

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY, MARCH 26, 2019

A meeting of the Finance Committee (FC) was held on Tuesday, March 26, 2019 in the Municipal Center. Ms. Holmes called the meeting to order at 7:07 PM.

ATTENDANCE:

PRESENT: Pamela Holmes (Chair), Howard D'Amico (Vice Chair), Carol Gogolinski, Michael Hutnak, Heather Morin, Lynne Mussulli, Dick Vanden Berg

ABSENT:

NON-VOTING: Matt Wojcik (Town Administrator-left 7:25 PM), Jeanne Lovett (Finance Director)

1. DEPARTMENTAL PRESENTATIONS:

Fire Department-Kent Vinson Fire Chief: Chief Vinson joined the meeting. He explained that the Ambulance budget is mainly funded through Ambulance Receipts for Appropriation, which is where money that is collected from insurance companies is allocated.

Chief Vinson first presented the Fire Dept. budget, including Personnel & Salaries, Expenses, Course Reimbursement (new), Physicals Health & Wellness, Early Detection Physicals & Scans (new), Supplies, Fuel, Food, Uniforms & Clothing, Training & Education, and Dues & Membership.

Ms. Holmes asked for an inventory of the Fire Dept. trucks.

Chief Vinson explained the Lieutenant Paramedic pay rate change to gradually bring the rate up to the rate of a Police sergeant.

Chief Vinson next presented the Ambulance budget including Salaries and Repairs & Maintenance.

Board of Health (BOH)-Steven Donatelli (Chair): Emily LaFlamme, Bob Brazeau, Dick Skinner, Steve Donatelli, Kristin Harris, and Cory Howard joined the meeting. Mr. Donatelli outlined the BOH's responsibilities, which include the Transfer Station, Nurse, Title 5, water testing, landfill, Animal Inspector, and restaurant inspections. Ms. Lovett presented the BOH wages. The FC reviewed the BOH budget.

Ms. Harris explained the nurse's responsibilities. Mr. Donatelli explained how the cost of the Transfer Station stickers are determined. The goal is to break even with cost vs. expenses. A discussion was held regarding the Transfer Station, including recyclables.

Community Development-William Cundiff, Town Engineer: Mr. Cundiff joined the meeting and presented the operating budgets for: Conservation Commission, Planning Board, Zoning Board, Open Space, and the Economic Development Commission (EDC).

A discussion was held regarding the regional local assistance of the Central Mass. Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC). The EDC has asked the Board of Selectmen (BOS) for a budget increase from \$1,000 to \$5,000 because they are working on a number of larger projects. The Worcester Business Development Commission (WBDC) no longer has a contract with Douglas.

Mr. Cundiff next presented the budgets for Community Development and the Building Facilities & Construction Committee.

Mr. Cundiff next presented information regarding the Town Meeting warrant zoning articles. Ms. Lovett explained that they do not yet have the written articles.

Special Town Meeting (STM) Article 4: Supplemental Green Communities Funding: Mr. Cundiff explained that they are in the process of closing out the LED street light replacement project. Roughly 100 of the 400 streetlights involved need to be rewired. Mr. Cundiff is working on getting a firm number for that cost. He feels that the net sum for the project will be zero.

Annual Town Meeting (ATM): Articles 16 & 17 Mr. Cundiff feels that this article is nonfinancial in nature. This article refers to designating an area in Town as 43D – expedited permitting. Article 16 removes some parcels that were previously designated 43D.

ATM Article 18: This article is for a zoning bylaw change, and the Planning Board public hearing will be 4/9/19 at 7:00 PM. The Town Clerk is looking to add a section to the zoning bylaw that would allow the her to make edits to the bylaw regarding numbering and sequencing, not content.

ATM Article 19: This article looks to rezone an area from Residential to Industrial. The Planning Board public hearing will be 4/9/19 at 7:30 PM.

ATM Article 20: This article looks to rezone an area from Village Residential to Village Business. The proposed use for this area is for a wedding venue/function hall. The Planning Board public hearing will be 4/9/19 at 7:15 PM.

ATM Articles 24, 25, 26 & 27: Road acceptances for Deer Crossing-Woodland Road, Stonegate Estates-Meetinghouse Lane and a portion of Cobblestone Lane, Summerlyn Estates-Wildflower Drive, and a 50' strip between Darling Way and Brandywine Circle. Mr. Cundiff is working with all the developers to get these roads ready for acceptance.

2. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL 2020 REPORTS:

Mr. Wojcik presented the FC with the entire budget forecast, including a Projected Revenues Budget for FY2020, which has been updated since the last meeting. No Free Cash is being used in Operating Budget.

He next presented the Municipal Operating Budget Request from the Administration for every department. This document includes five years of history. The 2018 numbers are the actuals. He presented the budget by department and by activity code. He presented an explanation of the Personnel Budget and a forecasting spreadsheet. Mr. Wojcik recommended making investments in things that will reduce the long-term operating costs of the Town.

Regarding the Pay Equity impact, Mr. Wojcik recommended bringing the pay grade for the Director of the Senior Center equal to the pay grade of the Library Director. All of the department heads with significant assets under management and significant responsibilities for managing people are at management 5 step 10, or their salary relates them back to management 5 step 10, except for the Fire Chief. Mr. Wojcik proposed to the BOS to bring the Fire Chief to the same level as the Highway Dept. Superintendent, Finance Director and Town Engineer, which is management 5 step 10.

The final health insurance numbers were received Friday afternoon. Mr. Wojcik left the meeting at 7:25 PM.

3. RESERVE FUND TRANSFERS/ VOUCHERS/ SNOW & ICE REMOVAL:

There were no transfers.

4. MEETING MINUTES: October 9 & 23, 2018

Approval of the October 9 & 23, 2018 Finance Committee meeting minutes was deferred to the next meeting.

5. OLD/NEWBUSINESS:

New Business: Town Moderator Keith Menard joined the meeting. Mr. D'Amico does not feel that the FC and BOS are equally presented at Town Meeting. Mr. Menard explained that the BOS are on stage as a space-saving measure. The BOS proposes most of the motions. Once the BOS sets the warrant, the warrant is the province of town meeting.

Ms. Holmes stated that FC presents the base budget at Town Meeting and makes the motion. Ms. Lovett explained that if the BOS and Town Administrator are not in agreement on the budget, each budget option is listed in the flyer that is sent out to every household. Mr. Menard explained Town Meeting procedure and explained his jurisdiction over Town Meeting. A discussion was held.

Ms. Holmes stated that the FC has had trouble getting a quorum for their meetings, and it has been asked why they do not reduce the membership on the FC from 9 to 7. Mr. Menard stated that they can do that, and they could also lower their quorum. Ms. Holmes stated that Mr. Wojcik stated that they could not do that. A discussion was held.

The FC recessed at 7:36 PM to move the meeting to the larger meeting room.

Ms. Holmes asked Mr. D'Amico and Ms. Lovett for notes from the 3/12/19 FC meeting. Ms. Lovett will get her a copy of the Blackstone Valley Tech budget.

Old Business: The next meeting will be 4/2/19 at 6:30 PM, and the presentations will be Water/Sewer, Cable, Town Administrator's budget, and the draft warrant articles. the public budget hearing will be 4/10/19.

6. ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Hutnak made a motion at 9:23 PM to adjourn the Finance Committee meeting. Mr. Vanden Berg seconded the motion. Vote: Aye-6.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Wright
Recording Secretary