



**OCTOBER 11, 2022 @ 5:30 PM
AT FI COMMUNITY CENTER
MONTHLY WORKSHOP
ADOPTED MINUTES**

*David Burnham, Chair
Bob Evans, Treasurer
Sarah Malinowski, Secretary
Kate Stevens
Tryn Collins*

Treasurer Bob Evans proposed a Budget of \$864,350 for 2023, which is \$18,050 less than the Budget for 2022. Bob highlighted some changes in the proposed budget compared to last year's:

- a reduction in Compost station fees
- a reduction of \$10,000 in anticipated Workers Comp contributions
- an increase in hauling prices by \$10,000
- a reduction in building utilities by \$10,000 (recycled waste oil furnace means we don't need to buy any heating oil this year)
- an increase in rental equipment to \$6,000 to prorate the outsourcing of grinding big stumps every three years for a total cost of \$18,000

Bob will distribute hard copies and a digital copy of the proposed budget to the commissioners. Bob left to attend another meeting, saying Beth could field any questions.

Beth noted that our costs will most likely exceed our 2022 budgeted amount. Beth will email us a 2022 year-to-date through September as soon as possible. It was noted that last year's taxpayer burden was artificially low because \$60,000 was applied to it from our fund balance.

We discussed that we are not allowed to raise our budget by more than 2% annually. We did a quick calculation that if we did that, it would mean c. a \$20,000 increase as compared to Bob's proposed \$18,000 decrease. Beth pointed out that if we lower our budget ceiling for 2023 this affects the subsequent 2024 budget ceiling. Kate added, given all the current economic uncertainties, if an approach could be to raise the budget by 2% and then strive to be under budget; this way we are hedging against future cost increases. David suggested keeping the budget unchanged from last year as a kind of middle ground between what Bob's proposed c. 2% decrease and a possible 2% increase.

David added that he has begun to investigate new compactors and identified one that can increase the amount of cardboard in each load by 5x. These higher tech compactors cost significantly more than the one the District has just purchased for c. \$25,000 as an in-kind replacement of a broken, older model. It was suggested that anticipated equipment replacements and upgrades like these should be taken into consideration in the proposed budget as well.

Sarah stated that our budget is also a document that communicates the District's priorities to the public. To that end, she suggested we increase the amount in Education, which is a pillar of our 2022/23 strategic plan. Sarah urged the District to invest in employee, commissioner, and public educational

opportunities. Beth thought it would cost \$2,000 or \$3,000 for all of us to attend the annual NYS Organics Summit or similar conference.

David requested we all take a look at what Bob proposed and make suggestions via email this week. We have to come to agreement ASAP. Our final budget has to be presented to the public at our regular monthly meeting on October 24.

5 DEC grants were discussed. These include 2 for landfill, 2 for recycling (one for capital improvements, one for programs) and 1 for diverting materials from the MSW stream. The consensus was that the MSW diversion grant - which aligns well with our LSWMP strategies and benchmarks, especially capturing all organic waste into composting programs - would be the most obvious fit. Tryn pointed out that much of the language from our LSWMP could be used as part of the application. It was agreed that there should be funds in the budget for a grant writer. Beth pointed out that if we are awarded a grant, we have to front the money and will only be reimbursed by the DEC after our initiative is completed. This means that funds for these MSW diversion projects need to be on hand and taken into consideration for the budget. Kate will look more closely at the MSW diversion grant for the costs involved, including for hiring a grant writer.