

FINANCE COMMITTEE

MINUTES

March 28, 2019

Regular meeting of the Finance Committee was held on Thursday, March 28, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. in Room #112, Town Hall, with the following members present: M. Trudell, J. Burke, R. Ardine, A. Flowers, K. Greulich, A. Hamilton, M. Ahigian, Lisa Van der linden, D. Shea, M. Sullivan, B. Bain. Members absent were: R. Nottebart, S. Lawson, and D. Crowley. Also in attendance was Finance Director M. Thompson, Town Accountant J. Cuneo, Fire Chief T. Bailey, Building Maintenance Superintendent D. Anderson, Police Chief J. Carmichael, Deputy Police Chief C. Machenzie, Deputy Fire Chief P. Barry, Assistant Town Administrator P. Shield, DPW Director R. Mattson, Council on Aging Director K. McManama.

7:00 p.m. Quorum being present, the meeting was called to order by the Chairman M. Trudell.

Special Education Circuit Breaker Reimbursement/Chapter 70 Funding

School Committee Member N. Gallivan presented to the Committee a letter dated March 25, 2019 to be sent to Senator Feeney, Representatives Kafka, Rogers, McMurtry and Dooley looking for support to prioritize Special Education Circuit Breaker and Chapter 70 Foundation Budget funds. She is requesting Finance Committee Members to sign, if they wish. School Committee and Board of Selectmen have been asked to also sign it.

Reserve Fund Transfer – Town Clerk Expenses

Speaking to this request was Town Moderator D. Bruce and Town Clerk L. Gaffey. Amount requested is \$4,971 for funding for electronic voting for the May 6, 2019 Spring Annual Town Meeting. They feel that this will reduce the number of nights for Town Meeting. Standing votes and roll call voting take a lot of time. Voting this way would take approximately 90 seconds. Electronic voting has proved efficient in other communities, approximately 30 towns already use it. . This funding is for a one time trial. No contract has been signed for it ,but presents an opportunity to see how it works. The use of electronic voting has to be approved by Town Meeting Members and there is the chance that Town Meeting will turn it down. A letter explaining the electronic voting will be sent out in the Town Meeting packets to the RTM's.. Use of electronic voting should cut down the number of nights for Town Meeting and might encourage more people to run for RTM. The units would be turned in at the end of the evening.

MOTION MADE by A. Flowers, Seconded by K. Greulich for a Reserve Fund Transfer request in the amount of \$4,971 for Town Clerk Expenses, Motion Approved (10-1-0 (D. Shea opposed) (11 voting)

May 6, 2019 Spring Annual Town Meeting

Articles 7 Water Enterprise Fund and Article 8 Sewer Enterprise Fund.

Finance Committee had previously voted on these two articles but the debt numbers for sewer and water was not included in the original vote.

MOTION MADE by R. Ardine, Seconded by J. Burke for Reconsideration of Articles 7, Water Enterprise Fund and Article 8 Sewer Enterprise Fund, Motion Approved, (11-0-0) (11 voting) Unanimous

Article 7 – Water Enterprise Fund

MOTION MADE by R. Ardine, Seconded by J. Burke for Favorable Action on Article 7 in the amount of \$4,949,747, Motion Approved, (11-0-0) (11 voting) Unanimous

Article 8 – Sewer Enterprise Fund

MOTION MADE by R. Ardine, Seconded by J. Burke for Favorable Action on Article 8 in the amount of \$5,850,226, Motion Approved (11-0-0) (11 voting) Unanimous

Article 9 – Snow and Ice Deficit

No funds being requested.

MOTION MADE by A. Flowers, Seconded by J. Burke for No Action on Article 9, Motion Approved (11-0-0) (11 voting) Unanimous

Article 10 – Prior Year's Bills

There are no known outstanding bills at this time. Town Administrator is recommending No Action.

MOTION MADE by Ardine, Seconded by J. Burke for No Action on Article 10, Motion Approved (11-0-0) (11 voting) Unanimous

Article 11 – Stabilization Fund

Town Administrator is recommending \$50,000 for the Stabilization Fund to be funded from Overlay.

MOTION MADE by K. Greulich, Seconded by J. Burke for Favorable Action on Article 11 in the amount of \$50,000 to be funded from Overlay, Motion Approved (11-0-0) (11 voting) Unanimous

Article 12 – OPEB Trust Fund

Town Administrator is not recommending any supplemental funds, at this time, for the OPEB Trust Fund

MOTION MADE by M. Trudell, Seconded by J. Burke for No Action on Article 12, Motion Approved (11-0-0) (11 voting) Unanimous

Article 5 – FY19 Budget Adjustment

The Town Administrator is only recommending the Police Department Budget be adjusted in the amount of \$85,000 for the remainder of FY19 in order to continue the current level of service. This shortfall is due to the need for a second fulltime School Resource Officer with a service dog, which takes an officer off the street. This is a state mandated program but there is no funding provided. Department needs to have a full staff due to dealing with mental health issues, bullying, etc. The budget for overtime was not enough to cover the expenses of training the dispatchers for the new stations, There has also been numerous changes in personnel, leaving and being injured. He is recommending the \$85,000 be funded from the Overlay.

MOTION MADE by M. Ahigian, Seconded by J. Burke for Favorable Action on Article 5 in the amount of \$85,000 to be funded from Overlay, Motion Approved (11-0-0) (11 voting) Unanimous

Article 6 – FY20 Budgets

Major changes from previous requested budgets are the Council on Aging: Increasing the hours for the Director, and adding a new Assistant Director position, eliminating the part time clerk position, and additional funds for training and development, office supplies and a decrease in electricity. Increase funding in Walpole Public Schools, Tri-County, Walpole Fire Department (new Lieutenant position) Building Maintenance, Elections, Treasurer/Collector, Reserve Fund, Veterans Benefits OPEB Contribution and decrease in Health Insurance. These changes have been incorporated in the Town Administrator's budget recommendations.

Consensus of the Committee was to vote the different categories individually with a final vote to be taken on the total budget.

General Government - \$5,450,108

MOTION MADE by J. Burke, Seconded by M. Trudell for Favorable Action on the General Government Budgets in the amount of \$5,450,108, Motion Approved (11-0-0) (11 voting) Unanimous

Public Safety- \$10,825,681

MOTION MADE by R. Ardine, Seconded by B. Bain for Favorable Action on the Public Safety Budgets in the amount of \$10,825,681, Motion Approved (11-0-0) (11 voting) Unanimous

Public Education - \$47,013,835

MOTION MADE by R. Ardine, Seconded by M. Ahigian for Favorable Action on the Public Education Budgets in the amount of \$47,013,835, Motion Approved (10-0-1) (D. Shea abstained) (11 voting)

D. Shea spoke to wanting to know the amount that the Walpole School Department had voted for their budget

Public Works - \$5,418,857

MOTION MADE by M. Sullivan, Seconded by B. Bain for Favorable Action on the Public Works Budgets in the amount of \$5,418,857, Motion Approved (11-0-0) (11 voting) Unanimous

Health & Human Services - \$813,052

MOTION MADE by A. Flowers, Seconded by K. Greulich for Favorable Action on the Health & Human Services Budgets in the amount of \$813,052, Motion Approved (11-0-0) (11 voting) Unanimous

Cultural & Recreation - \$1,786,352

Library Budget –Committee members spoke to needing to have a discussion with the Library on providing more services to the community, especially with children programs. Friends of the Library fund some of the programs but the Community needs to speak out on what they want.

MOTION MADE by A. Flowers, Seconded by J. Burke for Favorable Action on the Cultural & Recreation Budgets in the amount of \$1,786,352, Motion Approved (11-0-0) (11 voting) Unanimous

Debt & Interest - \$4,110,288

MOTION MADE by A. Flowers, Seconded by K. Greulich for Favorable Action on the Debt & Interest Budgets in the amount of \$4,110,288, Motion Passed (11-0-0) (11 voting) Unanimous

Assessment's & Fringe Benefits - \$18,317,235

MOTION MADE by M. Sullivan, Seconded by B. Bain for Favorable Action on the Assessment's and Fringe Benefits Budget in the amount of \$18,317,235, Motion Approved (11-0-0) (11 voting) Unanimous

Total Overall Operating Budget - \$93,735,408

MOTION MADE by M. Trudell, Seconded by J. Burke for Favorable Action on the total Operating Budget in the amount of \$93,735,408, Motion Approved (11-0-0) (11 voting) Unanimous

Schedule Updates

April 29, 2019 - Article 13 – Rte. 1-A Fields – Finance Committee will meet on April 29 to discuss this article. Town Administrator will provide information to the RTM members in the packets that are distributed to them prior to Town Meeting with a lot of the answers provided on the fields.

May 2, 2019 – Finance Committee Public Hearing on the Budget and Articles to be held at the South Street Center, 60 South Street at 7:30 p.m. Regular meeting to commence at 7:00 p.m.

Planning Board Public Hearing on the zoning articles (Articles 20 and 21) will be held on May 2, 2019. Finance Committee votes on these articles is presently Recommendation at Town Meeting. Committee needs to wait for the public hearing prior to voting on these articles. Committee will meet prior to Town Meeting on May 6, 2019 to take these votes.

Retiree Health Insurance Contribution Letter

Letter dated March 28, 2019 from the Finance Committee to the Board of Selectmen regarding retiree health insurance requesting that the retiree contribution rate for all retirees under the age of 65 starting on July 1, 2020 be phased in until all retirees are at the 50-50 contribution rate specified in the Town of Walpole By-laws. Committee needs to vote authorizing the Chairman to sign the letter.

Committee discussed that the Town should be following the Town's By-laws regarding this Going forward, this presents an opportunity for savings of \$281,634 for FY2020 to continue to fund beyond the 50/50 split. This letter is non-binding; it is the Board of Selectmen's decision.

MOTION MADE by A. Flowers, Seconded by L. Van der Linden to authorize the Chairman to sign the letter to the Board of Selectmen regarding Retiree Health Insurance Contributions with the removal of the **5% per year** stricken from the letter starting July 1, 2020 in the letter, Motion Approved (10-0-1) (K. Greulich abstained) (11 voting)

Adjourn:

MOTION MADE by K. Greulich, Seconded by D. Shea to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 p.m., Motion Passed (11-0-0) (11 voting) Unanimous

Respectfully submitted,

Clare P. Abril
Clerk