inventory of salt is reasonable, and the amount purchased will vary based on snowfall. He has 250-275 tons of salt remaining this year. G. Mays noted that he wanted to include refurbishing plows in the vehicle maintenance line. The new trucks have a lot more electronics and emissions issues with them and they are seeing repairs related to this. The new trucks have a shorter lifespan than the older mechanical plow trucks and they expect 10-12 year lifespans on the trucks. Other operating lines are increasing due to state contract increases and material increases.
- Public Works has included in their budget a request for a seventh maintainer: K. Brennan asked how the seventh person would benefit the town. R. Pruzinsky noted that Pent Road is well maintained, but all the other parks are being neglected. He could use an additional maintainer for the Parks alone. G. Mays noted with another maintainer, the Public Works department, they could rebuild more catch basins and have drainage prepared for roads that require mill and paving. R. Pruzinsky noted that to fix the roads, you need to fix what is underneath the roads and many of our catch basins are masonry blocks. If the Town wants Public Works to handle more of the drainage and catch basin work, a 7th maintainer would allow them to increase that type of roadwork. Three men can rebuild two catch basins per day.



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G. Mays also noted that it currently takes 2 days a week to mow the entire town, so a seventh person would be able to mow, leaving the other maintainers to do roadwork all the time. G. Mays added that another maintainer would assist with brush tractor trim work and patching of potholes. He noted that with the position filled, then the Town could hire seasonal staff for the summer months to assist with maintenance.

- G. Smith stated that catch basin work is not something we do every year-round after-round. He had requested that one of the park's employees move to the highway 3 days per week to assist with roadwork. It is more expensive to pay for a seventh person year-round, then to hire a contractor to come in and complete catch basin work for 8 hours per day. He stands against the seventh person, because it is a lot more expensive to bring someone on board 365 days per year. R. Pruzinsky noted that parks maintenance gets bumped often and to pull someone out of the parks, they get behind on mowing and then Toby's Pond and Matthies Park are lower priorities.
- M. Krenesky asked if Public Works could use more help on the administrative side of things and R. Pruzinsky noted that he does about 2 hours per day of administrative tasks and tries to get out on the road by 9:00 AM. The administrative work is in his job description and contracted work. Admin tasks are about 10 hours per week. So, on the admin side, for someone to take over that work, the department gains only 10 hours per week on the road.
- M. Krenesky walked through Matthies Park with SLR this week for the POCD and SLR saw the challenges of maintaining the property.
- A discussion occurred about the type of salt being used on the new Burton Road sidewalks and the concrete mix there may be an issue.
- **Capital Projects:**
 - i. 2006 F-350: This vehicle is almost 20 years old, and due for replacement. It is in decent shape so that it could be used by another department or sold at auction.
 - ii. Town Garage Siding: G. Mays noted that this project is now a necessity. There are holes, mice, rats, birds, and the walls are moving and there is nothing left of the siding. The building was built in 1978 and desperately needs repair.
 - iii. Town Garage Roof: G. Mays did a lot of research and called many contractors for this work, which is a rubber roof which was put over the original steel roof. The siding should be done first, and when the contractor completes the siding, they can set it up, so that is weather tight for them to come back and do the roof the next year. The skylights and roofing insulation are falling in.
 - iv. N. Nau noted that this project is sizable and to be fair and competitive, we should bid this work and would invite the contractor that has provided the quotes. G. Mays called 6-7 people and they all recommended Pacesetter for this work. The building is not on a concrete slab, and it is rotting out.
 - v. G. Smith noted that until we can find a piece of land for a new Public Works Garage, we will need to protect this asset and extend its useful life. The Transfer Station permit is in the place for several more years, so it makes sense to make this a usable building, which could be repurposed if Public Works relocates down the road. Discussion occurred about the costs of a new garage, but the town does not have a suitable location. 60 x 120



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building, need property to build it. Has been part of every week and we must; protecting our assets and extending the useful life. G. Smith is in favor of completing the job as one project, so the siding can be done and prepped so that the roof can then tie into the new siding.

- vi. Salt Shed Roof: G. Mays noted that Digiorgi has provided an excellent price for this work. N. Nau added that we would need to waive the procurement procedures to accept the quote for this roof, as the project qualifies for a competitive bid process.
- vii. Parking lot paving – Under the Town's paving contract is finalized, the price here is an estimate. The lot is cracked up and falling apart.
- viii. Matthies Park Garage Doors: The garage stores equipment, fertilizer, clay. All four solid metal doors need to be replaced. The Parks Building Maintenance line may be able to support one door at a time, but the project is for all four doors.
- ix. Sidewalk snowblower: G. Mays has researched all types of machines for sidewalk clearing. Public Works clears the sidewalks on Main Street, by the green bridge, by Town Hall and will have most of Church Street to address next season. He looked at stand up skid steers (which were \$33,000) and settled on a ride on tractor with a 48 inch plow the width of the sidewalks for \$36,400. The tractor has a snow blower and a broom and will fit on the green bridge and can be used all summer as well as for storms. They already have a trailer they can use with the tractor, so that is another cost savings. K. Brennan asked what they currently use, and it takes 3 hours with snowblowers and shovels.
- x. Asphalt Roller: Replacement of a 1985 roller that is in bad shape and now only one drum turns. G. May explained that every time they use it, they need to repair it.
- xi. Gator: Public Works may withdraw this project. The Firehouse is planning to give Public Works their old ATV and this will work for the parks department instead of the Gator.
- Regarding upcoming road work, the commuter lot will be repaved with bonded monies as part of the EV Charging station work. R. Pruzinsky does not plan to chip seal but has roads he will be crack sealing in the spring with General Fund Pavement Maintenance monies. The Fiber mat on Lancaster is showing wear, so there is potential for fog sealing that road. We will include micro seal in the new paving bid, so that application can be considered.
- Toby's Pond – M. Krenesky reminded the group that there is \$17,000 in O&G granted funds for the maintenance of Toby's. R. Pruzinsky added there is no evidence of dike failing between the river and the pond.

5. Open Budget Discussion: Revenue, Expenditures, Non-Recurring Capital Projects

The board agreed to no further discussion tonight. K. Brennan asked to add General Budget discussion to the agenda for the 3/12/24 Regular Board of Finance Meeting. The 3/19/24 Budget Workshop will include Fire/EMS and Fire Marshall discussion.



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6. **Adjournment:** J. Carroll made a motion to adjourn the BOF Workshop at 9:06 PM. W. Giglio seconded the motions. All ayes. M. Krenesky made a motion to adjourn the BOS portion of the Workshop at 9:06 PM. G. Smith seconded the motion. All ayes.

Respectfully submitted,

Erin A. Schwarz