

TOWN OF SEABROOK

BUDGET WORKSESSIONS

OCTOBER 30, 2025

Aboul B. Khan
Theresa A. Kyle
Harold F. Eaton
William M. Manzi, III

Mr. Khan opened the meeting at 9:08AM.

230 - FIRE DEPARTMENT

Chief William Edwards was present for his budgets. Chief gave an overview of the department. He said they have been down personnel and that is hitting the budget pretty hard. The budget is underfunded and understaffed so it is pretty hard to continue maintaining the same budget moving forward.

Mr. Manzi commented that with this budget they typically focus on the overtime line due to the large numbers. He said they need to right size the lines as they have all been underfunded so it's not just the overtime line.

The retirement reserve line is for employees who may retire per the union contracts. There is no expenditure to date, but he has had a couple employees retire this year. Chief Edwards said he has 4 employees on the floor now that could potentially retire in 2026.

Chief Edwards explained other contract services. He explained how they utilize funds in infectious disease control. Mr. Manzi said theoretically if there was money left in this line it would go to the general fund however, with the holes in this budget these lines have been filled with the additional funds.

There was discussion on what happens if they over run the budget due to overtime. Mr. Manzi said when this happens, he needs to stop it. He discussed the options they would need to look at and if they choose to do nothing that is not recommended. Chief Edwards commented that a previous board voted that overtime is considered a contractual obligation. The default budget includes the contractual increase for the employees and the overtime number.

Mr. Manzi explained that the board has instructed him not to cut fire services. In this case he would need to go to other areas of the budget. If no funds are available and the law says you can't overspend the budget, then services would need to be cut.

Mr. Eaton feels they need additional staffing. Chief Edwards feels that is separate from the overtime issue.

Mr. Manzi explained that back in 2018 the board agreed to include the overtime as part of the default budget. A new board since then has reversed that and told him not to include it in the default budget. He advised the board they do have the power to again include it in the default.

Mr. Manzi discussed that the increase in health insurance is hurting the budget. The rate of growth has not been kept up within the budget.

There was discussion on holding a public meeting to discuss the situation in the fire department. Mr. Eaton said they should inform the public that they either need to right size the budget or cut services. Chief Edwards said this issue has been going on for the past 10 years he has been chief. He feels that the board needs to take a stance and do the right thing. He has heard in this meeting that the board knows the budget is underfunded and they need more staffing, but no one wants to bite the bullet and do it.

Mr. Khan said there has been no new hire since 2003 in the fire department. They are collecting more taxes due to more businesses, and more residences in town. He said unless he hears from the people that they want to cut the services in the department he is going to support the increase.

MOTION: Theresa A. Kyle To keep line 140 at
Second: Harold F. Eaton \$1,450,000.
Unanimous

MOTION: Aboul B. Khan To put the overtime line
in the default budget.

Mr. Eaton asked if this would warrant a legal proceeding and if the judge ruled in favor of the person bringing the case where would that put the town. Mr. Manzi said the last time the court prevailed in the town's favor. If they were to prevail against the town then that number would roll back to the traditional number.

Procedurally it's hard to say if other communities do it the same way as Seabrook. There was discussion on the union contract stating they tone out on the first ambulance call. There would be different viewpoints as union would say its contractual and you would be violating the contract however, law states you cannot overspend the budget.

Second: Harold F. Eaton

Unanimous

MOTION: Harold F. Eaton To approve 230 budget
Second: Aboul B. Khan new bottom line at
Abstain: Theresa A. Kyle \$6,478,628.

230 - REVENUES

Chief Edwards explained the increase in revenues and imposing the fees that were set by the board.

There was discussion on the tax rate in Seabrook compared to other areas. This is the reason people don't pick up and move to those areas.

MOTION: Harold F. Eaton To approve 230 revenues
Second: Theresa A. Kyle at \$100,500.
Unanimous

231 - FIRE HIRE

This budget is level funded.

MOTION: Theresa A. Kyle To approve 231 budget at
Second: Harold F. Eaton \$13,061.
Unanimous

MOTION: Harold F. Eaton To approve 231 revenues
Second: Theresa A. Kyle at \$15,542.
Unanimous

235 - FIRE STATION

Mr. Manzi said this budget has been level funded for the past few years. This budget cycle we are in should be right-sized. Chief Edwards said the past couple years around June he has been giving instructions to freeze this budget. This budget has no custodian the firefighters take care of the building.

Mr. Khan will support the chief's recommendation if the board agrees. Mr. Eaton is more comfortable going with the town manager's recommendation and then increasing it next year. Mrs. Kyle agrees with Mr. Khan and supports the chief's recommendation as it is the only station we have in town.

MOTION: Theresa A. Kyle To approve 235 budget at
Second: Aboul B. Khan \$92,551.
Opposed: Harold F. Eaton

240 - EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Mr. Manzi said after conversation with the director he will work through 2026 and retire in 2027. They can have that discussion later on how to proceed with this position at that time.

Mrs. Kyle said she hopes that her request to not hire the person she talked with the director about is granted. She does not want to see him working in the building.

MOTION: Harold F. Eaton To approve 240 budget at
Second: Theresa A. Kyle \$121,429.
Unanimous

241 - RERP

Mr. Manzi said the state has fallen back on what they are sending to the town in revenues. They will need to look at this in 2026 and decide how they proceed with this budget. Chief Edwards said he looks at it like we do this for them. As he understands if we choose not to participate in the drill, they will bring in state police.

MOTION: Harold F. Eaton To approve 241 budget at
Second: Theresa A. Kyle \$25,760.
Unanimous

241 - REVENUES

MOTION: Harold F. Eaton To approve 241 revenues
Second: Theresa A. Kyle at \$6,375.
Unanimous

REVOLVING ACCOUNT

Chief Edwards explained the ambulance replacement line and why his number is more than the town manager's request. Mr. Manzi explained how the banks work when ordering an ambulance.

MOTION: Harold F. Eaton To approve revolving
Second: Theresa A. Kyle fund expenditure at
Unanimous \$296,493.

MOTION: Harold F. Eaton To approve revolving
Second: Theresa A. Kyle fund revenues at
Unanimous \$700K.

Mr. Eaton said they know there is a staffing issue and it's at the point where they need to address. He said there is a safer grant that can assist in getting these positions. Chief Edwards said they are going to need a grant writer for this grant it is a lot of work and could cost about \$20K just to write the grant.

He said they are working on changing the dispatch system so they can provide the information that is needed for this grant.

Mr. Manzi commented and said they would look at this and bring back the information to the board along with a cost for the grant writer. Mrs. Kyle said she doesn't need a study to tell her they need additional personnel. Mr. Eaton feels it would be a nice document to have to show the people that it is warranted.

Mr. Manzi feels that support from the local firefighters is important in order to get the safer grant.

Chief Edwards pointed out that the revenues for the ambulance fund are currently at \$880K.

Chief Edwards introduced Rick Saracy as the new Deputy Fire Chief. He was previously a firefighter and has worked with the town for 13 years.

Board recessed at 11:07AM. Board reconvened at 1:14PM.

480 - LIBRARY

Susan Schtavet, Eric Small & Elizabeth (new librarian) were present for the budget.

Susan Schtavet gave a brief overview of the library and services offered. She said the budget has an increase of about 4% overall. The department head line increased due to the salary matrix that the trustees have authorized to come in line with other libraries.

Mrs. Kyle asked about the revenues and said private clubs are using the facilities and other residents during this time cannot use the facility. Susan Schatvet said that no one has ever come to her to express concern that they couldn't use that particular area. Mrs. Kyle feels they are allowing private groups to use these facilities with no revenue coming in. She feels they should be charging rent as she represents the town as a whole. Mr. Eaton asked if they could stipulate that anyone that wants space in the library that no other Seabrook resident can be turned away if they want access to the space.

Eric Small said if they charge a rental fee that would be a decision of the trustees. He said he would bring that back to the board and see how they feel about it.

Mr. Eaton said where it is funded by the taxpayers, he doesn't want to see that it is tailored to a specific group.

There was discussion on the rates for the part-time staff and how many positions are on shift. They currently have 4 full-time staff members and that includes the librarian.

Mr. Eaton said the percentage for increases in staffing seems a little high. Elizabeth explained when she interviewed for the position, she put together a proposal with comparable librarians doing work in comparable communities and Seabrook was the lowest. The state average is about \$75K and she accepted the position at \$71,500. In order to get the best people, you need to pay those employees as it is very fluid in this area to get employees.

Mr. Manzi spoke about the healthcare numbers and how the town's rate increased 17.6%. Susan said they have their own plan but are with Health Trust and their increase was not quite substantial as the town.

Mr. Eaton said he would like to see that both the department head and full-time employees have an increase of 3%. He feels this would be more in line with what the town employees receive. Elizabeth spoke and said she has accepted the position and will be here for the next year. She hopes to see what they will accomplish and then go from there. Mr. Khan said he would go along with the 4% increase.

Mrs. Kyle asked if they had been provided the contract for the new librarian. Mr. Manzi said the librarian contract would not come before the board as that responsibility falls exclusively under the law to the library trustees. He said the board has the ability to make those cuts however, the trustees can move money around under the appropriate budget.

Mr. Khan suggested they put the department head and full-time employees at 4% rather than the 5% and 6% respectively.

MOTION:	Aboul B. Khan	To approve 480 budget
Second:	Harold F. Eaton	new bottom line at
Abstain:	Theresa A. Kyle	\$577,069.

470 - WELFARE ADMIN

Bonnie Armentrout-Brown was present for her budget. The budget has less than a 1% increase that is due to contractual obligation.

MOTION:	Harold F. Eaton	To approve 470 budget at
Second:	Theresa A. Kyle	\$81,697.
Unanimous		

471 - WELFARE DEPARTMENT

There was discussion on donations made to the department. Mr. Khan asked if they could create a line item or document stating what she has received for donations and/or gift cards for that department.

MOTION: Harold F. Eaton To approve 471 budget at
Second: Theresa A. Kyle \$88,500.
Unanimous

471 - REVENUES

MOTION: Harold F. Eaton To approve 471 revenues
Second: Theresa A. Kyle at \$1,500.
Unanimous

210 - BUILDING INSPECTIONS

Lacey Fowler was present for her budgets. She said she has a part-time employee who assists with inspections and a contract electrical inspector who works 4 hours per week; she also has a full-time secretary.

Lacey discussed the larger electrical services that require more than what she is capable of doing and would bring in fees for doing work in the evening.

There was discussion on line 390 and increasing it to \$21K.

MOTION: Aboul B. Khan To approve 210 budget
Second: Harold F. Eaton new bottom line at
Unanimous \$135,771.

210 - REVENUES

There was discussion on the business license fees and the increase in revenue we are seeing.

MOTION: Harold F. Eaton To approve 210 revenues
Second: Theresa A. Kyle at \$268,900.
Unanimous

410 - HEALTH DEPARTMENT

MOTION: Harold F. Eaton To approve 410 budget at
Second: Theresa A. Kyle \$108,142.
Unanimous

410 - REVENUES

MOTION: Harold F. Eaton To approve 410 revenues
Second: Theresa A. Kyle at \$8,500.
Unanimous

FINAL BUDGET NUMBER

Mr. Manzi said that \$27,910,369 is the bottom-line budget number and it is a \$1,561,269 increase over 2025.

The board recessed at 2:33PM. Board reconvened at 3:10PM.

131 - REVENUES

Mr. Manzi explained that after discussion with the treasurer he concurs that the interest on deposits should be increased to \$350K bringing the total revenue to \$480K.

MOTION: Harold F. Eaton To change line 000 in
Second: Theresa A. Kyle 131 revenues to \$350K.
Unanimous

MOTION: Harold F. Eaton To approve 131 revenues
Second: Theresa A. Kyle new bottom line at
Unanimous \$480K.

2026 TOTAL BUDGET

MOTION: Harold F. Eaton To approve the 2026
Second: Theresa A. Kyle total budget at
Unanimous \$27,910,369.

The board thanked everyone who worked on this budget preparation as a lot of work goes into the budget. Mr. Manzi said a special thank you should be given to Morgan Cogdill who was thrust into this under special circumstances, and she did a wonderful job. Mr. Khan reiterated, she did a tremendous job and passed the test. Mrs. Kyle also complimented Morgan Cogdill and said she did an excellent job.

MOTION: Harold F. Eaton
Second: Aboul B. Khan
Unanimous

To adjourn the meeting
at 3:16PM.

Minutes taken by Kelly J. O'Connor.

Approved and endorsed:

Harold F. Eaton
Clerk

Date: _____