

THE RANDOLPH REVIEW

July 2019

Town of Randolph, Maine
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Selectmen:

Mark Roberts
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Editor:

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Annual Town Meeting is July 24, 7:00 PM
former T.C. Hamlin School
(Budget Committee met five times)

Non-routine items this year will include:

- ❖ replace our 112 old streetlights with modern LED units.....payback in under 3 years.
- ❖ possible bond for \$1 M for major street reconstruction
- ❖ new ordinances on food sovereignty and emergency services cost recovery

The Budget Committee started meeting in June with figures from the Selectmen and then had to meet 4 more times. All of the proposed items have the same recommendation of the Selectmen and the Committee. However, it is YOUR VOTE that will help determine how much your tax bill will be this year.

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 one long term loan account for less than 15% of the budget. The remaining amount (about 40%) 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 -- \$91,864 - up 3.2% from last year.
- ☞ MSAD #11 -- \$966,944 - up \$55,415 from last year (already approved)
- ☞ Capital debt -- \$118,750. It is for the past project on Kinderhook St. to be paid off by 2023
- ☞ Office salaries -- \$90,000 - up slightly from last year.
- ☞ Law & Code Enforcement -- \$23,650 - down \$3,450 from last year. Breakdown is: 11,000 for Police Chief and Harbormaster; \$12,550 for code enforcement; \$100 for health officer. Positions are part time.
- ☞ Fire Department (volunteer) -\$42,000 -up \$6K from last year for wages, equipment & training
- ☞ Emergency Management equipment -- \$2,000—same as last year. This work is now done by the Fire Chief and is for training, generator & maintenance.
- ☞ Emergency communications --\$5,000 - new account for radio maintenance, tower rental, repeater
- ☞ Winter plowing/sanding - \$64,500—same as last year.

- ☞ Street sweeping/catch basin cleaning -- \$4,520 -same as last year.
- ☞ CMP -- \$19,000 (street lights) — same as last year. Will drop greatly with switch to LED lights
- ☞ Hatch Hill -\$17,770 --for trash going to Augusta landfill- same as last year.
- ☞ Ambulance Service -- \$27,407 - down about \$5,500 from last year (fixed per capita fee + \$\$/call for Gardiner Rescue). Costs cover service + workers comp, insurances, + uncollected debt
- ☞ Hydrants - \$83,994- up \$4,410 from last year - for Gardiner Water District
- ☞ Emergency dispatch services -- \$25,000 — up \$2,420 from last year. This is 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) -- \$72,500 - down \$5K from last year.
- ☞ Road paving/sidewalk repair - \$50,000 - double from last year
- ☞ Sewer system Capital improvements-- \$100,000 - up \$20,000 from last year....will be used
- ☞ Road capital improvements-- \$125,000 - up \$5K from last year....will be used to do significant road repair on a few streets
- ☞ Cemetery maintenance -- \$4,000 for maintenance/upkeep....up \$500 from last year.
- ☞ Buildings & lands -- \$6,500 - up \$1,000 from last year -- for building improvements, pest control, security, & fire extinguisher testing + a new security light at Town Office
- ☞ Townwide junk cleanup -- \$1,700 -this was not done this past Spring so we plan to do one this Fall
- ☞ General assistance -- \$6,000- same as last year.
- ☞ Town newsletter -- \$800 for 3 issues..... cost is about \$0.73 per household/issue.
- ☞ Town website -- \$1,200 - up slightly from last year.
- ☞ Town wide property valuation -- \$5,000—down \$10,000. This is being saved in a dedicated account for the inevitable valuation that may be needed 3 to 5 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.
- ☞ Selectmens' salary -- \$18,000 for all three ---- up \$500 per Selectman
- ☞ Community benefits -- \$2,750 - up \$1,250 from last year. It will go to Janice's Food Pantry, Chrysalis Place, KVCAP, Spectrum Generations, Lifeflight, Crisis & Counseling & Town historian. The Town receives many more requests but concentrates on funding more local agencies.
- ☞ Gardiner Area Boys/Girls Club -- \$10,629 - up \$621 from last year after being steady amount for several years. This is Randolph's share for operational & utility costs of the Club as one of the 4-town partners. 142 girls/boys from Randolph took part in programming this year along with hundreds of community members who use the facility for other events.
- ☞ Gardiner Library -- \$15,789 - up \$645 from last year..... this allows Randolph to be a "partner town" so that so that all Randolph residents can have unlimited access to the Gardiner Library. This money pays for the Library's operating expenses such as heat, lights, etc.
- ☞ Veterans' Memorial -- \$500 - maintenance funding for Memorial at Town Office. Donations have dropped off sharply. If interested in donating, contact the Town Office.

LED streetlights?

The budget includes \$40,000 for switching from our old sodium light fixtures to new efficient LED lights. Once done, the town will own the lights and will 1) use up to 70% less electricity and 2) pay almost 90% less than the current \$19,000/year bill for our 112 streetlights. The payback period for this investment is less than 3 years. The company is called Affinity Inc. out of Dover NH and the contractor will be Coutts Bros of Randolph.

Some of the current lights may be removed and not replaced. The focus will be on intersections and overall public safety. There will be more details soon on the website. It is very likely that lights will be converted by the Fall of this year.

New ordinances? "food sovereignty", cost recovery ?

- 1) Food sovereignty - this recognizes that Randolph citizens have the right to produce, process, sell, purchase, and consume local foods from local farms/gardens without state licensure and inspection. It does not include poultry or meat products.
- 2) Cost recovery - this would give the town the ability to recover any cost of services provided by our Fire Dep't to noncitizens when involved in emergencies or mutual aid in other towns

Randolph "Crime Watch"

This volunteer watch group has been reactivated to keep our neighborhoods safer. It is a group of neighbors who work together with our constable to reduce crime and improve our quality of life in Randolph neighborhoods. FMI, contact Greg Lumbert at 592-7073 or Autumn Schmidt at 649-7869. Details are also shown on the town website.

Gardiner Library..... a place for lifelong learning

by Stephanie Duncan, Randolph's Library rep

For many people in our community, the Gardiner Public Library is a place of wonder and a place for lifelong learning. I have witnessed the wonderment of children the first time they step into the library's enchanting Children's Room that welcomes all children to pick up a book and find out about dinosaurs, trucks, doctors, skyscrapers and science. It is this room where a child can meet Robert McCloskey and all his ducklings. It is where Maurice Sendak leaves his wild things for children to explore. It is in this room that children gather together and read books aloud and learn all that one needs to learn about the love of reading. It is where my daughter Mariah found her love of reading and learning. It has served her well as she finished her masters degree in mental health counseling and expressive therapies. She is now an art therapist in Boston. Reading should be a joy for life and that is why everyone should have access to the collection. It is in this place that teens can visit and learn the skills of research that do not involve a Google search though professional librarians are there to help decipher the accurate and inaccurate information found on the Internet. It is a safe place where teens can come after school to visit with their friends and find a nice quiet place to read and imagine. I brought all my kids to the library as they were growing up and they now feel comfortable visiting other libraries!

Unbiased and accurate information needs to be available to everyone in our community. As we grow older, we should continue to read and learn and what better place to start than the public library? The staff runs two book discussions a month that brings over 30 people into the Hazzard Reading Room to discuss books and ideas. Lifetime friendships have sprung from these discussions and people know that their opinions should be expressed and respected. I still visit the library weekly and I can always find something to read in many different formats be they hardcover books, audiobooks or downloaded e-books.

As our town population grows older, it is so important that our senior citizens have access to a public library that they feel comfortable visiting. They can come when it is cold outside and they will be welcomed by a friendly and professional staff. Summertime offers so many programs and a Summer Reading Program that seniors may join with their grandchildren and everyone keeps reading!

If you haven't visited the Gardiner Public Library lately, what are you waiting for? Within its doors is a world waiting to be discovered and a chance to learn something new every day.

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**"Randolph Review"
a newsletter written for
the residents of Randolph**



Annual Town Meeting

PLEASE ATTEND ON JULY 24 at 7:00