

**TOWN BOARD
BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING
October 15, 2025
12:30pm**

Supervisor Holdridge opened the meeting at 12:35pm.

Attendance Rollcall:

Supervisor Holdridge	Present <u> x </u>	Absent <u> </u>
Council Member Ardisana	Present <u> </u>	Absent <u> x </u>
Council Member Becker	Present <u> x </u>	Absent <u> </u>
Council Member Courtenay	Present <u> x </u>	Absent <u> </u>
Council Member Dysinger	Present <u> x </u>	Absent <u> </u>

Determination of Quorum: Yes X No

Pledge of Allegiance

Supervisor Holdridge led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ASSESSOR – A1355

Town Assessor John Schuler presented his budget request, stating he had tried to cut costs where possible, reducing approximately \$10,000 from last year's line items.

John noted that his only concern was with the vehicle maintenance line, which had been reduced from his requested \$800 to \$400 in the tentative budget. Given that the vehicle is 10 years old and may need front brakes (approximately \$600), he requested the board consider increasing this line to \$600.

Personal services increased by 11% (\$22,400), which John explained was dictated by the county contract that pays for his salary, his assistant, and the data collector. This is the final year of the current three-year contract.

John confirmed that staffing was sufficient for current needs, including the upcoming work related to the Greens development once it receives water service and can begin building out more rapidly.

POLICE DEPARTMENT – B3120

Police Chief Doellinger and Sgt. Vitale presented the Police Department budget requests. They discussed several items:

Staffing

Chief Doellinger requested two new positions:

- An additional sergeant position (previously requested last year) to provide supervision for more shifts. Currently only two-thirds of shifts have supervisor coverage. With an additional sergeant, approximately 85-90% of shifts would be covered.
- A part-time clerk position to complement the new full-time clerk position, which would free officers from administrative duties and provide more consistent office coverage.

These positions were not included in the tentative budget.

Equipment

The equipment line showed a significant increase from \$70,800 (2025 projection) to \$177,000 in the tentative budget. The chief explained this was partly due to new accounting procedures that moved items from contractual expenses (0.4 line) to equipment (0.2 line).

Items requested but not included in the tentative budget:

- \$12,500 for red dot sights for firearms (discussed during PBA negotiations).
- \$900 for Halligan tools (forcible entry tools).
- \$500 for OC spray (pepper spray) replacement as current supply is expired.
- \$1,300 for additional riot batons, shields and ballistic face helmet shields.

Council Member Dysinger questioned the department's preference for Chevy Tahoes over Ford Interceptors, noting higher fuel costs for the Tahoes. The Chief explained that Tahoes provide more space for equipment, are more reliable, and typically stay in service longer.

Council Member Courtenay inquired about the benefits of red dot sights. Sgt. Vitale explained they improve officer accuracy, which is both a safety issue and a liability concern.

Council Member Dysinger requested consideration of noise monitoring equipment (approximately \$350-600 per unit) to help enforce the town's noise ordinance.

The Chief noted that the department building's roof (original from 2006) may need replacement in the coming years, and the floors need waxing, which the current cleaning contractor does not provide.

ANIMAL CONTROL – A3510

Chief Doellinger reported that the Humane Society contract includes a 3% increase over the previous year's request. The spay/neuter/return program funding request remained the same. The system continues to work well for the town.

BUILDING DEPARTMENT – B3620

Building Inspector Andrew Contarino requested two increases from the tentative budget:

- Postage and publication: from \$800 to \$1,500-1,600, noting that nine months into the year they had already spent nearly \$1,200.
- Membership dues and training: from \$1,175 to \$2,000 to cover recertification requirements for two code-certified staff members.

Discussion ensued about engineering fees, with Andrew explaining that most engineering expenses for reviews come from escrow accounts for specific projects, and the building department primarily uses engineering services for septic reviews.

TOWN CLERK - A1410, A1460, A4020

Town Clerk Zappala reported that most of her budget requests were incorporated into the tentative budget with only minor adjustments:

- A slight decrease in postage expense.
- IT services reduced to \$5,800 based on 2025 projections (down from \$7,000 requested)
- Equipment was increased slightly based on IT's recommendation to replace computers that will no longer be supported by Windows 10.

For records management, there were slight reductions in professional services, IT services, and publications lines. The Town Clerk noted the registrar line remains at \$2,000, which is generally offset by revenues.

RECREATION

Recreation Director Michele Deshler presented her department's budget, noting she had worked with the Comptroller to better track individual program expenses:

Programs for the Aging – A6772

- Congregate dining program (\$6,500) will start October 28th with revenue coming from county, state, and federal sources. An adjustment of approximately \$30,000 would be needed in both revenue and expenses based on information from that day's meeting with the county.
- Transportation (\$13,500) for seniors to venues and trips is not budget neutral.
- Venues (\$10,000) are budget neutral as seniors pay the full cost for venue admission.

Senior Center and Recreation – A7140, A7145

- Supplies and materials increased by \$100 due to microphone issues.
- Fireworks budget remains at \$35,000, with some offset by sponsorship from Suburban Propane.
- Basketball program budgeted at \$5,000, with a need for volunteer coaches.
- Bus trips increased to \$10,000 (budget neutral) due to increased interest.
- A new line of \$500 was added for department uniforms.
- Summer camp funding was discussed in relation to uncertainty about the PAC facility.
- "Summer Camp" (\$11,000) should be relabeled as "Field Day" for clarity, which is partially funded by a \$5,000 county grant.

Michele noted that cleaning service at the senior center needed improvement.

TIMEKEEPING

Comptroller Neil Meyer proposed moving from the current PayClock system to the Edmunds Employee Self-Service (ESS) module. Benefits would include:

- Better integration with the existing payroll system.
- Ability for employees to view their remaining leave time.
- Option to request time off through the system.
- Access through both computer and mobile app.
- Annual cost of approximately \$3,000, with a savings of \$600-700 by eliminating PayClock.

The highway department has been consulted and is receptive to the change. Further discussions would be needed with the police department.

The Board expressed general support for the proposal, which would be budgeted for in 2026.

WELL CAPPING

Supervisor Holdridge reported that a Parks Advisory Board member had suggested removing a well cap in the middle of a pathway at Knapp's View. After discussion, the Board consensus was not to cap the well permanently, as it might be useful for future water needs at the park. Instead, they suggested making it more visible with protective measures.

SIDEWALK MAINTENANCE

Council Member Becker presented information on equipment needed to maintain the newly constructed sidewalks in Sugar Loaf. A commercial-grade snowblower would cost approximately \$26,000, plus storage requirements.

The Board discussed various options for sidewalk maintenance:

- Purchase equipment for town staff to maintain the sidewalks.
- Create a sidewalk district and charge affected property owners.
- Pass a local law requiring property owners to maintain sidewalks themselves.
- Contract out the service (approximately \$10,000 annually).

Council Member Courtenay expressed concern about placing the burden on individual homeowners who never had sidewalks before, while Council Member Dysinger questioned whether the entire town should pay for maintenance that primarily benefits a small area.

The Board agreed to continue the discussion at the October 22nd meeting, with Council Member Becker to research better pricing on equipment.

ADJOURNMENT

ON A MOTION OFFERED BY Council Member Dysinger and second by Council Member Becker to adjourn the meeting at 2:35pm, there being no further business brought before the Town Board.

VOTE: AYES(4): Holdridge, Becker, Courtenay, Dysinger, ABSENT(1): Ardisana

ADOPTED

Respectfully submitted,

Linda A. Zappala, RMC
Town Clerk
2025-10-15