

Event Details

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Finance Committee

Tuesday, March 21, 2023

Date: March 21, 2023

Time: 7:00 PM

Location: Community Meeting Room

Address: 29 Depot Street
Douglas, MA 01516

Douglas Finance Committee Agenda - Revised

Town Hall

Depot Street

March 21, 2023

1. Call to order
2. Budget presentation/review
 - a. ~~Douglas Public School: Paul Vieira and Courtney Keegan~~ Douglas Social Center
 - b. ~~Douglas Social Center~~ Douglas Public School: Paul Viera and Courtney Keegan
 - c. Community Development
 - d. Library
 - e. Recreation
 - f. Compensation Table: Matt Wojcik—as needed

3. Snow and Ice update—as needed
4. Approve minutes of prior meetings as needed
 - a. Feb. 14, 2023
 - b. Feb. 28, 2023
5. Upcoming dates:
 - a. March 28
 - i. Capital
 - ii. Board of Health
 - iii. Water/Sewer
 - iv. BVT
 - v. Review special articles
 - b. April 4?
 - c. April 11: public review of the Warrant articles, possible votes
 - d. Town Meeting: Monday, May 1
6. Reserve Fund transfers as needed
7. Open session for topics not reasonably anticipated 48 hours in advance
8. Adjournment

Douglas
MASSACHUSETTS

CONTACT

The Town of Douglas

Municipal Center

29 Depot Street

Douglas, MA 01516

[Contact Us](#)

FINANCE COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, MARCH 21, 2023
TOWN HALL

Attendance: Chair Dick Vandenberg, Vice Chair Sandy Kuipers, Ryan Hogan, Lynne Mussulli, Carol Gogolinski, Howard D'Amico, Heather Morin

Absent: Mike Hutnak

Chair Dick Vandenberg called the meeting order at 7:04 PM.

1. Budget presentation /review
 - a. (7:04 PM) (0:20 TS) Douglas Social Center
Patrice is presenting the Social Center budget to the committee and stated that the only thing that has changed in her budget from last year is the addition of the van. The van is expected to come around November or December so what they figured into the budget was 6 months' worth of fuel for \$3300.00, she does not have the compensation table for the drivers yet. Last year's budget for expenses was \$7,462 and this year will be \$10,837. The grant amount has increased from the previous year, she is doing a lot of applications for fuel assistance and SNAP.
 - b. (7:18 PM) (14:30 TS) Douglas Public Schools: Paul Viera and Cortney Keegan
The committee asked about the ground's maintenance and custodians, and what the facilities manager's responsibilities are. Carol Gogolinski wants to make sure that the buildings are properly maintained so that they can last the time they should. Mr. Viera is trying to add 4 new positions to the budget, one being for maintenance, another for a full-time adjustment counselor at the middle school, add a second teacher for the stars and stripes program, and finally adding a STEM teacher. The stated aid has pretty much stayed the same from year to year with the minimum increase. They stated that the town of Douglas is not eligible for many grants. Mr. Hogan asked if they were net positive or net negative for the choice in and out. They don't have the school choice out number now but the school choice in is 97 students. Mr. Hogan asked what the percentage wage increase is at, they stated that they did not calculate the increase from FY23 to FY24 percentage increase for wages. They still have some adjustments cuts to make to their budget before the town meeting. One of the concerns of the school department is stability and being able to keep the teachers that they have and not having to let any go. There is a concern about being able to obtain and retain quality staff members for the school. The board and school department discussed the school choice and how to retain more students, so they leave.
 - c. (7:58 PM) (54:20 TS) Community Development – Matt Benoit
Mr. Benoit has one change in the budget, last year he discussed the purchase of new GIS software for the town in which there was a discount provided by ESRI which made the cost \$5770.00. They waited till the fiscal year rolled over and went to purchase it for that rate and were informed that a state contract had expired June 30th and that the discount was no longer available. They waited for the contracts to be renegotiated and continue to wait still, the difference in price is \$1230.00. So Mr. Benoit has shifted the base rate to be \$7000.00 in the budget for this year for the GIS software to be purchased, so if the contract is not renegotiated then they will still be able to purchase the software. The only other changes to the budgets is for the Zoning Board (\$4k) and Planning Board (\$5k) in the advertising line item, to create a flat advertising fee. There are warrant articles for the Community

Development which included removing the 53E ½ account because it is not used or needed anymore and the other one is a zoning bylaw that is a state mandate from the Department of Conservation and Recreation and a federal mandate from FEMA that the town is required to make updates to the Quinebaug Watershed bylaw. There is also a street acceptance of two cul-de-sacs that were left off Stonegate Development.

d. (8:06 PM) (1:02:00 TS) Library

Justin from the library presented his budget and stated that if it passes, they are trying to reclass one of their library assistants to an archivist because Rebecca Lavallee has been employed at the library since 2016 as a library assistant but during that time has been doing archivist work. He is hoping that in FY25 their budget will be at the place where they can hire a new library assistant. He has also added a dues and memberships line item because he would like to be able to offer his staff Massachusetts Library Association memberships so they can go to conferences and so they can engage in some professional development. On February 2nd the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners announced the town's grant round for library building construction, so Justin will be submitting a letter of intent on April 28th, for the application that is due May 31, 2024. If they receive the grant the first thing they need to do by June 16, 2024, would be to have the certified votes and local approvals for appropriation for the planning phase. The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners will fund half the cost for the planning and design up to \$150k dollars. He has put a request in today with the capital committee for that to be considered for 2024/2025. Then in 2026 they would have to go for a vote for approval of funds. The library commission may decide to sit this grant cycle out and wait till 2028 due to the competitiveness in the grant. Everything is rising at the library, circulation, foot traffic, this year they added 270 new patrons to have a total of 3279 patrons of the library. What concerns Justin is the rising price of eBooks and audio books, the states are trying to bring this situation under control and cap the price of eBooks in the commonwealth.

e. (8:18 PM) (1:14:00 TS) Recreation – Ryan Hogan

Mr. Hogan would like to first thank the community for their support, two Sundays ago they hosted the league championship for basketball in the municipal center gym. Mr. Hogan is looking for an increase in the recreation budget. Back in the late 90's early 2000's the recreation budget was \$30k and has reduced over the years due to the economy and it is now \$3k. The facilities are showing some wear and tear from a lack of funding to keep up with maintenance, the basketball bleachers are in need of repair along with fans in the gym, the soccer goals at the Veterans Field are in need of new nets and they need to rebuild their sprinkler system. The Soldiers Field club house needs some windows and a new roof, the dugout at Martin Road needs to be re-shingled, the wall at Soldiers field is rotting and needs new plywood, the adult social center is looking to have lines painted on the gym floor for pickle ball, and finally the Martin Road playground is showing a lot of wear and tear. For this year he would like to propose raising the budget to \$5k this year, and then maybe the following year when the town is getting more revenue from the warehouse project go up to \$10k. Mr. Hogan will be looking for a recommendation from the Finance committee on this proposal and then talk with Mr. Wojcik about adding it to the budget.

(8:25 PM) (1:21:15 TS) Motion to endorse the proposal by the recreation committee for the budget increase of \$2k to bring it to \$5k total made by Lynne Mussulli, 2nd by Heather Morin. Howard D'Amico and Ryan Hogan will abstain and all other members in favor.

f. (8:29 PM) (1:25:08 TS) Compensation Table: Matt Wojcik

Mr. Wojcik is not present

2. (8:29 PM) (1:25:15 TS) Snow and Ice update as needed

APPROVED
JUNE 27, 2023

Nobody present.

3. (8:29 PM) (1:25:20 TS) Approve Minutes: February 14, 2023 & February 28, 2023
(8:30 PM) (1:26:40 TS) Motion to approve the February 14, 2023 meeting minutes made by Howard D'Amico, 2nd by Sandy Kuipers. All members in favor.
(8:31 PM) (1:27:11 TS) Motion to approve the February 28, 2023, meeting minutes made by Heather Morin, 2nd by Howard D'Amico. Sandy Kuipers and Lynne Mussulli abstained all other members in favor.
4. (8:32 PM) (1:28:15 TS) Upcoming Meetings:
 - a. March 28
 - Capital
 - Board of Health
 - Water/Sewer
 - BVT
 - Review Special Articles
 - b. April 4 – Committee may not need to meet
 - c. April 11: Public review of the Warrant Articles – Possible Votes
 - d. Town Meeting: Monday, May 1
5. (8:34 PM) (1:30:15 TS) Reserve Fund Transfers as needed: NONE

(8:34 PM) (1:30:20 TS) Motion to adjourn the meeting made by Sandy Kuipers, 2nd by Carol Gogolinski.
All members in favor.

Respectfully submitted,


Stephenie Gosselin