

**FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY, APRIL 10, 2018**

A meeting of the Finance Committee (FC) was held on Tuesday, April 10, 2018 in the Municipal Center. Mr. Hogan called the meeting to order at 7:09 PM.

ATTENDANCE:

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

ABSENT: Eric Chamberland

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

1. 7:10 PM PUBLIC HEARING ON FISCAL 2019 BUDGET

Mr. Hutnak made a motion at 7:10 PM to open the public hearing. Ms. Holmes seconded the motion. Vote: Unanimous.

Mr. Hogan first reviewed the Revenues for FY19. Total Revenue is \$27,700,007. Total Expense is \$26,490,960. The difference between the two amounts is that the Blackstone Valley Tech (BVT) line is being voted separately from the budget. Ms. Lovett stated that the Ambulance Receipts Reserved for Appropriation had to be reduced from \$320,000 to \$270,000.

The base budget was reviewed next. During the Health and Human Services discussion, Dawn Fontaine of 25 Charles Street asked for clarification of the Council on Aging and the Veterans Agent. Ms. Lovett clarified. During the Culture and Recreation discussion, Ms. Shurick stated that she is not comfortable with the Library budget of \$2,701, meaning that the Library cannot be funded. Ms. Lovett clarified that the increase in Snow and Ice of \$20,000 is due to a contractual rate increase for insurance for the private plows. John Furno, Highway Superintendent, explained.

Under the Education discussion, BVT is being treated as a separate line item under Article 5. \$1,209,547 is being changed to \$500. The total Education Budget is \$14,227,133. The Personnel and Expenses line is \$220,000 less than the school received last year. Mr. D'Amico began a discussion about Athletic Fees. Courtney Keegan, Business & Operations Manager stated that any fees that are brought in are put into a Revolving Fund. The projection for FY19 is 308 high school athletes.

Tom Devlin of 417 Northeast Main Street asked for the high school population (DHS), and the answer is approximately 380 students.

Mr. D'Amico asked Interim Superintendent Kevin Maines if there is consideration next fall for eighth graders to visit DHS as many times as they visit BVT. Mr. Maines explained what is involved in the eighth grade Step-Up Day in the spring and how high school students visit the eighth grade. Mr. Maines will consider an eighth grade fall visit to DHS around the same time as the BVT visit is planned. Mr. Maines elaborated other ways in which Douglas entices students to stay in Douglas. Eighth graders shadowing DHS students was discussed.

Sherry Zetlan, Chair of the School Committee (SC), joined the meeting. Mr. D'Amico asked, if the school were granted additional funds, did she have the authority to commit those funds to a specific purpose. Ms. Zetlan replied that it would have to go before the entire SC. Mr. D'Amico would like to transfer \$50,000 from the FY19 FC

Reserve Fund to the Schools to reduce Athletic fees from \$225 to close to \$50 to keep students in Douglas. Ms. Lovett does not remember a year when the Reserve Fund has not been needed. Ms. Keegan and Ms. Zetlan supported keeping the money in the Reserve Fund and looking at the Town as a whole. A discussion was held.

Ms. Holmes made a motion at 7:58 PM to close the public hearing. Mr. Hutnak seconded the motion. Vote: Aye-6, No-1.

Mr. Hutnak made a motion to recommend the FY19 Board of Selectmen's Base Budget as presented. Ms. Lahousse seconded the motion. Vote: Aye-7.

2. GENERAL DISCUSSION AND FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMENDATIONS

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

STM: Mr. Hogan read each article aloud. Article 2-Ms. Holmes made a motion that the Finance Committee recommend Article 2 as written. Mr. Hutnak seconded the motion. Vote: Aye-7.

Article 3-Ms. Holmes made a motion that the Finance Committee recommend Article 3 as written. Mr. Hutnak seconded the motion. Vote: Aye-7.

Article 4-Ms. Gogolinski made a motion that the Finance Committee recommend Article 4 as written. Ms. Shurick seconded the motion. Vote: Aye-7.

Article 5-Water/Sewer Commissioner Bob Sullivan joined the meeting to speak about the water line replacement to be done simultaneously with repair work at the North Street Bridge. Ms. Gogolinski made a motion that the Finance Committee recommend Article 5 as written. Ms. Lahousse seconded the motion. Vote: Aye-7.

ATM: Article 1-Mr. D'Amico made a motion that the Finance Committee recommend Article 1 as written. Mr. Hutnak seconded the motion. Vote: Aye-7.

Article 2-Mr. D'Amico made a motion that the Finance Committee recommend Article 2 as written. Mr. Hutnak seconded the motion. Vote: Aye-7.

Article 4-Mr. D'Amico made a motion that the Finance Committee recommend Article 4 as written. Mr. Hutnak seconded the motion. Vote: Aye-7.

Article 3-Override Article: Mr. Wojcik stated that the only thing ATM can do is to appropriate the funds made available by a successful Proposition 2.5 vote.

Kevin Morse, Chair of the BOS joined the meeting to speak about how the base budget and override decisions were made. The amount of \$1.5 million for the override was derived to stabilize the Town for five years and not to come back to the Town to ask for another override in a year or two.

Mr. Wojcik explained that, if ATM votes to spend only \$800,000 of the \$1.5 million, the levy is set to raise the \$800,000. There is an appropriation deadline of September 15, 2018.

Mr. D'Amico made a motion to recommend that the Town vote in favor of the Proposition 2.5 override. Ms. Holmes seconded the motion. Vote: Aye-6, No-1.

Ms. Holmes made a motion that the Finance Committee recommend the motion for Article 3 as amended. Ms. Lahousse seconded the motion. Vote: Aye-6, No-1.

Article 5-BVT Budget: The flyer will state that the FC and BOS recommend decreasing the amount requested by BVT by the additional BVT assessment of \$70,518.

Mr. Wojcik spoke about working with other schools within the BVT regional district to work together to put pressure on BVT to consider its communities ability to pay while developing its budget.

Mr. D'Amico made a motion that the Finance Committee recommend the motion for Article 5 as written. Mr. Hutnak seconded the motion. Vote: Aye-7.

Article 6-Mr. D'Amico made a motion that the Finance Committee recommend Article 6 as written. Ms. Holmes seconded the motion. Vote: Aye-7.

Article 7-Mr. Hutnak made a motion that the Finance Committee recommend Article 7 as written. Mr. D'Amico seconded the motion. Vote: Aye-7.

Article 8-Mr. D'Amico made a motion that the Finance Committee recommend Article 8 as written. Mr. Hutnak seconded the motion. Vote: Aye-7.

Article 9-Mr. Hutnak made a motion that the Finance Committee recommend Article 9 as written. Ms. Lahousse seconded the motion. Vote: Aye-7.

Article 10-It was decided to wait for Town Counsel's input and wait until the ATM to make their recommendation. Mr. D'Amico made a motion that the Finance Committee pass on making a recommendation on Article 10 until the night of the Annual Town Meeting. Mr. Hutnak seconded the motion. Vote: Aye-7.

Article 11-These Capital projects will be approved, with or without an override. Mr. D'Amico asked if the items can be amended at ATM and the answer was yes. Mr. D'Amico made a motion that the Finance Committee recommend Article 11 as written. Ms. Lahousse seconded the motion. Vote: Aye-7.

Article 12-Mr. D'Amico made a motion that the Finance Committee recommend Article 12 as written. Ms. Holmes seconded the motion. Vote: Aye-7.

Articles 13 & 14- Ms. Gogolinski made a motion that the Finance Committee pass on making a recommendation on Articles 13 & 14 until the night of the Annual Town Meeting, if the Police Union and Fire Union contracts have been finalized by that time. Ms. Shurick seconded the motion. Vote: Aye-7.

Article 15-Ms. Gogolinski made a motion that the Finance Committee recommend Article 15 as written. Ms. Shurick seconded the motion. Vote: Aye-7.

Article 16-Ms. Holmes made a motion that the Finance Committee recommend the motion for Article 16 as amended. Mr. Hutnak seconded the motion. Vote: Aye-7.

Article 17-William Cundiff, Town Engineer joined the meeting. The existing Accessory Apartment bylaw contains language that requires all applications to include a lease agreement to be reviewed by Town Counsel. The amendment does not make this necessary, but can be required as a condition by the Planning Board as most accessory apartments are for relatives. The Planning Board voted to recommend this change. Mr. D'Amico made a motion that the Finance Committee recommend Article 17 as written. Ms. Gogolinski seconded the motion. Vote: Aye-7.

Article 18-Mr. Cundiff stated that this amendment stipulates a \$300 fine per violation per day, which is discretionary to the Zoning Enforcement Officer. A specific dollar amount needs to be stated in the bylaw in order to issue a violation. The Planning Board voted to recommend this change. Mr. D'Amico made a motion that the Finance Committee recommend Article 18 as written. Ms. Holmes seconded the motion. Vote: Aye-4, No-3.

Article 19-Mr. Wojcik stated that the BOS needs to work with the Planning Board on zoning regulations. The moratorium is currently in effect. The only thing that is

changing is the underlying text. A discussion was held. The Planning Board is having a public hearing on April 24, 2018 at 7:00 PM. Mr. D'Amico made a motion that the Finance Committee recommend Article 19 as written. Ms. Lahousse seconded the motion. Vote: Aye-7.

Article 20-Mr. Cundiff stated that Stonewall Court had gone before Town Meeting before and failed. Since then, the developer has dissolved. The Planning Board will be voting on this tonight. Ms. Gogolinski made a motion that the Finance Committee recommend Article 20 as written. Ms. Holmes seconded the motion. Vote: Aye-6, Mr. Hutnak abstained.

Article 21-Mr. Cundiff stated that this road has a minor issue regarding drainage easements on private property that were not properly reserved. He is working with Town Counsel. Planning Board will be voting on this tonight. Ms. Gogolinski made a motion that the Finance Committee recommend Article 21 as written. Mr. Hutnak seconded the motion. Vote: Aye-6, Mr. Hogan abstained.

Article 22-Ms. Gogolinski asked if the Highway Superintendent had any discretion regarding cutting brush on private ways. Mr. Furno does not want to take on that responsibility. Ms. Holmes made a motion that the Finance Committee recommend Article 22 as written. Mr. Hutnak seconded the motion. Vote: Aye-7.

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 June meeting.

6. OLD/NEWBUSINESS

New Business: The next FC meetings will be the night of Town Meeting, May 7, 2018 at the high school at 6:30 PM and June 12, 2018 at 7:00 PM.

Old Business: There was no old business discussed.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. D'Amico made a motion at 9:40 PM to adjourn the Finance Committee meeting. Ms. Holmes seconded the motion. Vote: All-Aye.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Wright
Recording Secretary