

THE RANDOLPH REVIEW

July 2014

Town of Randolph, Maine
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Selectmen:

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Annual Town Meeting is July 23, 7:00 PM

T.C. Hamlin School

(Budget Committee meets six times)

Non-routine items this year will include:

- ❖ how to make up for less municipal revenue sharing from the State
- ❖ buying software to accept debit/credit cards at Town Office
- ❖ paying for new Town Office roof
- ❖ planning for eventual town revaluation

The Budget Committee started meeting in May with figures from the Selectmen and then had to meet 5 more times. While most of the proposed items have the same recommendation of the Selectmen and the Committee, there are a few items where the Budget Committee is recommending a different amount than the Board. These will certainly generate discussion on the Town Meeting floor, however, it is YOUR VOTE that will help determine how much your tax bill will be this year. So, c'mon down..... it might be hot but the discussion may be hotter!

Your taxes are determined by the amount of money necessary to fund all the operations of this Townplus the School District. In fact, the School budget accounts for less than half of the entire budget. The County Tax and 2 long term loans account for about 15% of the budget. The remaining amount (about 39%) goes to operating the various programs in the Town of Randolph.

The following information is a sampling of the items which citizens will be voting on:

- ☞ Kennebec County -- \$90,758 - down \$1,067 from last year.
- ☞ MSAD #11 -- \$910,051 - up from last year's \$880,846 (already approved)
- ☞ Capital debt -- \$129,700. This is decreasing every year and it is down from last year's \$131,200. It is for 2 past projects: Belmont Street and Kinderhook St.
- ☞ Taxes being due on September 12 and March 12

- ☞ Office salaries -- \$91,540 - up \$14,000 from last year due to proposed 50 cents/hr. increase for all 3 staffers.
- ☞ Software upgrade to allow electronic motor vehicle registrations - Selectmen recommend estimated cost of \$6,800 but Budget Comm. recommends zero.
- ☞ Software upgrade to allow electronic licensing of hunting and fishing licenses through state's MOSES system -- \$470
- ☞ Software and equipment upgrade to allow town to accept debit/credit cards for payments at Town Office -- \$1,100
- ☞ Gardiner Library -- \$17,328 - up slightly from last year.....but with a significant difference. Similar to last year, the Selectmen and the Budget Committee recommend to discontinue being a "partner town" so that this money would not be paid, as usual, to the Gardiner Library for its operating expenses such as heat, lights, etc. so that all Randolph residents can have unlimited access to the Gardiner Library, and then access to the entire state library system. Instead, this amount of money would be set aside in a town dedicated account to reimburse residents who would have to buy a library card at any public library (i.e. \$65 for Gardiner) and then come to the town office for reimbursement. See following article.
- ☞ Gardiner Area Boys/Girls Club -- \$10,629 (this is Randolph's share in the operational & utility costs of the Club as one of the 4-town partners)—same as last several years. About 100 girls/boys from Randolph took part in programming this year along with hundreds of community members who use the facility for other events.
- ☞ Road paving/sidewalk repair - \$25,000 - same as last year.
- ☞ Winter plowing/sanding -- \$62,000 - down almost \$14,000 from last year. The town now has a new 3 year contract with Mr. Ellis in Farmingdale which brings an end to over 50 years of plowing by Mr. Barry.
- ☞ Street sweeping/catch basin cleaning -- \$9,400 - down almost \$700 from last year. The town now has a new 3 year contract with Mr. Ellis in Farmingdale which brings an end to over 50 years of sweeping by Mr. Barry.
- ☞ Ambulance Service -- \$16,888 -up about \$8,000 from last year's \$8,823 (fixed per capita fee plus \$\$/call for Gardiner Rescue)
- ☞ Office machinery -- \$1,700 - same as last year
- ☞ Hydrants - \$79,584- up about \$6,300 from last year - for Gardiner Water District
- ☞ CMP -- \$17,820 (street lights — up \$620 from last year)
- ☞ Hatch Hill -\$26,580 --for trash going to Augusta landfill-down a bit from last year.
- ☞ Emergency dispatch services -- \$20,426 (up about \$1,300 from last year) for using Lincoln County for E-911 service and fire dispatch and continuing to use Central ME Regional Communication Center for police dispatching, and equipment upgrades
- ☞ Public Works (maintenance of roads, sewers, equipment) -- \$63,500 - up about \$8,000 from last year. (Budget Comm. Recommends \$60K.)

- ☞ Public Works Vehicle Replacement - \$5,000 to continue a dedicated account for future replacement of vehicle
- ☞ Cemetery (3) maintenance -- \$6,000 for maintenance/upkeep - up about \$800 because mowing is now done by contractor and not by town crew.
- ☞ Spring junk cleanup -- \$2,500 - same as last year.
- ☞ Install ADA-compliant door openers at Town Office -- \$4,000
- ☞ Replacement of Town Office roofing—borrow up to \$20,000 from town's Revolving Loan Fund to be paid back over 4 years at 4%..... for new metal roof
- ☞ Law & Code Enforcement -- \$26,616 - Breakdown is: \$10,500 for Police Chief and Harbormaster (Greg Lumbert) and deputy Peter Griffin; \$16,016 for code enforcement; \$100 for health officer. Positions are part time.
- ☞ Fire Department (volunteer) -- \$32,000 - same as last year for wages, equipment, and training. Wages=\$17K and operations, training and equipment =\$15K.
- ☞ Emergency Management equipment -- \$2,000—same as last year. This work is now done by the Fire Chief and is for training, generator & radio maintenance.
- ☞ Fire Truck future replacement: -- \$5,000 to continue to increase the Capitol Equipment account.
- ☞ Town newsletter -- \$1,000 for 2 issues. Cost is about \$0.73 per household/issue.
- ☞ Town website -- \$850 - same as last year.
- ☞ Community benefits -- \$1,500 - same as last year. It will go to some local charities and food banks, KVCAP, & Spectrum Generations, and Town historian.
- ☞ General assistance -- \$6,500- same as last year.
- ☞ Selectmens' salary -- \$16,500 for all three ----\$5,500 for each (up \$500 per selectman from last year)
- ☞ Town wide property valuation -- \$15,000. This would be saved in a dedicated account for the inevitable valuation that may be needed 4 to 6 years from now.
- ☞ Town Comprehensive Plan -- \$1,000. This would be saved in a dedicated account for the future cost of updating our Plan in about 10 years from now.

Credit/debit cards at Town Office??

Voters will decide whether to pay for software to allow citizens to use their cards for payments at the Town Office. If that is approved, then the cost to use personal cards will involve a small fee. That fee will be ADDED TO the payment in question. For instance, if you need to pay a bill of \$100, then you will pay a total of \$104 for that convenience. (If this fee policy was not in place, then the Town's cost would have to be absorbed by all taxpayers for the benefit of those people who use their cards.)

Gardiner Library

Randolph has always been one of four "partner towns" that collectively pays for operational costs of the Library. The cost share per town is determined by the "per cent of book circulation" amongst the 4 towns. Because Randolph's circulation accounts

for 4.6% of the total circulation, then the Library requested \$17,328 this year which is about \$350 more than last year. As a member town, this creates free usage by citizens of each of the 4 towns to use the local libraries and 90 other public libraries plus the University system and libraries at Bates, Bowdoin, and Colby. It has operated this way for decades.

According to the Library's files, over the last year, Randolph has 413 cardholders which represents 296 identifiable households. Total Randolph circulation was 6,139 items.

In recent years, the selectmen and Budget Committee have discussed the pros/cons of this system. After much recent discussion, a majority of both boards is recommending not to specifically fund the Gardiner Library. Rather, money would be set aside in a separate account to reimburse any citizen who wants to personally buy a library card at any public library and then be reimbursed at the Town Office. For Gardiner, a private "non member" card is \$65. *In reaction to Randolph's proposal, on July 2 the City of Gardiner imposed a 3 year moratorium on all "non resident" Library cards which effectively means that no Randolph resident can get a card nor be reimbursed if the town decides to not be a "partner town".* Randolph citizens would have to try to buy a card elsewhere and then be reimbursed to receive Library services.

BOTTOM LINE: Your vote at Town Meeting is important!! If you agree with this new method, then you would have to vote for the Article as written. If you do not like it and want to have a Gardiner card, then the Article would have to be amended "on the floor" and then voted on.

PLEASE ATTEND ON JULY 23