

Town of Wayne, Maine
Draft Agenda for Wayne Budget Committee
Ladd Recreation Center
In Person & Remote
March 12, 2024 6:30 p.m.

Zoom information: Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5443482874?pwd=eIFXeDcrclFtMHlrMGpHMTN2L3VoQT09&omn=89453324771>

Meeting ID: 544 348 2874

Passcode: 2042842

Approve Agenda for 3/12/24 & Minutes for Meeting 2/27/24.

The timeline approved at a previous meeting for this date "Public Safety" includes:

(1) Fire Department:

(2) Animal Control:

(3) Public Safety (such as Ambulance, Sheriff & Rural Patrols):

(4) Health and Human Services:

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(5) Updates if available on news from RSU 38 Budget, Transfer Station, Kennebec County (and others?)

(6) Contingency: we deferred this topic at our last meeting as premature. I had been hoping we could address several issues on the general concept rather than determining a "budget item" and amount.

(a) The method used to develop and allocate budget recommendations for a Contingency Fund seems clearly in the wheelhouse of the Budget Committee to advise the Board: What is a good approach to setting a goal and to maintaining in reserve an adequate Fund - possibly a one-time large sum set aside to be used and replenished on an annual basis (e.g. \$100,000)? Or rather, setting a goal and making several annual payments to reach that goal (e.g. four years at \$25,000 per year), also to include replenishing any funds drawn down in the following budget cycles.

(b) The general idea of a contingency fund suggests a level of confidence in the officials in charge of deciding to use the fund: perhaps there could be a slightly higher standard such as requiring a 'super-majority vote' of the Board for allowing funds to be dispersed.

(c) The general idea also suggests an occasional but conceivable need for very prompt action: perhaps the Select Board Chair and/or Town Manager would be authorized to have appropriate, limited, emergency decision-making power.

Are there other matters the Budget Committee could or should consider in its capacity to advise the Select Board on matters related to a Contingency Fund?

(7) Other topics? Stan Davis has sent us all a suggestion to include in the budget a recommendation for an initial amount (he suggests about \$75,000) so that we are prepared in the event the Town votes for the extension of the Spectrum broadband network. (Recall and note that the Town did vote to approve an earlier project subject to the receipt of a grant approval. When the grant proposal was turned down, there was no effort made to redirect and spend the funds that had been authorized.)

"Hello all- an update for budget planning purposes.

The Select Board voted that we plan to put an item on the June ballot to see if citizens want to spend money to subsidize expansion of high speed reliable internet to the parts of town not now served. Spectrum would pay for more than half of the cost of this expansion. The total town cost figure will be under \$400,000 (we are still negotiating), which I assume we would borrow over five years. So the annual figure would be somewhere in the \$75,000 range, depending on how much ARPA grant money and Internet reserve account money we have left, and on interest costs. I'm not sure if this should be on the Tuesday ballot or at Town Meeting- I see pros and cons on both sides of that issue. The Select Board, when we discussed this, saw this as an issue that the Select Board would not make a recommendation about, but would leave it to the will of the voters.

This proposed project would involve an expansion of Spectrum's network, in which those who do not now have Cable internet available on their roads would be able to get fiber internet. It is also possible (though unlikely) that we will have a proposal from CCI through their Fidium Fiber division, to build a fiber network.

If the town votes no, it is likely - but not certain - that the federal BEAD program would pay for Spectrum to build out its network to all roads in town some time between 2026 and 2029.

Clearly, there is a range of opinions about this decision in town. When we asked for comment, the majority of responses said we should put this to a vote.

Just an FYI

Stan

(8) Other topics?

