

**Budget Workshop to Discuss 2024 Budget held October 17, 2023, at 10:00 A.M. at the  
Town Hall in Schroon Lake N.Y.**

**Present:**

**Town Supervisor:** Meg Wood

**Councilpersons:** Richard Gero, Lynn Donaldson, Leanna Welch and Steve Miller

**Deputy Town Clerk:** Erica Hedden

**Also Present:** Albert May, Bill Tribou, Sue Palisano, Brian Ritching, Julie  
Chippendale, Jen Slothower

Supervisor Wood called the meeting to order at 10:00 A.M. with a salute to the Flag.

**Schroon Lake EMS:**

Bill Tribou stated, Thank you for having me here today, I am a board member and I will be presenting. I will refer to Steve with some questions as he will be wearing two hats today. Starting with the overall operational summary for the 2024 budget. Starting from the top, the EMS requested budget for this year is \$319,261.00. Last year we put in a slightly higher budget request and the council cut it by 6%. The \$319,261 actually represents the 6<sup>th</sup> year in a row that the EMS budget has been flat or cut by the council. The entire budget represents a 7.8% increase over the 2023 fiscal year, or what we are through of this year. The increase is due to a couple of things. The main thing is staffing increases. We are pretty much a paid squad right now except for Punky Whitty, thank goodness for her! We get our staff from two places, E5, which is a private commercial vender and the other is the County of Essex which now provides paid staff. The first year we got the employees for free but now we have to reimburse the county for their staff. Both E5 and the County have put in some pretty steep raises for the EMT's, that's because it's very hard to get EMT's up here. It is very hard to attract them. We do have some input on what E5 does for raises but we do not have any input on what the county does. We have tried to walk a middle line about increases. We don't have the figures yet but the county has gone in for some much larger raises, we have no input with them. That is a large part of our budget. As you know we have been billing this past year. The cost of billing has gone up. Fuel, as well all know, fuel has gone up. The main thing is the call volume has increased a lot. In past years, 365 calls a year was a busy year. Next year we are projected to have over 500 calls. Most of our

calls have us going to Glens Falls which is 90 miles round trip, something to consider. The good news is that even though we have had an incredible increase in call volume, we are not dropping any calls. We are able to respond to all of our own calls, which is pretty unique in Essex County. If someone calls for an ambulance in Schroon Lake, the ambulance is typically out of the garage in 3 minutes. I don't have the stats or figures to know how that response time ranks, but I think we have one of the shortest response times. EMS squad is doing a great job! They provide an amazing service to this town and I project the need will only increase.

Here we have our profits and loss that shows the actual expenditures and income through the end of September. There is also 2023 fiscal year and the 2023 actual expenditures, as well as the request 2024 budget. Good news is that our income has gone up, we still have a couple of months left in the year, but we project that our income will continue to go up for the remainder of 2023. We estimated in 2023 to have an income of 551,000, and we have an actual number of approximately 611,000. This is largely due to our billing an hour call volume being so high. We also have a treasurer, Doug, he couldn't be here today but he has found some amazing investment opportunities for us, and our summer fund drive had a really good year. I will note that a part of the summer fund drive was that we had a very large memorial donation.

Expenses are also up, of course. Even with our increase in expenses, we do believe our income will cover that and we will still come out in the green. The \$25,000 or so that we do have, we strongly feel like we still need that in our budget. What we would like to do with it is put it into our long term capital plan. We have been unable for the last several years to put any money into our capital fund. This would be the first year that we have been able to put money into this capital fund. We want to do some advance planning with that \$611,000. We are the only agency in Essex County that doesn't have power lift stretchers. We have looked into them and they are quite expensive. The two power lift stretchers will be \$127,000. Also refurbishing our old ambulance, up until now we have replaced an ambulance about every 5 years on rotation. The ambulances last about 10 years and we have been staggering, replacing the oldest ambulance first, then when the new one becomes the old one, we replace that one. The price of ambulances, the quotes we received were higher than expected. They were between \$325,000 and \$345,000 and that was to duplicate the ambulance that we have now. We have decided that we just can't afford to buy a new ambulance, so we are looking into refurbishing. That has an estimated quote of \$150,000. Do we need a second ambulance? The second ambulance goes out only about a dozen times a year. However our ambulances are always in the

garage, for tires, or this or that. So the second ambulance isn't only for when the first one is out on a call, it is also a back up for when the primary ambulance is being serviced or out of commission for any reason.

Councilman Gero stated; what does the refurbishing consist of?

Councilman Miller stated; it's basically everything but the box. We keep the box but they go through and do everything else. It's the chassis, the motor, everything. That's all part of the refurbishing, new motor, new bushings, new front end.

Bill Tribou stated; the ambulance is actually a two part deal. There's the truck and the chassis, then the box on top. Two separate things. So the refurbishing is just the truck and chassis and everything that consists on the frame of the truck itself. They take the "box" off and re do EVERYTHING else. \$150,000 is still pretty expensive but it's cheaper than a new ambulances.

Councilman Miller stated; what we are hoping is that the refurbished will last another 10 years. In 10 years the one that we refurbished will become a new ambulance and then the next one will be refurbished. We want to keep the rotation but what we want to do is refurbish on rotation and replace on rotation and this will save us a couple hundred thousand dollars.

Councilman Donaldson stated; can you remind me of what the year is on 3291?

Councilman Miller stated; I believe is a 2015, it has about 90,000 miles on it now; I worry more about the miles than the year.

Supervisor Wood stated; so if there is new technology that is available does that equipment come with the refurbishing?

Councilman Miller stated; there's very little new equipment needed. An example is the Zolle monitors, but those are a separate item. We have two Zolle monitors on our list as well. It is required that we have one on each ambulance. The refurbishing is the truck and truck parts only. This ambulance needs refurbishing, if you're lucky enough to be in the right seat in a rain storm, you better have a rain coat on. The rain comes right down through the lights and drips onto your back. That would all be replaced and corrected when it's refurbished.

Councilman Welch stated; so all that would be fixed when it's refurbished. All the lights would be replaced, the engine, everything would be resealed, re wired, the whole nine yards. Now 328 you want to replace in 2028?

Councilman Miller stated; yes. That's our first line ambulance and that was is a 2020 so we figured in 2028, it takes about a year once the order is placed. It takes a long time to build an ambulance.

Councilman Gero stated; have you gotten quotes for a new cab and chassis?

Councilman Miller stated; no, we have just explored the refurbishing, but we can definitely take a look at that, and we should. We should know all our options.

Bill Tribou stated; moving on, we have listed \$20,000 for building improvements. Let me explain that a little more. The emergency squad occupies or is a tenant in the fire station. The fire station is in need of a lot of improvements, we put in a new floor through out the whole building that was about \$30,000. The building didn't have an AC system and that was started to affect our squad as they have to sleep there, that was about \$50,000, the fire commissioners asked the emergency squad to contribute \$20,000 towards that and we did. The building improvements for 2024, we do need to do a few more things. There is some water damage in the walls of the fire station. Walls need to be opened up and insulation needs to be replaced. We are waiting on a quote from that, we are estimating it to be about \$20,000.

Circling back to the new ambulance, we are estimating \$300,000. I think that by 2028, that \$300,000 quote will be much larger. That's why we are hoping to put \$25,000 into our capital fund. If we do \$25,000 a year then by the time we get to 2028, we will be a lot closer to what we need for a new ambulance.

Councilwoman Donaldson stated; are we able to get grants for the power lifts and the Zolle monitors?

Bill Tribou stated; we have been aggressively looking for grants. We hired a grant professional, and so far we have put in about 50 grant applications, and so far I think we have only received one for \$1,000. Schroon Lake is a really hard place to get a grant for; we are considered an affluent town. 60% of our school students live under the property level but the houses around the lake and our tax basis, gives us that title of affluent. Port Henry gets grants, Chilson gets grants, Ticonderoga gets grants and so fourth. It has been very hard for us to qualify for these grants. We are going to keep trying but so far it has been vey unfruitful.

Councilwoman Welch stated; has there been talk about a second crew, or a partial crew?

Councilman Miller stated; so the way we handle that now is that there really isn't a second crew. What we are able to do in most cases, for example the other day there was a call and our crew was out, I was actually in Tops and a second call came in and I volunteered. I was able to take the ambulance out myself, but not before I knew the county medic could meet me there. So between our crew and the County, we can usually cover. We also have mutual aid. We have mutual aid contracts with all the surrounding towns. The way that works, is if we are headed south and need help and Warrensburg jumps on, we pay them \$200 for that call. If we go there because they are busy somewhere else, than we take that call and we bill it, that is the way all our mutual aids work.

Bill Tribou stated; in terms of volunteers, everyone knows Punky, she is a very active volunteer for us. She refuses to take a paid position. She is extremely helpful to the squad and fills in where ever she sees a need. Our other employees as well, volunteer their off time. So they are employees or E5 or the County but they also volunteer in their off time. We are so fortunate to have such a dedicated crew, a crew that is dedicated to the service of this community.

Councilwoman Donaldson stated; the increase in the EMR, is that due to them raising their rates or is that value?

Councilman Miller stated; that's a great question, that's due to volume. It is a great problem to have. Its 10% no matter what, but since we collected more in revenue, the cost was more.

Councilwoman Donaldson stated; the other thing I see is that you have overtime listed here where you didn't have that before.

Councilman Miller stated; yes. I added a line item, for example, we have a guy that's going to be out of paid family leave for about 10 weeks for the birth of a child. That starts the week of thanksgiving. We try to keep over time to as little as possible, but this is going to be unavoidable. He is an E5 employee, and E5 does not have another full time employee to put in his place, so we have to manage that in house.

Councilwoman Welch stated; What about your billing, you have someone hired to do billing, is that something can do in house?

Councilman Miller stated; No, it is extremely complicated. This is a major job, dealing with Medicaid, Medicare, private pays, and other insurances. They even keep track of all the PCR and the medical codes, they know what they can bill who, and it all has to be done within a time frame or it lapses. It is way more then we can handle in house currently. Every department around here uses the

same company. North Creek doesn't, they hired two full time people from in town to do this, and we looked into doing that. We decided that it wasn't going to be cost effective or the people to do it.

### **Schroon Lake Chamber of Commerce:**

Sue Palisano stated; in terms of the 2023 budget, we are on target to exceed our targeted revenue projection by about 7%. That's of course great news, we had initially projected a short fall, but that is not the case. We have been profitable for the last 5 years and I am expecting to be profitable again this year. Our balance sheet looks very good. We will be facing some up and coming challenges in terms of the building. We have not done all that much in terms of building maintenance, doing only what we had to do. We had the boiler replaced but thankfully that was covered under an insurance claim, so we only needed to pay the deductible. We also replaced the floors in the visitor's center and in the kitchen that absolutely needed to be done. What we see coming up will be having new windows put in, doing repairs to the south side, that wall has sustained some water damage. We did do the foundation repairs a couple years ago, so we are not concerned with that. We will also have to look at the driveway; we will have to take some responsibility with that in terms of our 50% ownership of it. That will not be coming out of our general fund, we are going to have to run a capital campaign or find some really generous folks who are willing to do some work for us in exchange for membership.

We currently have 139 members which is the highest membership total in the modern day records. In terms of member benefits and what we are doing to promote Schroon Lake? First of all, the large display that we maintain at the Clifton Park. It is an extremely busy visitors center because it is the first one on the north way. We have a large display that is not cheap for us to maintain, but for the first time since I have been here that ad space is full, completely sold out. We know that is very popular, and I can gauge that based on how quickly our materials need restocking. I get calls several times during the summer that they are almost out of brochures. I keep our tourist brochure and our member services directory there. We continue to employ a distribution services, our brochures go out twice a year, once in the fall and once in spring, typically in May. We distribute to about 800 different points for our brochures and for our member services to about 450 spots in the greater Lake George area. We currently have 8 cooperate sponsors now, we had 3 in 2018. One

welcome challenge that will come from that if we get any more is that we only have so many slots on our brochure to support them, but we will figure that out when we get another. This member services directory has grown to be about 35 pages, we also have the most paid advertising in this that we have had to date. Printing costs have doubled since I started here. We do produce this entirely in house with the exception of the actual printing. We continue to increase our co-op advertisement for our member business, let me explain that a little. That is when we the chamber takes out an ad in a publication and our members can purchase space on our ad at a reduced cost to them individually. Those ads continue to be successful and helpful to our members that might not want to take out a full ad, and only want a piece of a larger ad. One of the publications is the Four Seasons Guide, this is our first year we have used them. We initially planned to have a two page spread in here but due to member need, we have a four page spread. This Four Season guide also gets us into every other directory they keep it in. We also got a photo on the cover of the publication. I sent some photos into the publication to put in our ad and the designer liked one of our photos so much that they asked if they could use it for the cover, to which of course we said YES. The chamber also hosts events throughout the year. Despite the challenges we had on the fourth of July, it was probably one of the biggest parades we've had. Our summer programming, our Twilight Dance, formerly known as Schroon Lake Square Dancing. Now this includes dancing, and live music from various local musicians. Also for one of the weeks in the summer we have a fantastic entertainer from the Saratoga area come up, Nelson and his Trio. That is a completely different kind of music. It's Soul, Mo' Town and pop and that turns into a giant dance party. We usually start out these show at about 100 people, this peaks around the fourth if July, and then typically trends down. We did not see that downward trend at all this year, we were consistent each week. We were seeing around 200-250 people at these dances, some really impressive numbers. Lots of people are taking advantage of our summer programs, its get to see. Our boat cruises are extremely popular. We were sold out for every single week of the summer. That to me is a lost opportunity. We are very fortunate that Word Of Life partners with us at no cost to us, they provide the boat and the crew. We did have to cancel one week, unfortunately the boat was getting repairs. I feel like this is an avenue that we need to explore more. For the boat cruise, I created a script to use that just outlines things around the lake and historical facts about the lake and the town, I have turned that into a flyer that people can take from the Chamber. It has become one of our most popular flyers. People are really interested in the history of Schroon Lake and what this area is all about. We just finished our fall event; this was our third year doing it. We did the car show and fall festival. This year

we have a huge turn out with 106 cars and a park full of bounce houses and kid's games and activities. Games included, dunk tank, gold fish toss, sand art, pumpkin painting, bake sale and grab bags along with all the bounce houses and ball toss games. Also at the event we had three food trucks, they had an extremely successful day, and two of the trucks ran out of food! In addition to everything, most of the games and activates were free. The bounce houses were free, goldfish toss, sand art, pumpkin painting; the only items that cost anything were the bake sale and the dunk tank. So all the kids could really just run around and have a good time and the parents didn't need to be worried about paying for entry to the bounces houses or games. In addition to the fall festival and the car show we also had the Schroon Lake Farmers Market there as well.

Councilman Gero stated; I spoke to three different venders that were there, they told me that they go to the Bolton Landing Farmers market as well, and they said ours is their favorite. They said they absolutely love coming here. Three vendors sold completely out of their inventory. The lady that runs the farmers market here, she needs a round of applause. She does so much work and she is so organized and professional.

Sue Palisano stated; the chamber board is tossing around some ideas for next year. Our goal is to promote Schroon Lake.

Councilwoman Donaldson stated; are there any grants available for your building improvements?

Sue Palisano stated; it's unlikely, most grants are not out there for physical repairs. We will probably have to start a capital campaign.

### **Schroon Lake Library**

Julie Chippendale stated; I am the financial officer for the library, this is Jen Slothower. I am just going to quickly run down the outline. Most of the expenditures we are asking for are salaries. The summer hours that we asked for this year are not much more then they were the previous year. We are expanding our collaboration with the school. Last year, we had ask for an additional couple hours a week, for Tatiana to go over to the school. That worked out really well this year so we are asking for the same this year. The personal services which include the summer hours we are asking for \$88,442.99. We don't need anymore equipment for this coming year, our budget for mailings and office supplies will remain at \$1,000. That figure hasn't changed for many years. The internet services we split, the town gives us \$100 a month towards our internet, and we ask that they stay the same.

Under our additional programming, we have a sort of contingency plan. We are trying to establish more of an expansion with the high school. We have a lot that we do with the younger kids, a lot of involvement, but our reach to the high school is limited. We want to expand on that. We are looking into creating some sort of a technology group. We are still working on the details. We are asking for \$1,000 as a contingency fund to get the technology group up and running. We would need to figure out when to start this and what time of day to host it. Obviously the kids are in school during the day and many have after school activities. The library is open late one evening a week, we don't know if the tech club would be able to fit into that one evening a week, if that's the case we might need an additional staff member.

Jen Slothower stated; we have a meeting with the school scheduled for next week. We want to talk about our ideas and to get some feedback from the school and some of the older kids. To see what interests them, what they would like to see, what they would like to try. We have all the resources at the library already, we have the equipment. The funding would be for the staffing, we are not looking to change the library hours, just add a program that may be an hour a week for one staff member.

Julie Chippendale stated; we have a 3D printer. We thought that would be of interest to the kids. That might get them hooked in. If you can imagine it, we can print it. It is a great avenue for the kids to explore and be creative. It takes programming to create the designs and then it can print it. The filament goes in; the printer heats it up and puts it down in the shape of whatever was created. Teenagers can step into our library right now, we have a lot of preset designs that they can choose from, and they can create it. It does take a while to print but they can walk in and use this machine. The coding is very advanced for the machine; it could be an avenue for our tech club. We want to expand the idea of the library; it's not just a place to get books. There is so much there to explore.

Julie Chippendale stated; the library feels like a community center. We have the knitting group, book club, reading groups, kids activities, quilting group, and workshops of all sorts. It's a really welcoming environment. I want to say as well, our employees are absolutely fantastic. We have a great group here, they are so dedicated. I wanted to share with you a few states that I gathered. This is about the circulation of various libraries in Essex County compare to the population they serve.

The percentage of books that go out per year, per library. Schroon Lake is far above the average.

Schroon Lake's circulation was 19,600 books; our percentage is 11.85 books per person per year.

Ticonderoga is 10,415 circulations; their population is approximately 5,000, so they are about 2 books per person. Lake Placid, their average book per person is only 2.2. Champlain Memorial Library which is up above Plattsburgh, they did 6 books per person. We are really doing well, our library is doing great. We have an active library and an active participation in the community.

Chris Stone stated; In terms of the budget, I think your budget can absorb the extra hours without having an increase. We are basing your budgeted hours on an average. Maybe someone is on vacation or someone else with a different pay is filling in for those hours. I think your budget will be fine, even with that \$1,000.

### Sewer

Brian Ritching stated; this year as everyone knows was an extremely wet year, we felt it at the sewer plant. I had the Rogers Brook pump station and the Dock street pump station; they were sorely in need of repair. Since they were installed there have been no upgrades, I had that done. We should be good for the next 10 years. We did our normal sewer jetting, took care of trouble spots. I gingerly washed out Rogers Brook line, in the spring and in the fall. I found some man holes that don't have floors in them. I do not have a plan for those yet. It looks like they were installed that way when the industrial park was put in. I will be working on coming up with a plan on how to move forward with those. We upgraded our bulk storage tanks; I bought those tanks from Hunter. I actually budget \$20,000 for it, Hunter and I did the work, and it came to \$5,000. That will immensely save the sewer department on its bulk delivery costs. I have only needed one delivery where I am normally at two. We had to fix our chemical mixing tank, it was a mess. There was boards floating in it, it had to completely be rebuilt. It is fixed now.

Congratulations to Hunter, he passed his 2A. I want to send him for his 3A supervisor course, that way he has it out of the way. That way when he has his time in, he can go take the state test, get his license and get it out of the way. There is only one place that has the required course and that is in Morrisville. It is usually only offered once a year and that depends on when it comes up. We never know when but once it does, we would have to jump on it.

Cost of everything is going up. We had one sewer back up, it happened on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend. Luckily, Hunter and I were able to get to it and get it fixed quickly, if it was on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July the fix may have taken longer. I found out after the fact that it was not a town issue, the property owner had a back up on their private line, they cleaned their lines and it came all the way down to the town lines and plugged our lines. We jetted the lines; I also just jetted the same lines again to make sure we are clear going into winter.

Councilman Gero stated; would it be possible to get a heads up before they do that again? So we can be prepared for it and possibly coordinate.

Brian Ritching stated; I had talked to Phil about it, to let us know, and he said “yes, absolutely” I want to work hand in hand with them. They are a private outfit, so they don’t have to report to us, but we do want to work closely with them to ensure that this doesn’t happen again. Communication is key.

For this year, I am really not asking for much. I would like to replace some items at the horseshoe pond pump station; about \$10,000 a piece. Things are currently work fine, but they are outdated. When these items fail, there is no fix. It was suggested to me, to replace one, and save the old one, and the following year do the same for the other for emergency use. That would be a 2 year program for me, so that would be \$10,000 a year.

Down by the Dollar General, for 2024, or whenever the state decides to change the culvert out. I have a man hole that I have to get into. That is a big problem of mine. Water level rises at Dollar General and my floats rise. It’s NYS Route 9, it is a dangerous place to be working, so if I can coordinate with the State to do my work when they do their work. It will greatly increase the safety factor, with their flaggers and signs, as well as construction crew.

My UV modules, I have two of them. Should they be upgraded? Prices of these units or parts, I couldn’t pin down the rep to ask if he was going to discontinue them. The only thing he told me was that parts are going to get more and more expensive. This is just food for thought. Both the modules work just fine, I was told there was some funding out there from a grant, if approved I could defiantly use that towards these UV modules. If the grant is not available, one module next year would be about \$60,000. Then the following year I would do the other.

The Ford Ranger, it is starting to have electrical issues. It has over 100,000 miles on it. My department needs a vehicle. I got a quote online; it’s about \$30,000 to \$35,000 that is replacing exactly what I have, at about a 6 month build time. That is a base model, no frills, just a basic 4WD

work truck. Can I squeak by? Absolutely, but if the electrical issues get worse, that is unpredictable. I would like to look into the other dealers in the area; I want to try to get them to bid on this to keep the business in the area.

Councilwoman Donaldson stated would it be better for him to wait to take the supervisor course when it's closer to the test?

Brian Ritching stated; he could. Our thoughts were that he just got done with some schooling, so he is in school mode. We were thinking to just continue his education, but we don't have to.

Councilwoman Donaldson stated; doesn't he have to take water schooling now as well?

Brian Ritching stated; yes, Bill will decide if he does online or in person schooling.

Councilwoman Donaldson stated; how much is the supervisor's course?

Brian Ritching stated; I think about \$400 dollars, approximately, I don't have the exact figure. It's a one week long course. The Morrisonville location is upgrading their facilities, so things have been on hold and we don't have the schedules out yet. We want to keep Hunter moving forward. He's ready to do it.

Chris Stone stated; we have to get his water license, so instead of being a trainee he becomes an operator. That will do a lot for him; it moves him up a grade. It's his next step, then 3A license. The license he's going to get in the water, it's the highest license he can get for water. For Hunter, we need to keep him moving forward.

Councilwoman Welch stated; we need to invest in Hunter for the future.

Brian Ritching stated; once Hunter is certified, the town will be set for the next 30 years.

Chris Stone stated; Hunter has been very good.

Councilwoman Welch stated; he's earned his merits; we want him to be successful and to retain him.

Chris Stone stated; the sewer department is based totally out of rents. So what the board does for sewer rents will determine what the board does for your budget. I'm not sure where that will be yet; I will plug in the numbers.

Brian Ritching stated; at the beginning of the year I was told to upgrade my heating system controls. The year before I was calling for fuel constantly my boilers were constantly running. I upgraded the controls for it, and last year I only had to fuel up three times, which usually about 600

to 650 gallons of fuel oil. That is just for the heating, that doesn't include my generator. So this year I am hoping to get a really good savings for that.

### Arts Council

Sue Palisano stated; Arts council is not apart of the Chamber of Commerce. I serve as treasurer on the Arts Council board. The Chamber and the Arts Council have a partnership arrangement, where I do all of the back office work. I do all the marketing and all the other administrative parts. Two years ago we went to a model, post COVID. This was a significant change to what it was before. Its Tuesday night programming, those were ticketed boat house concerts. Attendance was limited by the capacity of the boat house but also ticket prices has significantly risen to the point in 2019 they were \$25 per ticket. That was limiting attendance to about 60-65 people. When we formularized our partnership agreement, we decided to change that model and we started to open it up to anyone that wants to come. Free, like we do on Wednesday nights. That showed a significant increase in attendance. This past year we had fantastic attendance. Some of our concerts needed to be indoor, due to rain. We held three special concerts; one was a Kick Off The Fourth concert, hosted by The Lodges at Schroon Lake. The other additional programming is a children's program, which is held in the boat house. It was very well received and was almost at capacity. The third special concert we did, we brought back a group that was very popular in Schroon Lake, which was also hosted by The Lodges at Schroon Lake.

Our Adirondack Folk Music Festival this year was one of the biggest we have had in many years. It was a special tribute to Pete Seeger and Woody Guthrie, the acts that were brought in were absolutely unbelievable. These were nationally known folks that were brought in, it was amazing. We had food trucks we had vendors, we sold T-Shirts. Like the Chamber of Commerce I do all the graphics work, we design and print, everything is done in house. The Chamber of Commerce is compensated, usually \$1,000. That money that covers both the time that I spend, after Chamber hours and the cost of paper and everything else that is involved with that. The bad news is that \$9,259 dollars is a negative number. I am extremely fiscally conservative, I am not happy about that loss. When we go from a ticketed venue, to free attendance that is a huge loss in revenue. What you can also see is under merchandise sales and donations; we bring in over \$4,500 just in passing around the bucket and selling the hats and t-shirts. I wish the Chamber of Commence was bringing in that much in a bucket. It's hard work, but without it we would be in trouble. We anticipate about \$4,000 from the

arts grants that we get. We are not guaranteed those but they have been pretty consistent for us. Where we need to increase our efforts is on sponsorship and grants. Also this year was the highest expenditures for Artist fees, that was largely due to the Arts Festival and the caliber of Artist that came in this year. I've gotten our insurance down considerably, our production cost went up, we used to have a free stage but now we don't any more. I am able to negotiate with the provider or the vendor of the stage; I get \$1,000 knocked off of that because he is the same vendor I use for the Fourth of July. One of the things that I have been talking about is taking the Arts Council from where it is now as a group of volunteers with a board to a membership organization. That's potential revenue, it's nothing more than being a member of the Schroon Lake Association, you're supporting the work that they do. I am working on completely redoing the web presence and having that be a big part of what can happen when people join the Arts Council. Even with a nominal fee for joining the Arts Council we can generate thousands of dollars. I think what is an unknown commodity is how well thought of Schroon Lake is, in terms of delivering high quality arts programming. Especially over the summer. Between the Chamber of Commerce, the Arts Council and the Seagle Music Colony, we are proving more live arts programming than pretty much any other town. We are doing just as much as Lake George. Other towns are doing these things at no cost, so we had to match that in order to keep interest. My request is \$10,000. The board has been very generous in the past in adding to the allocation to the Arts Council. That amount won't close the delta in terms of our expenses verses revenue. If we bring in the new model of membership, and we bring our expenses down a bit, even if by \$2,000 or \$3,000 we can probably have a balanced budget in the next year or so.

### **Building and Grounds**

Ethan Thompson stated; I will try to be quick. I will start at the beginning when I started, you guys gave me a \$2,000 dollar tool allowance, and I'm at roughly \$1,600. I keep track of every penny. I have about \$400 in the budget. I purchased approximately 40 tools, 90% of them have been at some sort of a sale or deal, and I didn't pay full price for them. 10% were not, due to necessity. I would like to continue to have the tool budget. The board had approved the aluminum brake from T.C. Murphy that is still not in, it is on back order.

Councilwoman Donaldson stated; you put equipment Maintenance and repair for \$750.

Ethan Thompson stated; yes that mostly the truck. It is a 2016, it's in good condition but it hasn't been maintained well. I have been under it a few times and the rust just comes off in sheets. There is a hole through the service body, it should still pass inspection. The hole is near the wheel well; luckily that part is available as a replacement part. I will see what the part looks like and go from there to see if I can do it, it's more about the time factor. The plow control is hanging, it needs a new plow control, I just purchased a light it didn't have a snow plow light at all. Just a quick update, this just happened, I got a call from Jim McCormick he is the building manager for Hudson Headwaters Health Network. He got a call from our Hudson Headwaters Health Network and they had a strong smell of heating oil inside the building. I went over, I could smell it. I went down into the basement and the smell was extremely strong in the mechanical room. I shut down one furnace, I told Jim he's going to have to get technical services to come and look at it. There are three furnaces down there; there are two matching ones and one that is different. I am assuming the two matching ones are the older ones. The new one was put in because of a cracked heat exchanger. It's anyone's guess as to what has happened to this one. This is just a heads up this will be coming down the pike soon.

Projects, obviously not all these projects will fit into the budget. I put all the projects in here to the board can decide which projects to move forward with or which ones can wait. Obviously some of these take precedence over others. A few of these might get done this year, one being the airport and the crack repair.

Town Hall, heating and cooling, that is obviously 100% necessary. My estimate is extremely rough, we just don't know. The price of materials and labor, it's hard to predict. The parking lot lines, those are getting pretty faint. I talked to Jon Senecal, we talked about possibly moving some of the lines making them more convenient and assessable.

Councilwoman Donaldson stated; you would hire that out right?

Ethan Thompson stated; yes anything with a "C" next to it is the hired out contract price. If it's listed just for materials that would be myself doing the work. I have a list on a spreadsheet of over 150 items that need to be done; I'm hoping to address about 20 a month.

Case in point the Parks building; I am putting the heating system in right now. I had to cut an access to attic, I was working up in there and I look up and the bottom of the sheathing is blacker than black. At the same time there was a whole stash of stuff stored up there. It was closed off at some point. About eight gallons of paint were up there that were starting to leak. I was in the judges' office the other day and the filter on the heating system said it needed to be changed. I get up there and I see

that the suspended ceiling is falling down around the heating system. Someone had put a wooden wedge into the track of the suspended ceiling. I look down and there is probably a 3 or 4 inch variation in the ceiling. It's brand new. The ceiling was holding back four vents, for the heating system, one of the vents was held shut because of the ceiling. There are leaks in the heating system; I had to put a bucket under one of the copper fittings. There are a lot of little things that keep popping up as I dig into things. I was over at the highway the other day; we had the boiler inspector there the other day. I could see half a dozen issues, their ceiling is black their walls are black. I'm just trying to give you a sense of how much there is to do. The old fire house, the garage doors all need to be replaced, there are some large gaps, where heat is literally, going out the door. I did have quotes for that, but they are a few months old at this point but it gives us a good idea. The more we can take off our plate this year, I think the better. The rear parking lot, that one isn't a necessity; there are two cisterns back there for draining. Between the parking lot and the road, they fill up with gravel. I have a water issue in the basement of the old fire house. There is a massive amount of water that comes off of the flat roof and the pitched roof. That water pools in the basement and it is compromising the wall, it is losing its Lyme coating. If we paved that lot, my recommendation would be to pave right up to the building to help the water run away from the building.

Youth commission storage and building and grounds workshop that is the back room that used to be the food pantry. I figured \$3,000 dollars in materials to set it up, so a third of that space for youth commission and two thirds for a workshop. The floor is buckled and warped because there is so much moisture down below.

The tennis courts, try as I may I can't get anyone there to look at the tennis courts. Two contractors so far and no one has come out to look at it. I wanted to get someone out here to look at it. I do not know if it has good grip still, can it just be washed? I don't know. I want to get someone out here to take a look and tell us what it needs. If we can just wash it and that enough, well that's great but, I do not know. If it's slippery or dangerous, then we have to fix it. I need someone who has more expertise than I do.

Councilwoman Donaldson stated; can we call other towns that have tennis courts and see who they use?

Ethan Thompson stated; yes we can do that, there are other towns that have them and we might be able to get a good contact from them. Ill contact Vermont Tennis and hope for the best.

Sidewalks and stairs, I don't know if that is something that the board is interested in doing right now. This year I fixed the stairs going down the center of the park, above the stairs that we built last year. All that area in front of the bath house, by the small pavilion, all those sidewalks are older, slightly uneven. There are so many layers of pavement; the first step is a foot lower than the pavement. The side walk from the bath house to the small pavilion, it acts like a gutter. Nothing that is a pressing matter, but something to keep in mind. We don't have a current plan, but it will need to be addressed at some point. The countertops in the bath house are starting to fail. They are lamen and they are starting to peel off. My recommendation after talking with George is to do a solid surface type material. Something that can take a lot of abuse and easy to clean. I estimate that to be approximately \$3,000 and that would be contracted out. The hand dryers in there are ancient, I can't find parts for them anymore, and they all work except one. I want to replace all of them on the woman's side and keep the working ones as spares for them men's side. They are approximately \$700 a piece. We would want to get ones with a shorter cycle, ones that are more energy efficient.

The beach, the parking lot is cracked. The boat launch, we need to rebuild the docks, that is a big one. That is \$24,000 just in materials. That is an item that again if we have money left in the budget this year. I would recommend purchasing as much of the materials as we can, to take that off of the budget for next year.

Steve Miller stated; this is an embarrassment, they are extremely unsafe.

Ethan Thompson stated; yes agree. The dock anchors as well. We have two sections of docks out there. The sections of dock closed to the beach called for 5 anchors, each anchor is 5,000lbs. When we put it in the water its 3,500lbs, we have one. Craig from the marina has been so helpful. When we hook up our docks, it needs to be chained as well, and that chain needs to be adjusted based on the lake level. It needs to be done proactively. The other section of docks needed at least 4 anchors as well, and it has one anchor as well. We need to find anchors, I believe Phil and Rob dove last year, and couldn't find them. I think we need to hire someone, these anchors are 6 foot, by 6 foot by a foot thick of concrete, and replacing them is not easy or cheap. I think should hire someone, a professional to look for them, to see if we can find them.

Councilwoman Donaldson stated; is that something Dock Doctors will do

Ethan Thompson stated; I don't know about looking for them but they will defiantly come and install new ones. They will come with their barge with the lift on it. I think they are the ones we used in the past.

Councilman Miller stated; they are expensive

Ethan Thompson stated; yes this is no easy task. I talked to Craig, he was using a diver from Glens Falls, and it was his first time using him so he said he would let me know how he did.

Boat house, that's just minor stuff. The sliding door is rotten and needs to be rebuild, window repairs. Little things.

Band Stand, we need to do an engineers report. Joel has a guy, Ron Biggs. He is interested in doing the work for us but he is laid up right now, we will get back to that. I do not know if it is a free service or not.

The club house at the golf course, the flooring. My limited understanding on the weekends they have their weekend tournaments. They were going to have one to raise money to fix the floor. Right now the flooring is just carpet, it's old and dingy. Our thought was to do vinyl plank flooring, it's very durable. Something we need to be aware of as well is that we would like to remodel both bathrooms at some point. They have showers in them that aren't being used and they are very dated. We can re-do those and make them more efficient and safer as well.

The Airport, it looks like a lot of the repairs to the airport are going to be taken off this budget, as he's looking to start work next week. I've contacted the FAA they are doing a study, if we don't get the study done in time I will contact another agency, which is who we can notify. Hanger maintenance is minor, it needs paint. A lot of the rafter tails are starting to rot, plant life growing up around the building.

The cemetery, over time I would like to improve the driving lanes at the Protestant and the Severance cemetery. I just put in a number of \$1,200 for blue stone and shoulder stone. I'd like to continue with that every year and eventually get a nice set of driving lanes. The flag pole I would really like to do the one at the Severance cemetery. The flag pole that is there is an embarrassment.

If possible, if there is a way that I can know for next year is my budgeted items. If I knew the amounts that I have, perhaps by building or overall and it's my job to coordinate accordingly that would be great. It would give me a lot more piece of mind, of course I would still update the board, but it would give me some liberties with organization.

Chris Stone stated; we have parks and we have buildings. When I do the budget, I do break it down. So what you are looking for is a detailed list of what your budget is for each line item.

Ethan Thompson stated; yes, if there's something that I know the amount, I think it will help me budget year to year. I think it will help with the planning.

Chris Stone stated; in the budget, there are always things that pop up and we try to put enough in to cover those unexpected things.

Ethan Thompson stated; plumbing is an example. If I go to Curtis Lumber to get a fitting, it might be \$2.00 but once I have some storage space, buying the fittings from a warehouse, they might be \$0.75, so I'd like to know what kind of a budget I have for that. Heating season is coming. I went around with the heating inspector so I got to see all the systems. We have four of the same circulators here and two of the same circulators over there, and all the same pressure relief valves. If I know I have the money, I could start to stock pile inventory. So when something breaks, I could fix it right then and there instead of having to wait on parts. Just as an example. There are also things that could be done, but if there are some leftovers in the budget we could squeeze in those small projects.

The last thing I recommend is that we re bid the HVAC service contract. Our current service contract, I have nothing against it, but we are paying them \$100 and something dollars an hour, and we don't always get the most experienced tech. Plus we are paying their travel time. I suggest we go back to bid and find someone local. The county has a bid from someone out of Elizabethtown.

Councilman Gero made a motion to adjourn at 1:00 P.M, seconded by Councilwoman Welch; carried.

I, Erica D. Hedden, do hereby certify the foregoing to be a true and correct transcript from the minutes now on file in my office and of the whole such original minutes.

Dated: October 20th, 2023

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Deputy Town Clerk