

GEORGETOWN SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes: March 2, 2023

via zoom

PRESENT:

Karren Cowing, Alison Freeman, David Polito, Sharon Trabona, Bronwen Tudor, Selectman representative, Terry Taylor, Financial Advisory Committee (FAC) representative, and Mary McDonald, Financial Director/Treasurer.

The purpose of this meeting is to draft the 2023-24 solid waste management budget.

FISCAL:

Terry Taylor presented a proposed base budget for 2023-24. He asked for input from the Committee.

Municipal Solid Waste and Bulky Waste:

Terry reviewed the proposed tipping/hauling line item. He extrapolated hauling trips and tonnage from the past 7 months of the current fiscal year. The total hauling and tipping line item would be \$101,350. Dave Polito thought the numbers were conservative, but appropriate. Karren Cowing said that she had looked at the tonnage and trips for February through June 2022. If those same amounts (tonnage and trips) were used for the remaining months of 2022-23 fiscal year the amounts would be slightly less than what Terry used for the proposed budget. Mary McDonald had reviewed the numbers with Terry today. She has tracked the waste disposal amounts (tonnage, trips, and costs) for several years; she thinks that the proposed tonnage and trips is about what could be expected. Sharon Trabona was supportive of the numbers as presented.

Attendants' Salaries:

Terry used an 8% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) increase for the proposal, although the Select Board has not decided the final COLA. Terry noted there are 3 Monday holidays included in the 23-24 budget that were not in the 22-23 line item. One of the on-going concerns the Town and Committee have had over the years is stability of staff. At the moment there are 5 staff persons, but it is not clear how long all of them will choose to continue their employment at the Transfer Station(TS). This had led this past year to having 4 employees on duty early in the year (normally 3 are at the TS at one time) in order for the new staff person to be locally trained. Brown Tudor interjected that if a current employee left, the entry level pay for a new employee would be lower than the employee s/he was replacing so it might not have an impact on the overall salaries' line item. Mary spoke with Jim on staffing and indicated that the TS does not need to have 4 employees at the TS all 3 days. Mary also clarified that the training line item is for DEP training provided by the State. The Committee members agreed to the proposed \$72,723 for salaries.

Recycling Contract:

The Lincoln County Recycling (LCR) fee for 23-24 will be \$12,814.

General Operations:

The Committee agreed to stay with \$3,000 for General Operations.

Licensing Fees:

The licensing fees have increased incrementally the last two years. Terry suggested \$600 for 23-24.

Reuse, and reduce, recycle.

Remember recycling and discarding less saves tax dollars.

Maintenance and Repair:

Dave asked why the roof repair was listed under Capital Improvement and not under Maintenance and Repair (M/R). Bronwen said this is a major expense, and a new roof is a replacement, not a repair. This expenditure will be capitalized and depreciated over several years. Mary suggested that the tree trimming by the bottles storage area should be done in this fiscal year. Ole had sent Dave an email suggesting that some of the monies in M/R could be used for the roof replacement. Alison asked about the roof on the Universal Waste (UW) shed. Dave did not think the roof would need repair any time in the near future. Dave got an estimate of about \$1500 for the tree removal this year. Bronwen said if a contract for a job, such as tree removal, is made in 22-23, even if the work takes place in the next fiscal year, the monies would come from the 22-23 budget. There was a discussion of whether gravel replacement in the metals area, which could become an on-going occurrence, should be a separate line item or under M/R. Terry and Mary thought it should be a separate line item if it needs to happen every year. Dave said he is not sure that gravel will be needed every year. Also, it is complicated to schedule because the gravel has to be spread when the metals have been collected and the area is empty of metal. The Committee agreed to keep the gravel for the metals under M/R. Also, the Committee agreed to keep M/R at \$5000.

Phone:

The phone bill is about \$50/month so the Committee agreed with \$600 a year.

Safety Equipment:

Safety equipment includes steel-toed boots for employees and T-shirts for the employees. The last boot purchase was in 2021. The Committee agreed to keep the line item at \$500. Mary requested that the T-shirts should have "STAFF" printed on them the next time they are ordered.

Training:

This is DEP training offered through the State. Since the Covid pandemic, this training has not been offered, but the Committee hopes it will resume. The Committee agreed to keep \$500 for training, in case it is offered in the near future.

Utilities:

Electric rates have increased so that line item was increased to \$1200.

Household Hazardous Waste (HHW):

The May event held in Bath this year was about \$2000. The Brunswick event is held in October, but this year the Town of Brunswick did not notify Georgetown of the event in time for citizens to register. Because of this Brunswick did not charge the Town for the few Georgetown citizens who showed up. Dave proposed increasing the HHW line to \$3000. The Committee agreed.

Universal Waste (UW):

Terry said each UW pick up is costing about \$275. In addition, the company is charging \$100 per trip. Jim had contacted NorthCoast and the representative did not know if there would be a rate increase for the items collected. Jim hoped there would not be. He thought there would be at least 2 more hauls this year. Mary said from the invoices it appears that the hauls have occurred every other month. Alison noted that if these costs are increasing because of the constant changes in technology that leads to quicker replacement of computers, TVs, DVDs, etc, it may be appropriate to consider charging fees for UW in the future. Terry suggested \$2000 for UW. The Committee was in agreement.

Capital Improvements:

The replacement of the roof over the compactor and bulky waste containers really needs to be done. Alison said at a previous meeting she had suggested the attendants' office building should be replaced or repaired. Dave did not think replacement of the attendants' office was necessary.

Dave tried to get estimates for the roof. There is rot under the shingles and the whole roof needs to be removed to the trusses and rebuilt. Dave was only able to get one solid estimate for \$31,500. Given the increase in costs for materials, he would suggest \$35,000 for replacing the purlins, plywood, shingle, some gutter work, and a new roof on the attendants' office.

Terry asked if there were any other possible capital improvements anticipated in the next 5-10 years. The Committee members did not think there was any other major improvements anticipated.

Contingency:

The Committee agreed to stay with \$2000.

NEXT MEETING:

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on Thursday, March 9, 2023 at 7:00 PM.

Dave moved and Sharon seconded adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Karren Cowing

Cc: Solid Waste Management Committee members, Selectmen, Town Office