

Greensboro Selectboard

November 20, 2024 Budget Meeting - Minutes

[This was a hybrid meeting held at the Town Offices]

SELECTBOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Eric Hanson, David Kelley, MacNeil, Bobbie Nisbet

SELECTBOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Ellen Celnik

OTHERS PRESENT (in person): Jennifer Lucas, Kim Greaves, Josh Karp

OTHERS PRESENT (remote): Christine Armstrong

CALLED TO ORDER: 1 PM

FY 2026 MUNICIPAL BUDGET

The board discussed the draft FY26 budget.

Eric: the base budget is more or less complete, we're looking at a 8.47% increase as a starting point, based on a 3.5% employee raise. I think we're now aiming to cut \$100k total.

David: can we agree on a maximum 3-4% budgetary increase? This is the message sent across VT during the last election, the cost of living has become untenable for many.

Eric: What about a 4-5% increase?

Items discussed included:

- 1. HERF.** John Schweizer has been working with the road crew on the HERF, current FY26 level is \$171k.
- 2. Incoming FEMA non-borrowed funds (reimbursement for gravel, equipment use, road crew labor).**
Jennifer said these funds should be put in the revenue projections, rather than 'offsetting' line item increases during budgeting time. If the funds come in before the tax rate is set (summer 2025) they can be used to offset some expenses and effectively lower the tax rate. Josh said counting on \$100K of FEMA funds for this offset is a conservative approach, as most FEMA projects have been obligated and he believes the town will be receiving the majority of funds in the next few months. Jennifer said this \$100k in revenue would bring the FY26 budget increase down to 4.7%.
- 3. Police.** David said he thinks the board should cut \$100K from the Sheriff's budget. MacNeil asked whether OCSD would be willing to negotiate, and asked what level of service the town wants. David said we want a full-time deputy sheriff with enough margin for emergency calls. Dave will discuss possibilities of reducing policing costs with Sherriff Harlow.
- 4. Road projects.** It was agreed to reduce the "road projects" line item from \$50K to \$25K.

5. **Fire Dept.** Discussion of fire dept. truck needs. Chief Brochu has informed the board that two trucks will be needed over the next few years that could total at least \$1 million.
6. **Reappraisal.** Discussion of whether \$21k is necessary in FY26, or if the amount currently in the reappraisal fund is enough to cover this expense.
7. **Appropriations.** Eric said perhaps after the 2025 town meeting, the selectboard can empower a committee to study all the appropriations. The Craftsbury Community Care Center and Greensboro Nursing Home were moved to the 'special appropriations' category.

The next budget meeting will be held on December 4.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 2 PM.

Respectfully Submitted: Josh Karp, Selectboard Clerk