

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29, 2020

A joint meeting of the Finance Committee (FC) and Board of Selectmen was held on Wednesday, April 29, 2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, participants were invited to join the meeting by video conference, although Mr. Morse, Mr. Cortese and Mr. Wojcik were present in person at the Municipal Center. Mr. D'Amico called the meeting to order at 7:16 PM.

ATTENDANCE:

PRESENT (remote): Howard D'Amico (Chair), Carol Gogolinski, Michael Hutnak (Vice Chair), Sandy Kuipers Phil Landry, Heather Morin, Lynne Mussulli, Dick Vanden Berg
ABSENT:

NON-VOTING: Matt Wojcik (Town Administrator), Jeanne Lovett (Finance Director-remote)

BOARD: Kevin Morse (Chair), Tim Bonin (remote), David Cortese, Hal Davis (remote), Mike Hughes (remote)

1. JOINT MEETING WITH THE FINANCE COMMITTEE & TOWN

MODERATOR:

Mr. Wojcik stated that it may be hard to schedule Town Meeting without having a consensus State revenue budget. With the Town's own uncertain revenues, at the minimum, a Special Town Meeting (STM) would be needed before the close of the fiscal year to cleanly make budget adjustments. Ms. Lovett recommends only financial articles at Town Meeting for FY2021.

Mr. Wojcik stated that the Town has a significant reliance on State Aid. Even small changes to that aid have a significant impact to the Town's budget. Mr. Wojcik reviewed the six items in the memo regarding FY2021 budget assumptions that will or will not change: New Growth, Excise Taxes, Permits & Fees, Building Permits, Cannabis Impact Fees, Chapter 70, and Unrestricted General Government Aid (UGGA). The total FY2021 Baseline Assumption revenue decrease is \$923,132. Discussions on the above items were held including Motor Vehicle Excise, North Village, marijuana sales and the Host Community Agreements.

Mr. Wojcik stated that the worst case scenario would include up to a 4% decrease in Chapter 70, which would amount to a revenue shortfall of \$386,773 (included in the \$923,132 total assumption). Mr. Wojcik feels the Town should have a plan in place in case they have a \$1 million revenue shortfall. Ms. Lovett hopes to have the STM and financial articles at the Annual Town Meeting (ATM), with the understanding that they will not have State budget numbers, and the department heads understand that their budgets are under constraints until there is better information.

Methods of conducting a June 30, 2020 Town Meeting were discussed. Mr. Menard suggested using Octoberfest's radio transmitter to broadcast the meeting over car radios. Mr. Morse would prefer a small STM in order to get transfers done and then have a fall ATM. Ms. Lovett feels this would be challenging and would prefer to find a way to vote the budget, with the understanding that it would have to be adjusted in the fall.

If there is no Town budget in time for 7/1/20, then the default would be a month-to-month budget, with a minimum of 1/12 of the prior year's budget, however it would not be easy. Mr. Wojcik recommends holding off on Town Meeting until there is a consensus revenue budget and a sense of where the economy and pandemic are headed. This is a two-year budget planning cycle.

The consensus of the BOS and the FC was to wait until fall for ATM, subject to another meeting(s) in May for further discussion.

Mr. Bonin inquired as to the day-to-day operations of staff. Ms. Lovett will need to contact the Dept. of Revenue. July is a very challenging month for Douglas. Inter-Departmental Transfers can be done if there is no STM before June 30, 2020. There is only \$20,000 remaining in the Reserve Fund. Only town meeting can transfer Free Cash. It was the consensus of the BOS to wait to hear back from Ms. Lovett as to how important it is to have the STM prior to June 30, 2020.

Neither Mr. Wojcik nor Ms. Lovett know of any other community that has scheduled a town meeting past June 30, 2020.

Mr. D'Amico asked for another joint meeting on May 19, 2020.

Mr. Wojcik explained that the Moderator can call a town meeting to order and recess it for a period of up to 30 days at a time. Mr. Wojcik will ask for input from Town Counsel and a date for Town Meeting will be chosen at the next meeting.

The next FC meetings will be 5/12/20 and a joint meeting with the BOS on 5/19/20.

2. ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. D'Amico made a motion at 8:25 PM to adjourn the Finance Committee meeting. Mr. Vanden Berg seconded the motion. Vote: Aye-8.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Wright
Recording Secretary