

A special meeting of the Rural Urban Fire Control Board was called to order by Chairperson Matthew Schooley at 7:02 a.m. at the Alma Municipal Building. A quorum of the Board was present.

Board members present: Kevin Beeson, Greg Mapes, Doug Merchant, and Matthew Schooley.
Board members not present: Ron Hunt, Tish Mallory, and Larry Mott.
Also present: Harold House, Kathy Phillips, Aaron VanHorn, and Mark Williams.

Motion by Mapes, seconded by Beeson, to approve minutes of the November 7, 2019 special meeting. Motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

Public Safety Director Mark Williams opened discussion about the proposed FY 2021 Budget. He explained the budget is mostly the same as in years past but includes options for payment for a new pickup truck for the Fire Chief. The on-call person is currently driving a city car, but with the purchase of a new truck, the on-call person will be using the Chief's old truck, and the city car will be used mostly for training. He noted new apparatus will need to be purchased in four years, but those should be the only large purchases in the foreseeable future, at least for ten years.

Board Member Tish Mallory arrived at 7:06 a.m.

Finance Director Kathy Phillips explained the options for purchasing the new truck. She also explained that internal service fees will be eliminated, and funds will be reallocated where they are needed. Beeson asked about overtime in the budget and Williams explained this covers police officers that are also trained fire fighters.

Phillips noted radios and a pole barn have already been authorized and the costs are included in the proposed budget. Discussion followed about radio replacements still needed and alternatives for funding.

Phillips returned to the subject of the pickup truck and explained the differences between paying from fund balance versus operating funds. Williams noted if trucks are not replaced at certain times, they are not recognized by ISO and department ratings go down. Also, waiting too long to replace trucks lowers resale value. He said Alma's trucks are serviced in house and that helps keep the value up.

Mapes suggested his preference for purchasing the new truck is taking the money out of operating funds. Phillips explained how the budget would be affected by the method of payment.

Beeson told the Board that he isn't ready to make a decision on the budget. Lengthy discussion followed about the amounts included in the budget, rising costs to local units, and employee benefits for Alma employees. Beeson asked for spreadsheet comparison of costs of the last five years. Mallory said they recently had to make a decision about retirement benefits. She doesn't believe the ~~firefighters~~ *rescue responders* in her township make enough money, but the township is struggling with the costs. She said it was important to consider these things in the future, but the Board needed to move forward with the now. Schooley asked if the Board was comfortable choosing one of the three options.

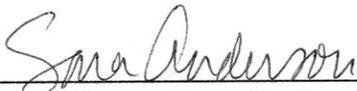
Motion by Beeson, seconded by Merchant, to adopt the FY 2021 Budget using Option #1 for purchase of the pickup truck. Motion carried. Voting yes: Beeson, Merchant, Schooley, and Mallory. Voting no: Mapes.

Schooley told members there need to be changes to the annual meeting date in the Interlocal Agreement as it appears to be too late in the year to meet budget requirements for local units. Merchant noted Ithaca is looking at developing an Authority, so there may be changes ahead.

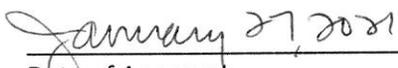
Schooley acknowledged a need to take a hard look at the agreement. Beeson said a meeting to review the budget at the end of January would be ideal.

Board members agreed on a day of the week that works best for meetings and agreed to set the annual meeting for Wednesday, April 8, 2020 at 7:00 a.m. in the Alma Municipal Building. Monthly meetings will begin after that on the second Wednesday of each month at 7:00 a.m.

Motion by Mallory, seconded by Mapes, to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 a.m. Motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.



Sara Anderson, Recording Secretary



Date of Approval