

**TOWN OF OLD ORCHARD BEACH
TOWN COUNCIL WORKSHOP
TOWN HALL CHAMBERS
TUESDAY, APRIL 14, 2009**

A Town Council Workshop of the Old Orchard Beach Town Council was held on Tuesday, April 14, 2009 in the Town Hall Chamber. The Chair opened the meeting at 7:05 p.m. The following budget issue was discussed: 20173– Conservation Commission; and Review of any prior budget topics.

Present:

**Chair Sharri MacDonald
Vice Chair Robin Dayton
Councilor Laura Bolduc
Councilor Mike Tousignant
Councilor Shawn O’Neill
Town Manager Steve Gunty
Assistant Town Manager V. Louise Reid**

20173– Conservation Commission; The Conservation Commission has the mission of protecting plants, animals and their habits; an ethic of resource use, allocation and protection including energy conservation; habitat and water conservations; wildlife management; marine conservations; and conservation restoration. Chair Andrea Berlin presented her budget requests as follows:

Extreme Clean First Street and park clean-up **\$ 2,750.00**

Conservation Chair, Andrea Berlin, indicated that she believed this was a good price and that Extreme Clean has provided a very excellent service to the community through the contract they have with the Town. This will include all of First Street which has not been done before as well as the Train Station area which has never been attractively kept up. It would cover starting the weekend of May 16th through Labor Day Weekend. Volunteers will also be encouraged to help in keeping ahead of the clean up work.

Mowing and Trimming Joe Lydon **\$ 9240.00**

Second year of 3-year contract

3 workers x 4hours = \$420 x 22 mows

Top dress stone dust pathways as needed has been accessed yet

It was brought to the attention of the Council that this is in the Public Works budget and was included here by error. On several occasions the statement was made that by having the Conservation Commission address the mowing and trimming it relieved the Public Works Department and the need not to hire three seasonal workers.

Fall Aeration, De-thatch, and Oversee Joe Lydon

\$ 1,315.00

All areas of high soil compaction
from Gazebo to the parking area,
from the walkway to the street side.

2009 repairs to turf \$6,791.00 This was from the damage created last year.

Chair Berlin informed the Council that this is a high traffic area and if not properly addressed results in dust bowls. She also discussed that the drainage system is working and this is encouraging.

Natural Lawns of America Ben Goodall
\$ 6485.50

Second year of 3-year contract
6 applications 85% organic lawn care
fertilization of trees

They have attempted to go to 85% organic which was \$1,800 more than offered by a Chemical company but the safety of the children, adults and animals that use the park was a consideration of spending the extra funding. Also addressed was the possibility of John Waters doing additional fertilization.

2009 contract 5,500.50
2009 fertilization of all park trees \$ 985.00

Pruning of trees
\$ 3,500.00

Veteran's memorial park
Town square, town hall, Milliken Street.

The additional need for the pruning of trees throughout the town, not only at Memorial Park, was raised by Chair Berlin. She indicated that there are many trees in and around Old Orchard Beach that have never been pruned and they do produce a safety issue. She talked about the School area, the Milliken Street Parking Lot area. She said that when you plant new trees for the first three or four years you must prune them.

Watermatic
\$ 7,000.00

Annual maintenance and repair
2008 total cost \$10,675.78
2009 total cost \$15,408.39

It was mentioned that this will go out to bid next year. Originally when Watermatic bid it was \$20,000 cheaper than the other contracts. There have been some issues which have been addressed with the Company. Chair MacDonald encouraged that they provide a schematic of the electrical and water lines and that this needs to be provided to the Town of Old Orchard soon. It is an important historical documentation that they need to provide to us.

Playground **\$ 2,500.00**

Annual inspection \$ 1,114.00

2009 playground repair and parts \$ 4,700.00

2009 wood chips divided with schools our 1/3 = \$744.75

This is an important liability area and the repair and upgrading of the playground equipment is something in which we do not have a choice. The safety of those who use the equipment is our responsibility and the liability issues could be enormous. It had never been inspected till 2008.

Electrical **\$ 3,500.00**

Locate additional light on pole closest to bathroom station

Fixing an damaged or out lamps

Additional lighting on gazebo for concerts

2009 \$5,885.99

The need for additional lighting is necessary particularly in the area of the bathrooms and up by the gazebo. It is an unsafe area and also is an area where young people gather and smoke pot. We need to continue to fix the lights that are out on a regular basis and it was indicated that perhaps the Fire Department could assist in this regard.

John Waters **\$ 19,600.00**

Estimated 20 hours a week @ 35.00

fertilizing, pruning \$3,500

2008 \$9,100.47

2009 \$19,400.00

The praise for John Waters from members attending and that of Chair Berlin was evident. Questions on the costs being paid were discussed. Also the question of whether this should go out to bid to see if there are other individuals who have the qualifications applying for the position and the analysis of the cost. Again it was reiterated many times over of the qualifications of John Waters and Councilor Dayton spoke of the enormous amount of dedicated volunteer time he has provided as well. His experience in running the large parks in Portland was mentioned as well.

Southern Maine Community College Intern
Creating intern position under John Waters
20 hours a week @ 15.00

\$ 5,000.00

It did not appear that the intern position was going to happen as there were no applicants. The reasoning behind this is that many students are looking for full time work and not part time. It was recommended again that if anyone was to be hired it should be publicized with attention being given to local qualified individuals. Again the salary amount was discussed with pros and cons.

Projected community service hours

3 kids total of 200 hours free labor.

Armed Service Day Community Park Clean-up
Assumed savings of \$ 6,000.00

An enormous amount of time was spent on the amount of community service time provided to the Town and the value of volunteers. The question was raised, however, whether it is practical for a volunteer to be accountable for \$74,000 of town funding. It was also a concern that Chair Berlin, who was acclaimed for her marvelous commitment to the Park and to the Committee, should take on such enormous responsibilities and not be a Town employee. The question again of a Parks and Recreation Department, pros and cons, was discussed at length and what this would involve should it become a consideration.

Pettengill Landscaping

\$2,800.00

4 trees replacement costs:

This year conservation will be taking care of all the gardens in town to include entries to town and town signs, town hall, town square, Milliken Street lot, Veteran's Memorial Park. Discussion continued here as to the enormity of responsibility falling under the Conservation Commission and the need to perhaps revisit the question of Public Works and Conservation Commission work assignments.

Annual and Perennial Plants for these gardens

\$ 3,700.00

Alpine garden

600.00

Kidney garden

300.00

Gazebo

200.00

Grants

Councilor O'Neill asked questions about how much in grants was received and how is this shown in the request for budget funding.

Flags

3 (6x10) American Flags	\$264.00	
repair damage to brackets and replacement of stolen flags at the gazebo	\$ 110.00	\$ 370.00

Discussion on the need for flag replacement and the fact that the American Legion has assisted in the past but funding again even for them is a consideration. There has been damage to the flags and they need to be replaced when needed.

Hardware store	\$ 500.00
Tools	\$300.00

Basketball nets	\$ 100.00
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The same situation is obvious for replacement of the nets when they have been damaged and this is another cost factor for consideration.

Continuing ED training for conservation members	\$ 700.00
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We submitted funding for additional training for our conservation members who provide free service in volunteering for the community.

Total	\$70,460.50
Contingency to account for vandalism and damage	6,000.00

Total Budget	\$76,460.50
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During discussion, Eileen Payette, a member of the Conservation Commission asked for some understanding of the revenue that comes in from Memorial Park and Milliken Street and requested that perhaps some consideration be given for this funding being provided to supplement the Conservation Budget.

As a result of some confusion that became apparent in the presentation of the Conservation Commission budget request, Town Manager Steve Gunty tried to explain the differences in a simpler fashion. He indicated that the format prepared by Mary Ann Conroy for the Conservation Commission, which the Council had in their budget book was a simpler format in line with how all the other budgets were presented, according to account numbers representing specific cost centers, and that it should be followed for greater ease of understanding this complicated budget. The Town Manager said that first of all, the \$9,240 of mowing expenses is already covered in the Public Works budget, and should be eliminated from Andrea's version before the Council tonight. The areas of substantive differences from the Conservation Commission's request and the Manager's recommendation total only \$11,100 for operational areas. This difference was calculated after the Property Damage request is taken out of the equation (which should be reduced from \$6,000 to only \$500 figuring that insurance would handle the bulk of damage and

anything less would come from this line item), and after the Water-Irrigation line item is reduced by \$1,000 (to account for likely savings from re-bidding these services).

This leaves \$11,100 which is the difference in the Professional Engineering Services line item that accounts for wages of Arborist John Waters. Instead of budgeting \$19,600 toward the Arborist's wages, the Manager recommends a total of \$8,500. This could be achieved by reducing the hours. The \$19,600 was based partially on a two-tier wage structure of \$80/hour and \$35/hour depending on the whether Arborist duties or Tech support duties were being performed. Andrea confirmed the previous two-tier wage structure at \$50/hour and \$35/hour but stated that it has now been reduced to a flat \$35/hour. This alone will help offset some of the proposed reduction in wages in the Manager's recommendation.

It was suggested by Councilor Tousignant that instead of quibbling over the \$11,100 in operational difference between the Budget request and the Manager's recommendation, that the Council could split the difference and approve \$5,550 additional beyond the Manager's recommendation.

Councilor Bolduc reiterated the question about the need for the accountability of the funding to go under a particular department. Councilor Tousignant also indicated that there is no way to continue to sustain the Park at the costs that are being determined. He pointed out that we have spent \$3.5 million dollars in five years. Councilor Dayton supported the budget of the Conservation Commission indicating that this is the age of volunteerism and they have performed marvelously and that their requests have accountability. Councilor O'Neill indicated that we want to support the keeping up of the Park but again, there is a limitation for funding and we have to look closely at the figures and what the continual costs are putting on the budget as a whole.

There is no question that the work that has been done in Memorial Park has been outstanding and that it has resulted in a benefit to both the citizens and the tourists and that we need to maintain the Park so that its use is valuable. There was an agreement that the work plan needed to be revisited by the Council in the days ahead.

The Workshop ended at 8:38 p.m.
Respectfully Submitted,

V. Louise Reid
Town Council Secretary

I, V. Louise Reid, Secretary to the Town Council of Old Orchard Beach, Maine, do hereby certify that the foregoing document consisting of six (6) is a true copy of the original Minutes of the Town Council Workshop of April 14, 2009.
V. Louise Reid

Review of any prior budget topics:.

Respectfully Submitted,

**V. Louise Reid
Town Council Secretary**

**I, V. Louise Reid, Secretary to the Town Council of Old Orchard Beach, Maine, do hereby certify that the foregoing document consisting of fourteen pages (14) is a true copy of the original Minutes of the Town Council Workshop of March 3, 2009.
V. Louise Reid**