

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
MONDAY, APRIL 9, 2018

A meeting of the Finance Committee (FC) was held on Monday, April 9, 2018 in the Municipal Center. Mr. Hogan called the meeting to order at 7:09 PM.

ATTENDANCE:

PRESENT: Ryan Hogan (Chair), Eric Chamberland, Howard D'Amico (Vice Chair), Carol Gogolinski, Pamela Holmes, Michael Hutnak, Cynthia Shurick

ABSENT: Leigh Lahousse

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

1. CAPITAL COMMITTEE (CIC) – Kent Vinson

Fire Chief Kent Vinson joined the meeting as Chair of the Capital Committee. He began by describing the Committee and the Capital process, rating and criteria. This year, the departmental requests were narrowed down to 23, and the CIC decided to recommend funding the following 7 requests (Article 11): ambulance, defibrillators, high school security cameras, high school water booster system, primary school security key system, Fire station bay exhaust system, and Highway Dept. F550 dump truck with plow. The amount of money available is \$450,556, which is made up of Free Cash and Pay-as-You-Go capital from finished projects. Ms. Lovett identified the funding sources.

Discussions were held regarding the ambulance, including how many ambulances Douglas should have, leasing vs. buying, and outsourcing ambulance services. The Reserve Receipts for Appropriation account is not able to pay for this new ambulance. Both ambulances are beyond their useful life.

The items in Article 3, Highway Dept. brush chipper, asphalt hot box (Water/Sewer Dept. will contribute \$8,000), Municipal Center gym door replacement, Municipal Center gym windows, Police Dept. windows, another Highway Dept. F550 dump truck with plow, School tractor/loader, high school air conditioning compressor, Municipal Center air conditioning units, MS4 stormwater compliance design, middle school security card reader and portable radios, will only be paid for if the override passes. These items total \$553,781.

A discussion was held regarding what would happen if a motion is made on the floor of Town Meeting to have less than a \$1.5 million override. Ms. Lovett will get clarification of the effect on the tax rate.

2. GENERAL DISCUSSION

-Special (STM) and Annual (ATM) Town Meeting Warrant Articles

Non-budget articles: STM: Article 1-there are no prior year bills, Article 2-FY2018 Budget Transfers and Amendments – Ms. Lovett reviewed the items in this article. Mr. John Furno, Highway Superintendent, spoke about the Highway Construction Maintenance Account. To fund Article 2, the Health Insurance/Employee Benefits and Treasurer/Collector Expense Accounts will be decreased. Mr. Wojcik spoke about the reimbursable Green Communities grant for the LED street lighting replacement,

which must first be paid for from Free Cash. Mr. Wojcik will find out if street lights on private ways will also be changed.

Mr. Wojcik stated that the Board of Selectmen (BOS) will be reopening the warrant to add an article to repair North Street Bridge and upgrade the water connection from a 12" to a 16" main while the culvert is open. Ms. Lovett stated that they are looking at Water/Sewer to fund it.

ATM Articles: There were no discussions on the following articles: Article 4, Article 6, Article 7, Article 8, Article 9, Article 10 Article 11, Article 12, Article 14, Article 15, Article 17, Article 18, Article 20, and Article 21.

Article 5 – Blackstone Valley Tech (BVT) budget: The BOS recommended this amount, minus the additional assessment. The \$1,209,047 is BVT's full request. Ms. Holmes would like this article broken down into further detail and explanation, including a number for Transportation. Mr. Hogan recommended including an explanation that the amount in Article 5 is less than BVT requested because it does not include the \$70,000 additional assessment. Ms. Lovett clarified that there is no dollar amount in Article 2 for BVT that fluctuates based on what happens with Article 5.

Article 13-Police Union Contract: Mr. Wojcik summarized the agreement, which is a three-year contract with COLAs of 2.5%, 1.75% and 1.75% in each year, respectively. A Step 20 was added to the Police Union Contract. A contingent bonus was added if the department achieves accreditation.

Article 16-No Solicitation Bylaw: This bylaw was brought forth by a concerned citizen and drafted by the Police Chief. Politicians and nonprofit local groups are exempt.

Article 19-Temporary Moratorium of the Regulation and Taxation of Marijuana Act: Mr. Wojcik stated the change is that medicinal cultivation is out of the moratorium and everything else is in the moratorium, including everything that is adult use. There are now two Host Community Agreements with Medicinal Alternatives, one for medicinal and one for recreational.

Article 22 – Uses of Private Ways: Town Counsel has consistently been clear that the Town should not make repairs to private ways, however a private way may become impassable to a public safety vehicle. This bylaw protects the Town for a maximum of two runs per year with a grader or blade on private ways. The owners of the way would need to petition the BOS for more maintenance.

-Supplemental 2019 Budget with Override

Regarding what to do if the taxpayers vote to reduce the \$1.5 million override amount, Ms. Lovett will contact the Dept. of Revenue and Mr. Wojcik will contact Town Counsel.

-Fiscal 2019 Budget

Discussions were held on how to fund the library should the override fail. If the ambulance (\$240,000) was funded on an 8-year note for FY19, for FY20, over \$200,000 for the library would still need to be found. Ms. Lovett clarified that Article 2 does not allow borrowing, and the financial issue is larger than the library, it involves Douglas Public Schools as well. Mr. D'Amico argued for finding a solution to the large BVT assessment. Discussions included the decrease in Unrestricted General Government Aid, staffing issues, and informing the public.

Mr. Chamberland asked that if the Senior Center's budget could be raised by \$9,000 if the override passes.

Barbara Van Reed of 36 Monroe Street and the Library Trustees stated that a letter explaining the budget issues in Town and the override is being mailed to the public on Friday.

3. RESERVE FUND TRANSFERS

No Reserve Fund transfers were presented.

4. REVIEW OF EXPENDITURE VOUCHERS

No vouchers were presented.

5. MEETING MINUTES: March 26, 2018

Approval of the March 26, 2018 Finance Committee meeting minutes was deferred to the next meeting.

6. OLD/NEWBUSINESS

New Business: There was no new business discussed.

Old Business: There was no old business discussed.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. D'Amico made a motion at 9:38 PM to adjourn the Finance Committee meeting. Ms. Holmes seconded the motion. Vote: All-Aye.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Wright
Recording Secretary