

**FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING  
TUESDAY, MAY 12, 2020**

A meeting of the Finance Committee (FC) was held on Tuesday, May 12, 2020. Mr. D'Amico called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, participants were invited to join the meeting by video conference.

**ATTENDANCE:**

PRESENT: Howard D'Amico (Chair), Carol Gogolinski, Sandy Kuipers, Phil Landry, Heather Morin, Lynne Mussulli

ABSENT: Michael Hutmak (Vice Chair), Dick Vanden Berg

NON-VOTING: Jeanne Lovett (Finance Director), Matt Wojcik (Town Administrator-joined 7:58 PM)

**1. SPECIAL & ANNUAL TOWN MEETINGS (STM, ATM):**

Ms. Lovett explained that the Town typically holds an ATM and STM the same night, before June 30, 2020. During this COVID-19 pandemic, if they are allowed to hold an STM, Ms. Lovett requests than an ATM be held at the same time in hopes to have a base budget for FY2021. State numbers will not be available.

Ms. Lovett does not see much of a negative impact to Local Receipts, with the exception of meals tax, for which \$30,000 is typically budgeted. Certified New Growth will not be known, however \$125,000 has been budgeted. All her current revenue projections include House 1 numbers, however she feels State Aid will be reduced. If the Cherry Sheet is reduced, she recommends using Free Cash to stabilize the budget. Ordinarily, this is not a good practice. Free Cash has been certified at \$1,483,157.00.

Ms. Gogolinski was concerned that, if the ATM and STM are held in June, the group may be small and will be disproportionate to the rest of the voters. She was in favor of a June Town Meeting.

Mr. Wojcik joined the meeting and stated that a June Town Meeting would be easier and more familiar, however he is concerned that the level of revenue shortfalls anticipated by the State are significant and unknown. He is skeptical about trying to write a budget against an unknown revenue quantity.

Also, in order to be an institution of democracy, people need to be able to have access and participate in town meeting.

Mr. Wojcik summarized this evening's Board of Selectmen's (BOS) meeting. The BOS has set a target to try and cut \$400,000 from the budget for FY21, and they still have to use over \$250,000 from Free Cash to balance the budget. They would do no more for the School than Net School Spending, push hard on Blackstone Valley Tech (BVT), impact bargain with the collective bargaining units, reorganize, and revisit regionalization, and other savings. The BOS felt it would be better to make major cuts now rather than spread them out over multiple fiscal years.

The BOS also worked on prioritizing funds that could be relied upon to keep the Town's operational budget at an acceptable public service level and ranking those sources of revenue.

Mr. Wojcik believes that the BOS does not want to have a June Town Meeting because of revenue concerns. Mr. Wojcik is still working on getting guidance on who

can schedule a town meeting and how long it can be postponed. He has spoken with the Town Moderator regarding the technicalities of holding a Saturday, June 22, 2020 Town Meeting during the day.

The high school auditorium could hold a maximum of 117 people, observing social distancing rules. Using the cafeteria as overflow would allow for another 100 people, maximum. The governor's order limiting the size of an assembly does not apply to municipal town meeting.

Mr. Wojcik stated that BVT has not given any indication that they are prepared to take less of an appropriation from each of the member towns due to the financial situation.

Mr. Wojcik will have a preliminary budget ready for the May 19, 2020 joint FC/BOS meeting.

Ms. Gogolinski asked to know what items, other than budget items, were to be presented at Town Meeting. Ms. Lovett stated that only financial articles will be presented at Town Meeting.

## **2. RESERVE FUND TRANSFERS/VOUCHERS:**

There is \$20,000 in the Reserve Fund, not including any requests approved this evening.

Ms. Kuipers made a motion to transfer \$5,500 from the Reserve Fund to the Highway Construction & Maintenance Account. Mr. Landry seconded the motion. Vote: Aye-6.

Ms. Gogolinski made a motion to transfer \$5,800 from the Reserve Fund to the Tax Title Account. Ms. Mussulli seconded the motion. Vote: Aye-6.

## **3. OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS:**

**New Business:** Spring sports fees were recently refunded.

**Old Business:** There was no old business.

## **4. NEXT MEETING DATES:**

May 19, 2020—joint FC/BOS and June 2, 2020 at 7:00 PM

## **5. MINUTES: April 29, 2020**

Mr. Landry made a motion to approve the April 29, 2020 Finance Committee meeting minutes as amended. Ms. Mussulli seconded the motion. Vote: Aye-6.

## **6. ADJOURNMENT:**

Ms. Kuipers made a motion at 8:42 PM to adjourn the Finance Committee meeting. Mr. Landry seconded the motion. Vote: Aye-6.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Wright  
Recording Secretary