

MINUTES
BUDGET COMMITTEE
TOWN ALEXANDRIA
TUESDAY, SEPT 10, 2024

In attendance: Doug Benton, Don Paiva, Fred Platts, Ed Skroback, Cindy Williams
Audience: Tony Numeister, Larry and Nancy Sharp, Will Hanna

Don brought the meeting to order at 6:02.

A motion was made by Doug, 2nd by Ed to accept minutes as amended (adding Ed Skroback in attendance) for the meeting of August 13, so voted.

Don reviewed upcoming schedule of outside agency attendance
Tonight – LR Mental Health and Tapply Thompson Community Center
Sept 24 – Voices Against Violence and Lakes Region Visiting Nurses (NANA)
Oct 22 – Tri County and Don will choose another form the list to add.

Don reported that the Selectmen have signed a contract for the site work and building for the transfer station. Jennifer reported that the reimbursement to Eversource will not be required to be paid out this year, but carried over until next year.

LAKES REGION MENTAL HEALTH – Last year they requested \$3,500 and we approved \$1,500. Beth Vachon spoke on behalf of the agency. This year they served 3,125 patients Jul – Jun. They were formed in 1966 and are a private, nonprofit with an all volunteer Board of Directors. They serve all ages. They take referrals from health care providers, hospitals, law enforcement agencies, CAP. This year their request is for \$3500, same as last year. The requested amount is based upon the population of each town. They employ 200 employees located in Laconia and Plymouth. They provided \$907,630 in volunteer hours in services and served 37 residents totaling \$7,460 in Alexandria. This is 2% of their patients based on the 2020 census.

They are in the process of piloting the “Access to Care” program which allows open access with same day appointments during certain days and hours. The need for children 0-17 increased this past year 5 to 11 in Alexandria alone. They provide care to anybody regardless of ability to pay and ended this past year with over 700,000 in deficit. They are hoping to make that up this year to include some outstanding grants. They receive 70% Medicaid reimbursement.

They received grants last year from Dobles Foundation, SAMSA and another through Jean Shaheen. They also receive many donations and a lot of in-kind donations. 21 of the 24 towns that they have requested funding from have providing it.

Beth explained that upon intake, a team determines a treatment plan based on need. The plan can take anywhere from 12 weeks to several years. They provide emergency home visits in crisis.

Beth explained that people are confused as to what to dial in the time of crisis. Some call 988 which is a national mental health crisis line whereas the 833 will reach somebody local with a quicker response.

She also explained that their organization will work with police depts and other agencies and businesses to help recognize mental stress and how to handle situations.

They provide a small cottage “A Place to Go” for individuals that are unable to find services which provide a 24 hour service to help stabilize and observe and also a cold weather shelter.

TONY NUMEISTER and **WILL HANNA** - appeared as part of the group formed as the Alexandria Park and Rec Committee. He and Will Hanna are working with a group of volunteers in hopes of providing a skating rink for the community as a start. They have some great ideas to include a snowshoe path, Sunday night concerts, etc. They are trying to determine if they would form as a town dept or create a nonprofit. They came in tonight to touch base with the TTCC for ideas of a direction. Will has been looking for grants that will provide funding. The group has been in contact with the highway, fire and police depts and they are willing to assist with the rink. Will shared his passion based on childhood experience for a skating rink and has done the research of what is required to form a rink and figures the cost at approximately \$20,000. The purchase of a Bambini and ongoing maintenance expense would need to be considered. He has received guidance from other grant writers and they suggested the group partner with another non-profit. The group has a Facebook page “AlexandriaNHCommunity and an email: Alexparkrec@gmail.com .

TAPPLY THOMPSON COMMUNITY CENTER – Les Dion (Director) and Ann Halloran (Alexandria Rep) appeared. Les explained that skating rinks have been attempted in the past and suggested the group draft a proposal for her to present to the TTCC Board. Ann explained that PSU created a software program that assists in locating foundations for specific grants and they are trying to locate it.

Les answered questions of the committee. Doug asked how much the baseball program costs annually. Les reported this year it was \$90,000 and served 240 kids. They did not take in that amount. Volunteers assist in maintaining Wells Field, and the concession stand and golf tournament raise funds for it.

Les reported they served 175 Alexandria residents to include adults. Pickleball is not included in these numbers. She explained they continue to use the “fair share formula” that was created during Wink Tapply’s tenure. There has been an influx recently of adults looking for programs. They just started line dancing with much success.

This has been a big year. A grant was received for 1 million to renovate the existing facility to add 4 handicap bathrooms, a lift, etc. They just hired a grant writer who has been very successful. One item that hadn’t been expected and not part of the grant is the requirement for a sprinkler system.

They also received another grant for 1.5 million to build a gymnasium. They purchased a property, however, parking would be a problem. There is a new property that just came up for sale that would be ideal for the location of the gymnasium and answer all the parking concerns. They have put in an offer on the property and are waiting to hear back. They would then sell the property they previously purchased. With the increased interest in pickleball they would also like to build 2 more pickleball courts, provide day care and provide senior citizen programs.

They have also taken on the “Turkey Trot” that Newfound Grocery hosts on Thanksgiving which provides \$11,000 to disperse to residents in need.

Don asked what happens if a town does not allocate the total amount requested. Les explained that historically kids would not be allowed to participate in the programs. There are costs associated with all the programs in addition to the town’s contributions. They find the programs assist the younger children of the district to interact with those from other towns to make the transition to middle school easier.

Fred asked about the ratio kids vs. adults. Les reported 80% kids, 20% adults. This does not include coaches.

The center provides a full-time rec department for all taxpayers. Bristol residents are 50% of those served, but they don’t provide 50% of the cost due to the fact they provide all the grounds maintenance.

A motion was made by Doug, 2nd by Fred to adjourn at 7:45, so voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Williams