

## **FINANCE COMMITTEE**

### **Minutes**

**March 30, 2015**

Regular meeting of the Finance Committee was held on Monday, March 30, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in the Finance Committee Room, #112, Town Hall with the following members present: J. Burke, J. Denneen, M. Iwanowicz, A. Walsh, J. Ragosta, A. Healy, D. Crowley, C. Lane, P. Hinton, M. Trudell, D. Bruce, S. Lawson, T. Williams. Members absent were J. Lowre and J. McDermott. Also in attendance was Town Administrator J. Johnson, Finance Director M. Thompson, Town Accountant J. Cuneo and Fire Chief T. Bailey.

7:00 p.m. – Quorum being present, the meeting was called to order by the Chairman D. Bruce.

### **Appointments**

#### **J. Padell/Town Meeting Rules Committee**

J. Padell, Chairman of the Rules Committee, presented to the Committee the proposed changes to the Rules Applying to the Conduct of Representative Town Meetings in Walpole, Massachusetts. He explained that the Committee has been meeting over the winter, and proposing changes outlined in red in the document. They received input from the Town Moderator J. Rockwood. Recommendations are fairly straightforward, nothing is controversial with the exception of short changes and new rules on the use of microphones by the RTM's. There are no longer runners at Town Meeting. Proposed is for two microphones at the front of each aisle, members will have to get in line at the microphone and being recognized by the moderator. This will make the comments more orderly, less frustrating for the members. If physically unable to get in line, they will be provided a microphone. In addition changes were made to a standing vote. They did not look into putting the Rules on the Town's website, but felt it was a good idea.

These changes will be presented under Article 1, Committee Reports of the May 4, 2015 Spring Town Meeting. Finance Committee does not need to vote on these rule changes, it is being presented to the Finance Committee for feedback. Not all of the Finance Committee Members are RTM's, this is more a RTM issue.

#### **May 4, 2015 Spring Annual Town Meeting**

### **Budgets/Articles**

**Article 29 - Cable License Proceeds.**

Town Administrator spoke to the purpose of Article 29. Town accepts MGL Chapter 44, Section 53F3/4 establishing separate revenue account "PEG Access and Cable Related Fund" for the deposit of cable television license fees in a manner recognized by the Department of Revenue. All revenues are fees and are required to be reported in the General Fund. Town is allowed to maintain a receipt reserved account for appropriation, however, the law requires that Town Meeting authorize the formation of this fund. Present balance in the PEG Access Fund is \$826,862 and the Town has to adopt this section of the law in order to utilize the cable funds collected for cable related uses. If the law is not accepted the Town may be forced to transfer all cable funds in the General Fund at the close of the fiscal year.

Town Administrators spoke to anticipating that the funds will go towards the purchase of equipment and the repurposing of a small section of Walpole High School, where the current cable television classroom is. WCTV will be housed at the High School with a separate and secure entrance. This article has no money it, but it will be a requirement to go before Town Meeting to request an appropriation and present a budget to the FinCom, in an article sponsored by the Board of Selectmen each year. There will be an article presented at the Fall Town Meeting to spend these funds. Mr. Johnson spoke to still having a lot of questions regarding the bidding, procurement money, and town resources, etc.

**MOTION MADE** by D. Crowley, Seconded by T. Williams for Favorable Action on Article 29, Motion Passed (12-0-1) (S. Lawson abstained) (13 voting)

**Budgets**

Town Administrator presented an updated FY2015 Budget summary with his adjustments/recommendations.

**Administration**

Administration – Adjustment in Administration and professional salaries due to the Town Administrator's salary being set per contract. Professional adjustment is \$10,000 in order to provide extra training of personnel when coverage is needed in a department and a reduction in the salary for the Assistant Town Administrator to \$118,000) previously \$132,000

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by P. Hinton for Favorable Action on the Town Administrator's Budget in the amount of \$474,110, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

**Town Accountant**

Salaries reduced due to the Assistant Town Accountant retiring, and replacement coming in at a lower salary. Expenses – increase in training and education for the Town Accountant working towards certification, and providing for additional training on Munis and Capital Budget.

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by J. Burke for Favorable Action on the Town Accountant's Budget in the amount of \$192,616, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

### **Assessor's**

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by M. Trudell for Reconsideration, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous This budget had been previously voted in the amount of \$301,415 on March 5, 2015.

Town Administrator is recommending restoration of funds in Data Processing, Equipment Maintenance Contract, and Professional Services/Personal Property. Requested budget amount is \$303,500.

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by S. Lawson for Favorable Action on the Assessor's Budget in the amount of \$303,500, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

### **Reconsideration Votes**

On a request from the Chairman, Town Administrator will check with legal counsel on whether the Committee needs to vote for Reconsideration on articles that have been previously voted Recommendation at Town Meeting.

### **Community & Economic Development**

New director has been hired at Step 9, which is midpoint of grade. She is doing a great job and is a member of American Planning Association and is a certified planner.

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by D. Crowley for Favorable Action on the Community & Economic Development Office in the amount of \$918,889, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting)

### **Building Maintenance**

Budget previously voted on March 5, 2015 in the amount of \$2,093,966, Town Administrator is recommending an increase in expenses in the amount of \$9,000 for equipment and repairs.

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by S. Lawson for Reconsideration of the Building Maintenance Budget, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by S. Lawson for Favorable Action on the Building Maintenance Budget in the amount of \$2,102,966, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

### **Town Report/Auditors**

Town Administrator recommending an additional \$5,000 for auditors due to cost of an anticipated OPEB audit actuarial next year and additional audits on Council on Aging and Recreation. This is recommended due to a lot of changes in personnel in Recreation. Budget previously voted in the amount of \$48,500 on March 9, 2015.

**MOTION MADE** by D. Crowley, Seconded by S. Lawson for Reconsideration, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by S. Lawson for Favorable Action on the Town Report/Auditors Budget in the amount of \$53,500, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

### **Police**

Town Administrator previously recommended the amount of \$4,694,794, he is revising his recommendation in the amount of \$10,000 in Salaries for overtime for dispatchers, sergeants and patrolmen.

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by S. Lawson for Favorable Action on the Police Budget in the amount of \$4,704,794, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

### **Fire**

This budget was previously voted on February 12, 2015 in the amount of \$3,509,594. Town Administrator is now recommending an additional \$10,000 for Firefighter's Overtime.

**MOTION MADE** by D. Crowley, Seconded by J. Denneen for Reconsideration of the Fire Department Budget, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by S. Lawson for Favorable Action on the Fire Department Budget in the amount of \$3,519,594, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

### **Schools**

Town Administrator spoke to increasing his original recommendation by an additional \$200,000, which gets them closer to what they need. He is awaiting the House 1 figures in April. and will be reevaluating the numbers with the Superintendent. If needed he will recommend additional money next Spring for textbooks. The School Department's Reserve Fund has been mostly used due to special needs. School Department is anticipating increase in retirements and new employees will come in at a lower salary. There is a School Choice meeting on April 9. Town Administrator and School Superintendent are in agreement, at this time, of a budget number of \$39,940,000.

Committee discussed that there is not any fat in this budget, if the money doesn't come in there will be the need to cut teachers, have to think outside of the box. There is not sufficient money to educate all the children, special ed mandates are very costly. Special ed is under the jurisdiction of School Committee. Committee needs to vote a number that they can work with. Town Administrator spoke to being confident with this number.

Discussion ensued on what would happen if special ed was pulled out of the School Budget, it is not an education issue, but is part of the School Department's domain, it might be better if it was broken out. It is a Town issue and not a School Department. Everyone has a problem with the budget, budget deficits are not unique to the schools, most departments need more money, but Town has to be careful not to soft change other departments. Unemployment and insurance costs are covered in the Town's budget. Town Administrator will look into including the snow and ice removal for schools in their budget.

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by S. Lawson for Favorable Action on the School Budget in the amount of \$39,940,000, Motion Passed (12-1-0) (M. Iwanowicz opposed) (13 voting)

### **Tri-County**

Town Administrator spoke to recently attending a meeting at Tri-County and speaking to the Town's representatives. The Town's assessment is what it is, there are insufficient votes for a challenge on the budget. FY2015 Budget was \$851,156, Town's assessment for FY2016 is \$960,504, a 15% increase. Tri County has not been setting aside any monies for OPEB, and they have four additional students at an approximate cost of \$14,000 each. Committee raised the question on whether there could be a cap on the number of students attending, this is not allowed. Enrollment is down this year. Tri-County does not charge fees for bussing, sports, parking, etc. They do charge for safety boots and glasses.

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by D. Crowley for Favorable Action on the Tri-County Budget in the amount of \$960,504, Motion Passed (10-2-1) (M. Trudell, S. Lawson opposed, J. Burke abstained (13 voting)

### **Snow & Ice Budget**

Budget previously voted in the amount of \$810,000 on February 19,2015. This budget is a best guess estimate and is depending on the amount of snow falling. Town Administrator is recommending an increase of \$5,000.

**MOTION MADE** by D. Crowley, Seconded by S. Lawson for Reconsiderations of the Snow and Ice Budget, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by P. Hinton for Favorable Action on the Snow and Ice Budget in the amount of \$815,000, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

### **Norfolk County Agricultural School**

\$34,000 being requested. Town of Walpole presently has 13 students attending this school. Eight students have applied for admission for the 2015/2016 school year. School has approximately 2,000 students.

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by J. Burke for Favorable Action on the Norfolk County Agricultural School Budget in the amount of \$34,000, Motion Passed, (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

### **Veterans Services**

Budget previously voted in the amount of \$115,725 on March 2, 2015. He is now requesting additional monies for Veteran's Benefits, as there are more and more veterans' coming forward seeking benefits.

**MOTION MADE** by D. Crowley, Seconded by J. Denneen for Reconsideration of the Veteran's Budget, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by P. Hinton for Favorable Action on the Veteran's Budget in the amount of \$117,725, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

### **Recreation**

Budget previously voted on March 12, 2015 in the amount of \$218,411. Town Administrator is recommending an adjustment in salaries for the Recreation Director to

the maximum step, allowing the Town to hire a great candidate and for additional program staff. They are presently working on policies for this department.

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by S. Lawson for Reconsideration of the Recreation Budget, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by D. Crowley for Favorable Action on the Recreation Budget in the amount of \$229,694, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

### **Retirement of Debt**

Town Administrator spoke to anticipating that there would be an additional \$24,500 left over and recommended it be put in Project Financing in this budget.

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by S. Lawson for Favorable Action on the Debt Budget in the amount of \$3,562,683, Motion Passed, (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

### **Weights & Measures**

**MOTION MADE** by D. Crowley, Seconded by S. Lawson for Favorable Action on the Weights & Measures Budget in the amount of \$5,000, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

### **DPW Landfill Maintenance**

No money being requested

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by D. Crowley for zero funding on DPW Landfill Maintenance, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

### **Article 6 – FY2016 Budgets**

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by D. Crowley for Favorable Action on Article 6 in the amount of \$80,157,850, Motion Passed (12-1-0) (M. Iwanowicz opposed) (13 voting)

### **Finance Committee Public Hearing**

Scheduled for Thursday, April 30, 2015 at 7:30 p.m.

### **Meetings**

Next Finance Committee meeting tentatively scheduled for April 13, 2015, pending receipt of State numbers.

**Legislative Letter**

S. Lawson spoke to the letter she had drafted on funded and unfunded liabilities to be sent to the State Legislative Delegation. She is seeking comments from the Finance Committee, School Committee and Board of Selectmen and would like them to sign as individuals.

**Adjourn:**

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by M. Trudell to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 p.m., Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

Respectfully submitted,

Clare P. Abril  
Clerk