

**Joint Kingston Municipal Budget Committee/Board of Selectmen Meeting**  
**Decision Day 1: Operating Budget/Revenue Report**  
**January 8, 2022 at 9 a.m.**  
**Town Hall**

**KMBC Members in Attendance:**

Chuck Hart, Chair  
Rick Russman, Vice Chair  
Kim Donahue, Secretary  
Marissa Federico, Recording Secretary  
Claudine Dias  
Stacy Dion  
Gary Finerty  
Nick Hilfer  
James LaValley  
John Pramberg  
Annemarie Roth (arrived at 9:35 a.m.)  
Kevin St. James, representative from the Board of Selectmen (BOS)  
Trish Tidd  
Shaw Tilton

**BOS Members in Attendance:**

Phillip Coombs, Chair  
Chief Donald Briggs, Vice Chair  
Electra Alessio  
Kevin St. James, as above  
Richard Wilson

**Also in Attendance:** Tammy Bakie, Town Clerk/Tax Collector  
Adam Faulconer, IT  
Stephanie Hasselbeck, Trustee Chair, Library  
Lesley Hume, Friends of the Museum  
Tom Roughan, Trustee, Library  
Paul Staller, Waypoint  
Rich St. Hilaire, Highway Department

Chuck called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

Chuck explained the process for today's meeting. He explained that the KMBC and BOS have worked diligently to reduce the 2022 budget from a 10% increase to an 8% increase.

## **DETAILED REVIEW OF BUDGET**

### **Election and Registration (4140)**

- Tammy explained there are 3 elections in 2022 versus the one election in 2021.

Vote on approval of budget of \$19,600:

**KMBC (10-0) Two abstentions (Chuck and Claudine), Annemarie not present**

**BOS (5-0)**

### **Financial Administration (4150)**

#### **TC-TC**

- Tammy explained that the budget increase is mostly due to COLA and the cost of residents doing business via mail rather than in-person

**MM&S:** Motion to accept the budget of \$176,728. Motion made by Claudine, seconded by Shaw.

**KMBC (11-0) Annemarie not present**

**BOS (5-0)**

#### **Assessing**

**MM&S:** Motion to accept the budget of \$21,750. Motion made by John, seconded by Trish.

**KMBC (11-0) Annemarie not present**

**BOS (5-0)**

#### **Audit**

- Kevin explained the auditing budget is down because the town went out for bid.

**MM&S:** Motion to accept the budget of \$16,000. Motion made by Shaw, seconded by Claudine.

**KMBC (11-0) Annemarie not present**

**BOS (5-0)**

#### **Budget Committee**

**MM&S:** Motion to accept the budget of \$1,780. Motion made by Gary, seconded by Shaw.

**KMBC (11-0) Annemarie not present**

**BOS (5-0)**

#### **Treasurer Salary**

**MM&S:** Motion to accept the budget of \$7,800. Motion made by Jim, seconded by Trish.

**KMBC (11-0) Annemarie not present**

**BOS (5-0)**

#### **Trustees Trust Funds Salaries**

**MM&S:** Motion to accept the budget of \$1,875. Motion made by Trish, seconded by John.

**KMBC (11-0) One abstention (Shaw), Annemarie not present**

**BOS (5-0)**

#### **Trustees Trust Funds Bookkeeping**

**MM&S:** Motion to accept the budget of \$2,000. Motion made by Trish, seconded by John.

**KMBC (11-0) One abstention (Shaw), Annemarie not present**

**BOS (5-0)**

#### **Legal (4153)**

**MM&S:** Motion to accept the budget of \$35,000. Motion made by John, seconded by Gary.

**KMBC (11-0) Annemarie not present**

**BOS (5-0)**

#### **Personnel Administration (4155)**

**MM&S:** Motion to accept the budget of \$1,227,513. Motion made by Stacy, seconded by John.

**KMBC (11-0) Annemarie not present**

**BOS (5-0)**

#### **Social Service Agencies (4445)**

- Chuck explained that Waypoint and Richie McFarland have merged. Paul Staller was present to explain and discuss the merger and fund allocations for the budget request of \$6,000. Paul explained there are 23 families being served by their services in town. The organizations merged, and they expect economies of scale as the merger is completed. With the merger, no services have been compromised, just brought together.

**MM&S:** Motion to accept the budget of \$28,908. Motion made by Kim, seconded by Jim.

**KMBC (11-0) Annemarie not present**

**BOS (5-0)**

#### **Library (4550):**

- Stephanie explained that the library further reduced the budget for FT salaries (4550-S1) by \$14,270.76, an 11.2% reduction in FT payroll budget. This will be a one-time reduction due to the open 2 FT positions, and she expects both positions to be filled by March 2022. The 2023 budget will reflect the full salaries of all 3 FT positions if both open positions are filled.
- Stephanie noted she has a potential internal discrepancy for the transfer account budget (4550-04), but she received this number from Cindy and believes it is correct. Chuck believes this may have to do with increased benefits cost. Stephanie agreed to contact Cindy for clarification. Ellie emphasized the importance of providing the KMBC with a breakdown of the budgeted amounts of the transfer account; Stephanie had already done so.

**MM&S:** Motion to accept the change to the full-time salary line (4550-S1) to \$154,490. Motion made by Jim, seconded by Rick.

**KMBC (12-0)**

**BOS (5-0)**

- Ellie asked for salary detail for the 3 FT positions. Stephanie explained that the new director will be paid \$70,000. The children's services and adult services positions are still open, but she believes approximately \$40,000. Ellie asked if the budget reflects prorated salaries and benefits for the 2 open FT positions since it can take some time to hire new individuals, especially in light of a new director coming on board next week (Tuesday). Stephanie clarified that the lower FT salary line is already prorated by 8 weeks. John asked for clarification of the FT salary figure as the budgeted amount is higher than expected given these numbers. Stephanie stated that a merit raise is being budgeted for the new director.
- Shaw asked if benefits also reflect the 8-week proration. Stephanie agreed to discuss this with Cindy. Stephanie also added that the director did not choose her benefit plan yet. Ellie stated that is an easy calculation to do on decision day and should be reflected in the budget.

- Shaw also asked about the Block5 technology upgrade for \$20,280 listed in the transfer account budget. Stephanie stated an RFP is out right now and has not come back. Ellie is concerned about this figure considering the lower foot traffic in the library due to the pandemic.
- Ellie and Stephanie agreed on the importance of communication and accountability, and Stephanie is looking forward to the new director coming on and assisting with these goals.

**MM&S:** Motion to accept the budget of \$443,804. Motion made by Rick, seconded by Shaw.

**KMBC (10-2)**

**BOS (3-2)**

**Parks and Recreation (4520)**

- Chuck emphasized that this is revenue-generating so there is some reimbursement.
- Phil explained that Paul has been the director a long time and is an asset to the community. Paul will be retiring from his FT job and will dedicate more time to this position to improve and expand services. Phil also emphasized that P&R generates revenue. Paul will start increasing his hours in July 2022.
- Nick requested clarification that part-time salaries coordinator (4520-S1) only reflects Paul's salary. This was confirmed to be the case.
- Ellie also added that Paul has been applying for grants to offset costs.
- Kim clarified that this salary figure reflects Paul's increased hours starting mid-year. This was confirmed to be the case.

**MM&S:** Motion to accept the budget of \$34,064. Motion made by Jim, seconded by Shaw.

**KMBC (12-0)**

**BOS (5-0)**

**Patriotic (4583)**

**MM&S:** Motion to accept the budget of \$500. Motion made by Jim, seconded by John.

**KMBC (12-0)**

**BOS (5-0)**

**Museum (4589)**

- Kevin requested clarification if the budget for computer equipment and supplies (4589-02) removed the cost of purchasing a new computer as the BOS has agreed to purchase that for them. It was confirmed that the budget reflects that. Ellie was concerned about this cost, and Kevin also expressed concern, stating fundraising or grants could offset the cost or that the upgrade can be done in stages.
- Chuck explained that the Museum worked with Block5 to reduce their proposed technology upgrade. Stacy explained the budget should decrease once the upgrade is completed.
- Ellie stated when the town digitizes records, the museum can do that through the town which would lower the budget.

- Lesley, a member of the Friends of the Museum, now approached the KMBC and the BOS. She stated that the museum is part of the NH Historical Society and has access to an extensive online research collection. The museum also participates in online genealogy research and utilizes email to communicate. She explained the Friends have been around since the 1980's, and about \$1,800 per year has been contributed to museum. She expressed appreciation that the BOS agreed to purchase them a computer. She stated the museum applied for a Moose plate grant and was denied because it did not meet the standards for a grant. The museum has received 2 grants from the Seminary Trustees for their work completed on the history of the Seminary.
- Chuck explained there is a new book available about the history of the that was done in part by high schoolers. The proceeds of the sale of this book will go to the Museum. Lesley did not have an estimate of the potential royalties of the sale of these books. She explained this book was published privately.
- Phil asked about funds received from the sale of the town history book created by the 325<sup>th</sup> Committee. Lesley stated there are approximately 200 books left, and the museum is reimbursing the 325<sup>th</sup> Committee.

**MM&S:** Motion to approve the budget of \$10,113. Motion made by Stacy, seconded by Kim.

**KMBC (11-1)**

**BOS (2-3) Majority oppose**

<Break begins at 10:20 a.m. Meeting resumes at 10:35 a.m.>

#### **Government Buildings (4194)**

- Rich explained that the BOS authorized that any HVAC issues in town buildings will now be budgeted under Government Buildings rather than individual departments. He also explained that the rates of utilities have gone up. He stated he will utilize the capital maintenance fund in 2022.

**MM&S:** Motion to approve the budget of \$253,109. Motion made by Shaw, seconded by John.

**KMBC (12-0)**

**BOS (5-0)**

#### **Fire Department (4220)**

- Chuck explained that Comstar fees are charged to insurance companies, so this money is reimbursed.
- Chuck noted most of the budget increase is due to salaries.
- As Chief Pellerin could not attend the meeting, Rich utilized his extensive knowledge as a retired firefighter to assist in this budget discussion.
- Rich explained that the new building is larger but more efficient than the old building. The exact utility costs of the new fire station are currently unknown.
- Nick asked about if there are elements included in the Computer Upgrade (4220-03) that can be covered by an ARPA grant. Kevin explained that this is not eligible for ARPA funding as the upgrade is not for mobile usage and that this grant covers software but usually not the purchase of computers.
- Phil asked about the budget for Radio Replacement (4220-18) as the budgeted amount has not been historically fully spent. Rich explained that the cost of radio replacement is very

high; it costs approximately \$5,000 to replace one radio. The individual radios worn on uniforms cost approximately \$3,000 each, so this money is important in the event of radio failure. The current command car is being turned over to the town for usage by the code enforcement officer, so the new command car will need a radio.

**MM&S:** Motion to approve the budget of \$794,937. Motion made by Jim, seconded by Rick.

**KMBC (12-0)**

**BOS (5-0)**

#### **Emergency Management (4290)**

- Rich explained the budget for RERP (4290-03) is reimbursable and refers to training in reference to the nuclear plant in Seabrook.

**MM&S:** Motion to approve the budget of \$30,452. Motion made by Jim, seconded by Shaw.

**KMBC (12-0)**

**BOS (5-0)**

#### **Highway Department (4312)**

- Rich explained the budget for Equipment Repairs (4312-07) is assisted by unspent encumbered funds from last year's budget, so the impact in 2022 is only roughly \$5,000.
- Rich explained that the Highway Department formerly shared a PT secretary with the police, but they now have their own dedicated secretary. This reduced the PT salary budget (4312-S3), but he also hired a PT plow driver.
- Rich stated that some of the trucks are getting older and may need replacement/repair in the future.
- The budget for Stormwater Maintenance (4312-29) is reduced due to unspent encumbered funds from last year's budget. Rich believes the contract with the firm assisting the town with this process runs from July 1 to July 1.

**MM&S:** Motion to approve the budget of \$1,108,307. Motion made by Rick, seconded by John.

**KMBC (12-0)**

**BOS (5-0)**

#### **Street Lighting (4316)**

- Kevin stated the budget is down due to the savings achieved from installing LED lights. The savings, however, is not as robust as expected. Kevin contacted Unitil, who has not updated the rate they are charging the town. He will follow up on this to see if the rate adjustment will be retroactive.
- Chief Briggs explained that NH Electric Co-op and Unitil both provide electricity to the town. The lights from NH Electric Co-op have not been changed to LED, but the Unitil ones have been changed. He also added that there was a problem with the company hired to install the LED lights, and Unitil had to assist in changing over the lights.

**MM&S:** Motion to approve the budget of \$26,000. Motion made by Rick, seconded by Gary.

**KMBC (12-0)**

**BOS (5-0)**

#### **Other Highway Streets and Bridges (4319)**

- Rich explained that class VI roads (4319-01) are not maintained by the Highway Department other than ensuring they are kept open for emergency personnel.
- The Highway Block Grant (4319-02) comes in from the state 4x per year and has specified uses including road maintenance and purchasing new equipment as long as it is for the Highway Department.

**MM&S:** Motion to approve the budget of \$172,480. Motion made by Shaw, seconded by John.

**KMBC (12-0)**

**BOS (5-0)**

#### **Executive (4130)**

- Regarding Computer Maintenance (4130-04), Kevin and Phil explained the town is continuing to gradually upgrade its computer system for multiple town buildings. Kim asked if this number reflects recurring costs, and Kevin concurred. Rich Wilson stated Block5 has been very responsive in the event of issues. Kim asked about the length of the contract with Block5, and Kevin believes there is one more year in the contract. Nick and Phil concurred that the upgraded email system helps mitigate liability for the town.
- There was a discussion about the library upgrade, and it was emphasized that the library has computers available to the public, which is unique. Phil stated they are working with the library to determine financial responsibility since their budget includes town funding. Ellie and Phil commended the current Trustees as they have paid unspent funds to the town, which has not always happened in the past.
- Kevin stated that \$140,000 of the ARPA funds are being utilized to digitize the town's records. Phil stated digitizing things will slowly bring down the town's costs since information is readily accessible without requiring paper copies.
- Jim asked if there is a plan available for future improvements/upgrades, and Kevin will forward that on.
- Phil explained that Block5 drafted the RFP but also bid on the project.
- Ellie stated the town heard about Block5 through their work with the new fire station.

**MM&S:** Motion to approve the budget of \$398,613. Motion made by John, seconded by Kim.

**KMBC (12-0)**

**BOS (5-0)**

#### **Planning and Zoning (4191)**

##### **Planning Board**

- Chuck asked if the budget for MS365 (4191-18) is solely for the PB and not for the town. Kevin believes it is just for the PB.
- Chuck explained some of these costs are offset by revenue.

**MM&S:** Motion to approve the budget of \$86,605. Motion made by Rick, seconded by John.

**KMBC (12-0)**

**BOS (5-0)**

##### **ZBA**

**MM&S:** Motion to approve the budget of \$1,680. Motion made by Rick, seconded by Trish.

**KMBC (11-0) One abstention (Chuck)**

**BOS (5-0)**

HDC

**MM&S:** Motion to approve the budget of \$1,311. Motion made by Claudine, seconded by John.

**KMBC (12-0)**

**BOS (5-0)**

**Cemeteries (4195)**

- Contracted Services (4195-03): Buy by Chuck. Phil confirmed that the billing from the current contractor is not consistent, and the contract is renewed annually. The town went out to bid 2 years ago, and this is the only bid received. The bid is good for 3 years but is re-signed annually. Phil explained that the number of mowings changes based on the weather. Trish confirmed Brad increased the budget due to generally higher salaries and costs overall.
- Nick noted that the budgeted amount for salaries has not been fully spent. Phil expects that in 2021, the costs for the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the year will be higher and are not recorded yet.
- Rich noted that the cemetery has been added to the National Registry, which has requirements for upkeep.

**MM&S:** Motion to approve the budget of \$44,225. Motion made by Trish, seconded by Jim.

**KMBC (11-0) One abstention (Shaw)**

**BOS (4-0) One abstention (Phil)**

**Insurance (4196)**

- Phil explained they have gone out to bid on this, but the costs/benefit analysis was not favorable toward changing providers.

**MM&S:** Motion to approve the budget of \$73,260. Motion made by Rick, seconded by Shaw.

**KMBC (12-0)**

**BOS (5-0)**

**Regional Association Dues (4197)**

**MM&S:** Motion to approve the budget of \$6,300. Motion made by Rick, seconded by Shaw.

**KMBC (12-0)**

**BOS (5-0)**

**Other General Government (4199)**

- Kevin explained the Other General Government (4199-01) funds are for unanticipated expenses. Kim asked if this could be reduced looking at the actuals. Kevin explained this could be spent very quickly. Phil stated this was used for the PFAS consultant due to unexpected contamination). John explained this is a reserve fund and only represents 1% of the budget. For the next budget season, Phil stated the BOS can provide a list of expenditures for this fund.
- Kim asked if funds can be used from the capital reserve fund to cover unexpected expenses, and Ellie explained those funds are available for covering only capital expenses such as fire trucks, and the voters must approve that expenditure.
- The budget for Gasoline (4199-02) comes from state's shed and covers the gasoline needs of the town.

**MM&S:** Motion to approve the budget of \$137,000. Motion made by John, seconded by Jim.

**KMBC (12-0)**

**BOS (5-0)**



#### **Police (4210)**

- Per Chief Briggs, and cost of repairing cruisers has gone up, and the budget for uniforms includes new vests as well.
- Rick asked about the savings achieved for the installation of a new furnace and possibly changing over to LED lights. Rich states that the furnace has achieved cost savings, but fuel costs have gone up. Rich also explained that the new system is a heat pump system with a propane backup and is a high-energy unit. Chief Briggs stated they have not switched to LEDs as the grant is no longer available. Kevin explained they will be looking into changing to LED lighting for the Police, Highway, and Town Hall to see if savings can be found.
- Kevin confirmed the police do not have any projects eligible for ARPA funding.
- Chief Briggs confirmed that recruit training is listed in the budget under salaries.

**MM&S:** Motion to approve the budget of \$856,397. Motion made by Nick, seconded by Jim.

**KMBC (12-0)**

**BOS (4-0) One abstention (Chief Briggs)**

#### **Pest Control (4414)**

- Chief Briggs stated veterinary costs will likely be up for next year as the vet assisting the town has retired.
- Mosquito control is a contracted service. Multiple members of the BOS stated the contractor is doing a good job and communicates well with the town. They also track for mosquito-borne viruses.

**MM&S:** Motion to approve the budget of \$54,656. Motion made by Shaw, seconded by Trish.

**KMBC (12-0)**

**BOS (4-0) One abstention (Chief Briggs)**

#### **Town Inspectors (4240)**

- FT Salaries (4240-S2): Buy by Kim. Phil explained this line item is for the salary for a code enforcement officer that was approved by warrant article in 2021. The position is still unfilled, but there is a candidate being interviewed. The individual being interviewed is highly qualified and will be at the top of the salary range, possibly more than what is budgeted right now. Phil also explained the permitting fee schedules have been updated to help offset the cost. The salary is not prorated in the budgeted amount per Phil, and there is no set salary per Kevin. The budgeted amount is based on \$30/hour but may change based on the candidate's qualifications. Kim asked if they prorate the position, it will save approximately \$5,000. Phil hopes the addition of this position will bring in more revenue to partially offset the salary figure, but that is not known at this time. Ellie stated hiring a code enforcement officer could reduce legal costs as well. Kevin stated more information will be known after the upcoming interview. Phil stated the code enforcement officer was listed as a PT position but should have been a FT position. Richard stated they are doing cross-training across inspectors to help with coverage. Ellie stated the need for enforcement is important especially in consideration of the upcoming Seminary property project.
- PT Salaries (4240-S1): The plumbing and electrical inspectors are masters of their trades and had their rates bumped up. The increased fees will help offset these higher salaries.
- The Mileage (4240-05) budget is for the usage of the car for enforcement calls. Mileage is for the inspectors, not code enforcement. The code enforcement officer's gas expenses will come out of the town's gas, not this budgeted item.

- Ellie stated the hope is for each inspector and the code enforcement officer to have iPads to facilitate communication and eliminate the need for a secretary.
- It was noted that the building inspector may be retiring soon, so the new code enforcement officer could assume that role as well. Phil stated it is difficult to predict if PT salaries will decrease if the FT code enforcement officer takes on this role. Rich does not expect this potential change until next year.

**MM&S:** Motion to add \$10,400 to PT salaries for a budget of \$45,200. Motion made by Rick, seconded by Stacy.

**KMBC (11-1)**

**BOS (5-0)**

- The BOS authorized the removal of COLA for PT employees as this represents salaries for town inspectors, and they are already receiving a rate increase.

**MM&S:** Motion to remove the budgeted amount of \$783 for Salaries-COLA (4240-S3) and replace it with \$1 as a placeholder. Motion made by John, seconded by Trish.

**KMBC (12-0)**

**BOS (5-0)**

**MM&S:** Motion to accept the new budget of \$114,802. Motion made by Rick, seconded by Stacy.

**KMBC (12-0)**

**BOS (5-0)**

#### **Sanitation (4323)**

- Chuck explained there is reimbursement, so the burden on the town is decreased.

**MM&S:** Motion to accept the budget of \$646,525. Motion made by Rick, seconded by Shaw.

**KMBC (12-0)**

**BOS (5-0)**

#### **Health Department (4411)**

- The BOS authorized the removal of \$350 for COLA.

**MM&S:** Motion to remove the budgeted amount of \$350 for Salaries-COLA (4411-S2) and replace it with \$1 as a placeholder. Motion made by Claudine, seconded by Trish.

**KMBC (12-0)**

**BOS (5-0)**

- There was a discussion about the budget for Water Cooler Rentals (4411-07). Phil explained that the EPA changed the PFAS standard, and there are houses that have contamination. The town is delivering water to their homes while the investigation is ongoing. This is a temporary fix while the case goes through the court system.

**MM&S:** Motion to approve the budget of \$36,626. Motion made by Rick, seconded by John.

**KMBC (12-0)**

**BOS (4-0) One abstention (Rich)**

**Human Services (4441)**

**MM&S:** Motion made to accept the budget of \$16,526. Motion made by Gary, seconded by Kim.

**KMBC (12-0)**

**BOS (5-0)**

**General Assistance (4442)**

- Phil praised Ellen for finding alternative programs for the community, but he stressed this money is essential to keep in the budget.

**MM&S:** Motion made to accept the budget of \$40,500. Motion made by Shaw, seconded by John.

**KMBC (12-0)**

**BOS (5-0)**

**Heritage (4590)**

**MM&S:** Motion made to accept the budget of \$7,510. Motion made by Gary, seconded by Nick.

**KMBC (12-0)**

**BOS (5-0)**

**Conservation (4619)**

- Nick asked about the decrease in the Milfoil Testing and Treatment (4619-09) budget. Shaw explained that no remediation was needed in 2021, and the leftover funds are in the conservation fund. The balance of the conservation fund is now about \$19,000, so they feel comfortable reducing the budget.

**MM&S:** Motion made to accept the budget of \$9,760. Motion made by John, seconded by Gary.

**KMBC (11-0) One abstention (Shaw)**

**BOS (5-0)**

**Long-term Bond and Notes - Principal (4711)**

**MM&S:** Motion made to accept the budget of \$135,000. Motion made by John, seconded by Shaw.

**KMBC (12-0)**

**BOS (5-0)**

**Long-term Bond and Notes - Interest (4721)**

**MM&S:** Motion made to accept the budget of \$92,905. Motion made by Jim, seconded by John.

**KMBC (12-0)**

**BOS (5-0)**

Including all changes approved at today's meeting, the final proposed budget is \$7,172,921.

There was a discussion about COLA increases for part-time employees. Chuck and Kevin will review these increases with Cindy.

**DISCUSSION OF REVENUE:**

Chuck explained that Cindy has been very conservative historically on revenue estimates. Kevin believes these numbers are too low. Chuck will discuss the Meals and Rooms Tax figure with Cindy. The BOS advised that the town has sold some property, and that costs have gone up across the board.

<Joint meeting of the KMBC and BOS is adjourned at 12:57 p.m. BOS voted 5-0 to adjourn.>

<Start of KMBC meeting>

Chuck explained that the final draft of the BOS warrant articles will be available Monday. The deadline for warrant article submission is Tuesday, 1/11/22.

KMBC meeting adjourned at 1:07 p.m.

**NEXT MEETING: Saturday, January 15, 2022, at 9 a.m. at Town Hall**

***\*\*Minutes accepted and finalized without amendments 1/15/22\*\****