

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Minutes

March 31, 2016

Regular meeting of the Finance Committee was held on Thursday, March 31, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. in the Finance Committee Room, Town Hall, with the following members present: D. Bruce, J. Denneen, J. Burke, M. Trudell, J. McDermott, R. Mariani, J. Vaillancourt, T. Bowen, J. Stasiukevicius, A. Healy, S. Lawson, K. Guyette, D. Crowley. Members absent were P. Hinton and J. Lowre. Also in attendance was Town Administrator J. Johnson, Finance Director M. Thompson, Town Accountant J. Cuneo, Fire Chief T. Bailey and Recreation Director P. Shield.

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

Appointments – Town Clerk, D. Sicard

Town Clerk was before the Finance Committee to discuss the upgrading and replacing of existing election equipment (Voting Tabulators)

She explained that her intent was to go with the present equipment at this time but sees the need for replacement. Walpole's equipment is over 20 years old, which is over its life expectancy. If the equipment is not replaced now, she will need to come back at a future date for this request. At the previous election, there were three equipment failures of which one occurred during the test and the company made the repairs. During election day there were two failures and at the end of the night some precincts had problems. Equipment failures will continue due to the age of the equipment. There are no records available on the number of equipment failures, There were no costs incurred due to the failures, just the cost of staff staying additional hours. Town presently pays \$200 for a maintenance contract.

She would like to have the new equipment for at least one election prior to the Presidential election or the State Primary on September 8. State Law requires that the Board of Selectmen have to approve the equipment 120 days prior to the election and notification to the Secretary of State within 5 days of such vote. May 10, 2016 would be the deadline for the Selectmen to vote prior to the State Primary. If this was to go forward, election workers would be trained during the summer of 2016 and September 8 would be the first use of equipment. Presidential Election is November 8.

Funding could be obtained from the Reserve Fund in order to be able to purchase in time for the September Primary or put off to the Fall to be included in the Capital Budget. Committee needs to decide how essential is the need and the importance of doing it now.

Town Administrator spoke to bidding out the request in order to obtain information and discuss at Town Meeting or go before the Finance Committee at a meeting prior to Town Meeting for a Reserve Fund Transfer. May 10 is the last date to obtain funding. Funds have to be in place prior to signing the contract.

Town Administrator/ Budget Adjustments March 30, 2016

Tri-County

Tri-County Assessment came in lower than anticipated at \$719,521. Original estimate was for \$1,056,554. Enrollment has decreased by 18 students, saving the Town \$337,033. Difference is made up in a drop in enrollment based on per student costs.

Reserve Fund

FinCom had previously voted the amount of \$175,000 on this budget, Town Administrator is recommending an increase of \$57,462. This is pending receipt of Grant application for additional fire fighters, plus an additional \$5,000.

Town Administrator has increased this amount from what was previously voted in the amount of \$175,000 to \$232,462.

Building Maintenance

Administrator has increased the line item for heating at Boyden School from \$30,000 to \$35,000. Original request had been for \$40,000, Town Administrator had previously recommended \$30,000

Fire Department

Administrator had previously recommended \$27,000 for EMS supplies, original department request had been \$35,000, he is recommending an increase of \$3,000 to \$30,000.

Walpole Public Schools

Administrator's original recommendation of \$41,148,312, and is recommending an increase of \$280,000 to \$41,428,312. This is still less than the School Department had request by \$100,000, but they are aware of the Town Administrator's recommended amount.

Norfolk Agricultural School

Administrator had originally requested \$44,000, this has been increased by \$6,000 to \$50,000 based on increased student projections. (11 students have applied for next year).

DPW Administration

Increase in DPW Salaries by \$12,500 for Professional Stormwater Management. Originally requested \$17,500, this has been increased to \$30,000.

Veterans Services

Administrator had originally requested \$67,000 for Veterans Benefits, he is requesting an additional \$10,000 for this line item. He is anticipating an increase in requests for Veterans Benefits. It is expected that the Veterans Agent will be seeking funds from the Reserve Fund for this year. (FY2016) It is a guess as to the amount of veterans applying for benefits. Town is reimbursed 75% for the benefits, but it goes into next year's Free Cash.

Parks Division

Original requested \$6150 for school overtime, requesting an additional \$2,524 to \$8,674.

Retirement of Debt

Requesting an additional \$100,000 to projected project financing (Fire Station)

Debt

It is anticipated that the School Department will be requesting funds in the future for studies of the new high schools and consolidating the middle schools, estimated to be about one million to do the study. It is anticipating cost to be about one million for the study.

Vote

Reserve Fund

MOTION MADE by M. Trudell, Seconded by S. Lawson for Reconsideration of the Reserve Fund, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

MOTION MADE by M. Trudell, Seconded by S. Lawson for Favorable Action on the Reserve Fund in the amount of \$232,462, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

Building Maintenance

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

MOTION MADE by D. Crowley, Seconded by J. Denneen for Favorable Action on the Building Maintenance Budget in the amount of \$2,099,199, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

Fire Department

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

MOTION MADE by D. Crowley, Seconded by S. Lawson for Favorable Action on the Fire Department Budget in the amount of \$3,623,702, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

DPW Administration

MOTION MADE by S. Lawson, Seconded by D. Crowley for Reconsideration of the DPW Administration Budget, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

MOTION MADE by S. Lawson, Seconded by D. Crowley for Favorable Action on the DLPW Administration Budget in the amount of \$324,326, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

Veterans Services

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

MOTION MADE by J. Denneen, Seconded by S. Lawson for Favorable Action on the Veterans Budget in the amount of \$131,869, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

Parks Department

MOTION MADE by P. Stasiukevicius, Seconded by S. Lawson for Reconsideration of the Parks Department Budget, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

MOTION MADE by P. Stasiukevicius, Seconded by S. Lawson for Favorable Action on the Parks Budget in the amount of \$602,631, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

Schools

MOTION MADE by A. Healy, Seconded by J. Denneen for Favorable Action on the Walpole Public School Budget in the amount of \$41,428,314, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

MOTION MADE by A. Healy, Seconded by S. Lawson for Favorable Action on the Tri-County Budget in the amount of \$719,521, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

MOTION MADE by A. Healy, Seconded by S. Lawson for Favorable Action on the Norfolk County Agricultural H.S. in the amount of \$50,000, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

Emergency Management

MOTION MADE by J. McDermott, Seconded by S. Lawson for Favorable Action on the Emergency Management Budget in the amount of \$33,960, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

Retirement of Debt

Fire station projected to be borrowed for 25 years, police is 20 years. Administrator is recommending increasing the projected project financing by \$100,000 and setting money aside to do the design, and come back in the Fall to borrow for authorization for the entire Fire Station project. Projected project financing is for \$1,266,371, this is for various projects. He is recommending putting aside any money left, money be put aside from prison mitigation, Free Cash into the Debt Budget, thus eliminating the need for an Override. Town Administrator to provide the Committee with a detailed list of projects. He anticipates \$815,000 be closed out this year.

MOTION MADE by D. Crowley, Seconded by J. Denneen for Favorable Action on the Retirement of Debt Budget in the amount of \$3,835,284, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

Employee Retirement Assessment

\$300,000 for OPEB is included in this budget. Reduction in line items for unemployment claims, and County assessments for retirement of town employees.

MOTION MADE by J. Denneen, Seconded by S. Lawson for Favorable Acton on Employee Retirement Assessment Budget in the amount of \$4,674,064, Motion Passed (12-0-1) (J. Burke abstained) (13 voting)

Unemployment Claims

Reduction in unemployment claims from \$200,000 to \$150,000.

MOTION MADE by J. Denneen, Seconded by S. Lawson for Favorable Action on the Unemployment Claims Budget in the amount of \$150,000, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

Fringe Benefits

3% increase in health insurance (8.9%) only 3% due to \$255,000 being set aside last year by MIIA, which represents a one time payment.

MOTION MADE by J. Denneen, Seconded by S. Lawson for Favorable Action on Employee Fringe Benefits in the amount of \$9,924,441, Motion Passed, (12-0-1) (J. Burke abstained) (13 voting)

Casualty Insurance

15% increase in Casualty Insurance due to Worker's Comp losses being high, anything over 10% is considered bad, most of the worker's comp claims are in the DPW and cafeteria workers. Administration has formed a Safety Committee with the hope of being pro-active and bringing costs down. There is no deductible on this policy. Committee question bringing back an employee early that is receiving benefit but this wouldn't work due to being unable to do physical labor.

MOTION MADE by J. Denneen, Seconded by S. Lawson for Favorable Action on Casualty Insurance in the amount of \$1,030,100, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

FY2017 Budgets

MOTION MADE by J. Denneen, Seconded by S. Lawson for Favorable Action on the FY2017 Budgets in the amount of \$83,157,147, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

Article 16 – Revolving Funds

Town Administrator spoke to the Recreation Revolving Fund spending limit in the Town Meeting Warrant had been listed as \$700,000 which is above the 1% limit of the tax levy. He has discussed with the Selectmen and Town Counsel and spending limit could be changed to \$600,000 and warrant would not need to be republished.

MOTION MADE by D. Crowley, Seconded by J. Denneen for Favorable Action on Article 16 (Recreation changed to \$600,000) , Motion Passed, (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

Revenue Summary

MOTION MADE by J. McDermott, Seconded by S. Lawson to approved the FY2016 Projected Revenues in the amount of \$84,772,770 dated 3/30/2016 Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

Upcoming FinCom Meetings

Next scheduled meeting is Thursday, April 28,2016 at 7:00 p.m. Finance Committee Public Hearing on the FY2017 Budgets is scheduled for that date at 7:30 p.m.

Minutes

MOTION MADE by J. Denneen, Seconded by J. Burke to approve the March 14, 2016 Minutes, Motion Passed (12-0-1) (S. Lawson abstained) (13 voting)

Adjourn:

MOTION MADE by J. Denneen, Seconded by S. Lawson to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m. Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

Respectfully submitted,

Clare P. Abril
Clerk