

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2018

A meeting of the Finance Committee (FC) was held on Tuesday, February 13, 2018 in the Municipal Center. Mr. Hogan called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

ATTENDANCE:

PRESENT: Ryan Hogan (Chair), Eric Chamberland, Howard D'Amico (Vice Chair-arrived 7:40 PM), Carol Gogolinski, Pamela Holmes, Cynthia Shurick

ABSENT: Michael Hutnak (Excused), Leigh Lahousse (Excused)

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

1. DEPARTMENT BUDGET REVIEWS

-Board of Health (BOH)

David McCallum, Steve Donatelli, and Kristin Harris joined the meeting. Mr. Donatelli spoke about the responsibilities of the BOH, which include the Transfer Station, septic systems-permitting and inspecting, wells, restaurant inspections, the Town nurse, and the Animal Inspector. Mr. Donatelli reviewed the budget. A three-year contract for landfill maintenance has just started. Wages include a 1% COLA. Duties of the Animal Inspector were described.

A discussion was held regarding the Transfer Station. Douglas needs to pay the truck drivers prevailing wage. Ms. Lovett reviewed expenses. The largest expense is for BP Trucking for \$200,000.

-Building Dept.

Building Commissioner Larry Lench joined the meeting. He described his duties, which include plan review, zoning enforcement, and writing up the decisions for the ZBA. He works 16 hours/week for the Town. He reviewed a memo he submitted. He was hired 7/2016 at 19 hours/week. He voluntarily reduced his hours to 16 hours/week. He is asking to receive a step increase as he has not received one since he was hired.

Jane Alger's hours have been increased from 30 hours/week to 33.5 hours/week. Mr. Lench also recommended a step for Ms. Alger. Ms. Lovett stated that Ms. Alger is considering retiring next fiscal year. Her replacement would start at a lower step and there would be an overlap for training purposes.

Mr. Lench feels the stipends should stay the same. He does not use the GIS service.

Mr. Wojcik explained that the Town has been paying for licenses for Electrical and Plumbing inspectors. Mr. Wojcik does not support that policy and it will be discontinued.

2. RESERVE FUND TRANSFERS

Town Engineer William Cundiff joined the meeting. He explained the reasoning for the \$264.00 transfer. The Planning Board has been maintaining a level-funded budget. Every year, the Central Mass. Regional Planning Commission membership increases by about 15%. The Planning Board had to advertise for the annual town meeting. They will start exploring advertising in local papers in lieu of the *Worcester Telegram & Gazette* to save advertising costs.

Mr. D'Amico made a motion to transfer \$264.00 from the Reserve Fund to the Planning Board Expense account. Ms. Holmes seconded the motion. Vote: All-Aye.

3. REVENUES FOR THE FISCIAL 2019 BUDGET

Ms. Lovett distributed the budget books. The spreadsheet has not changed from last year, but it includes a 2.5% increase in New Growth. The change in Revenues from FY18 to FY19 is \$412,207. Mr. Wojcik stated that it has been confirmed that the Health Insurance premiums will increase by 5.9% (lost ratio 75%). The Property and Casualty quote is not in yet, but it may be around \$319,000 (132% loss ratio). Pension Fund will be the second largest account increase at 9.95% per year. The School budget is experiencing volatility from Transportation and Special Education.

Ms. Lovett presented from information on School Choice In and School Choice Out from the Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education. Mr. D'Amico asked if Douglas could promote their school system to other districts. Mr. Wojcik suggested developing a competitive business strategy.

Mr. D'Amico asked for Advanced Placement numbers from Douglas and Blackstone Valley Tech (BVT). BVT Superintendent Dr. Michael Fitzpatrick may have those numbers already. Mr. Hogan asked the FC to prepare a list of topics they would like to discuss with the School Dept. and BVT for the next meeting.

4. PAYROLL VOUCHER

There was one voucher for \$42.27.

5. APPROVE MEETING MINUTES:

Mr. D'Amico made a motion to approve the January 23, 2018 Finance Committee meeting minutes as presented. Mr. Chamberland seconded the motion. Vote: Aye-5, Ms. Gogolinski abstained.

Mr. Chamberland made a motion to approve the January 30, 2018 Finance Committee meeting minutes as presented. Ms. Shurick seconded the motion. Vote: Unanimous.

6. OLD/NEWBUSINESS

New Business: Mr. D'Amico and Ms. Lahousse will not be present at the 2/27/18 meeting.

Old Business: Mr. Chamberland asked Mr. Wojcik if he has looked into renovating the Old Grammar School for use as a Police Station. Mr. Wojcik replied that a new feasibility study would need to be done. He will ask the Board of Selectmen to put it in their budget.

Regarding getting a legal opinion on the BVT contract, Mr. Wojcik replied that Town Counsel is reviewing it.

Regarding the Green Community grant, the application needs to be submitted by 2/23/18. The Town is considering two methods for buying street lights and retrofitting with LEDs. The grant would cover either method. National Grid has provided the Town with a purchase price of \$1.00 for all the street lights in town. An audit needs to be completed for a cost of \$8,000-\$9,000. After the audit is completed, a design consultant will review the needs for the intersections based on traffic counts.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

The presenters for the next meeting are the Town Administrator and Finance Dept. March 13 will be the School Dept. and BVT. March 27 will be the Police and Fire Departments and the Capital Committee. The public hearing may be March 20, 2018.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. D'Amico made a motion at 8:56 PM to adjourn the Finance Committee meeting. Mr. Holmes seconded the motion. Vote: All-Aye.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Wright
Recording Secretary