

MONKTON SELECTBOARD SPECIAL
MEETING MINUTES
Monday, January 20, 2025
DRAFT

The meeting was called to order by S. Pilcher at 10:02 p.m.

Members in attendance: Stephen Pilcher (chair), Walter Crandall, John McNerney, Marikate Kelley, Joe Szarejko

Members absent: none

Others in attendance: Stan Wilbur (town administrator), Denise Daulton, Marilyn Cargill, Ivor Hughes, Curtis Layn, Anthony Delgreco, Randy Charboneau, Shane Lawrence and other members of the public

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

none

REGULAR BUSINESS:

PUBLIC COMMENT

D. Daulton said she was representing the seven homeowners on Old Airport Road. They believe that the town of Monkton should be responsible for the maintenance of their private road because the purchase of the Town Forest has led to the public using that road for one of the accesses to the Forest. It has essentially changed a private road to a public road.

M. Cargill noted that the Planning Commission could reduce their budget by about \$1500.

NEW BUSINESS:

FINALIZE 2025 BUDGET

S. Pilcher noted that there was a 41% increase in the draft budget this year when all requests were entered into the spreadsheet. He was looking for adjustments that would result in savings today. He also noted that changes could be made at Town Meeting. He noted that for the past three years the highway department had posted a surplus, and the surplus was used to reduce the tax burden. At the end of 2023, there was a \$290,000 surplus, which was used to reduce taxes in 2024. S. Pilcher noted that there was a deficit of \$79,000 in the 2024 General Fund and \$37,000 in the Highway Department. The General Fund deficit was expected because not everyone pays their taxes on time. The Highway Fund is expected to receive lower than usual funds from the State since for the past couple of years, some payments have been pulled forward a year, but this is not expected to happen in 2025. The Highway Department also had a busy year responding to the unusually strong storms. M. Kelley noted that a deficit

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increases taxes the following year. There was discussion about revenue, expenses, and differences.

After discussion several budget requests were cut. Notable was \$40,000 from the MVFD request, \$22,500 from ANAC request and \$35,000 from the Highway Capital Project Fund. Review of the Highway budget with Shane Lawrence also yielded some saving including a cut of \$25,000 in the Hot Mix.

S. Pilcher noted that a penny on the tax dollar yields \$43,000 for the budget. It was noted that the town has had artificially low tax rates for a few years due to surpluses in the highway budget. This year there is no surplus and an increase in taxes is the outcome.

There was discussion about fines for zoning violations.

J. McNerney noted that while Monkton has traditionally been well below the average municipal taxes per capita of surrounding Addison County towns, the 28% increase achieved after these cuts would bring Monkton up close to the average reported for surrounding towns for 2023 (the most recent year for which the State has reported the tax data.)

Payroll costs and raises for the Highway Department was discussed.

There was a question as to whether the Town of Monkton was contributing tax dollars towards the hardcourt construction in Morse Park. The answer was That the funds provided by the town were from Federal ARPA funds, with a balance being raised through private fundraising by a group of Monkton residents.

OLD BUSINESS

none

OTHER BUSINESS

none

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

The next meeting will be Tuesday, January 28, at 7 p.m.

M. Kelley moved to adjourn the meeting at approximately 12:30 p.m. The vote passed 5-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica Demeritt