

## **FINANCE COMMITTEE**

### **Minutes**

**March 9, 2015**

Regular meeting of the Finance Committee was held on Monday, March 9, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in the Finance Committee Room, Town Hall with the following members present: J. McDermott, J. Burke, M. Iwanowicz, A. Ragosta, M. Trudell, C. Lane, P. Hinton, J. Lowre, A Healy, 7:15 p.m. S. Lawson, 7:25 p.m. D. Crowley, 8:25 p.m. D. Bruce. Absent were: A. Walsh, T. Williams, J. Denneen, Also in attendance was J. Johnson, Town Administrator, M. Thompson, Finance Director, J. Cuneo, Town Accountant and T. Bailey, Fire Chief.

7:05 p.m. – Quorum being present, the meeting was called to order by Acting Chairman J. McDermott.

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

#### **Budgets**

**Treasurer/Collector** –Finance Director M. Thompson reviewed her budget.

Budget is pretty much the same as previous years. She is attempting to make changes on the process and streamlining the process, She doesn't like the changes to the online payments, they have difficult with postings, going with paperless payroll. Professional Services encumbrances everything including tax title work.

**MOTION MADE** by J. Burke, Seconded by P. Hinton for Favorable Action on the Treasurer/Collector's Budget in the amount of \$471,192, Motion Passed (8-0-1) (A. Healy abstained) (9 voting)

#### **Town Report/Annual Audit**

Town Administrator spoke to this budget. \$3500 is for the costs associated with the production of the Town's annual report. \$45,000 is for the Town Auditor's (Roselli & Clark). They do an excellent job, have been doing it for a number of years. The actuarial review is done every two years. He does try to keep costs down on the annual report by cutting back on the number of copies, this saves money. Employee's salaries is of major interest in the Town Report

7:15 p.m. – Committee Member Susan Lawson

**MOTION MADE** by J. Burke, Seconded by P. Hinton for Favorable Action on the Town Report/Annual Audit Budget in the amount of \$48,500, Motion Passed (9-0-1) (S. Lawson abstained) (10 voting)

**Trust Fund Commissioners**

Town Administrator spoke to this budget being level funded. \$175 is to cover postage and handouts. Finance Directors has no issues with the Trust Fund Commissioners.

**MOTION MADE** by J. Burke, Seconded in the amount of P. Hinton for Favorable Action on the Trust Fund Commissioners' Budget in the amount of \$175, Motion Passed (10-0-0) (10 voting) Unanimous

7:25 p.m. – Committee Member D. Crowley

**Town Moderator**

No funds being requested.

**MOTION MADE** by J. Burke, Seconded by P. Hinton for Favorable Action on zero funding for Town Moderator Budget, Motion Passed (11-0-0) (11 voting) Unanimous

**Charter Review Committee**

Selectmen have met with Town Counsel regarding a Charter Review Committee, Review hasn't been done in 12 years, they are looking into it and might be brought forward in the Fall.

**MOTION MADE** by J. Burke, Seconded by P. Hinton for Favorable Action on zero funding for Charter Review Committee, Motion Passed (11-0-0) (11 voting)

**By-Law Review Committee**

No funds being requested

**MOTION MADE** by J. Burke, Seconded by P. Hinton for Favorable Action on zero funding for By-Law Review Committee, Motion Passed (11-0-0) (11 voting) Unanimous

**Permanent Building**

No funds being requested.

**MOTION MADE** by J. Burke, Seconded by P. Hinton for Favorable Action on zero funding for Permanent Building Committee, Motion Passed (11-0-0) (11 voting) Unanimous

**Selectmen** – J. Johnson spoke to this budget

Budget is basically level funded with the exception of cost of living adjustments.

**MOTION MADE** by J. Burke, Seconded by P. Hinton for Favorable Action on the Board of Selectmen Budget in the amount of \$80,162, Motion Passed (11-0-0) (11 voting) Unanimous

### **Administration**

Town Administrator requests holding this budget at this time, he is in ongoing contract negotiations with the Board of Selectmen on his salary. He is also requesting additional funds for assistance in Purchasing, Accounting and Personnel Department if an employee was to leave. This will allow him to bring in someone to help out and learn a position.

### **Finance Committee**

Salaries – The number of hours fluctuates due to the work load.

Under Expenses - \$275 requested for Dues, Membership for the Mass. Municipal Association/Association of Town Finance Committees. This allows for the committee members to attend meetings and provides for an opportunity to learn the duties and responsibilities of the Finance Committee, provides training and opportunity to meet members from other communities. Committee Members did not feel the need to join this organization.

**MOTION MADE** by D. Crowley, Seconded by S. Lawson to reduce the Finance Committee Expenses in the amount of \$275 (Dues and Membership), Motion Passed (10-0-1) (M. Trudell abstained) (11 voting)

**MOTION MADE** by J. Burke, Seconded by D. Crowley for Favorable Action on the Finance Committee Budget in the amount of \$21,130, Motion Passed (10-0-1) (M. Trudell abstained) (11 voting)

The issue of the Finance Committee Booklet for Town Meeting being published and mailed to all residences of the Town will be looked at. This is required by the Town Charter and will be addressed when a Charter Committee is appointed. Board of Selectmen might do this in the Fall.

### **Reserve Fund**

Town Administrator is requesting \$175,000, this is to provide for consistency with prior years. Original request was for \$190,000.

**MOTION MADE** by S. Lawson, Seconded by M. Trudell for Favorable Action on the Reserve Fund Budget in the amount of \$175,000, Motion Passed (11-0-0) (11 voting) Unanimous

### **Town Accountant**

Town Administrator spoke to change in personnel in this department. Assistant Town Accountant's salary came in lower than previous accountant. Expenses have been increased for the Town Accountant for training, travel and certification as a Treasurer/Collector and allows for the Assistant Town Accountant to obtain her certification. This certification takes about three years and provides for a better understanding of the position and how it relates to the Treasurer. It is very valuable to have these certifications. Held for final figures.

### **Municipal Office Expenses**

This budget includes the costs of the maintenance contracts for the copiers, rental for the postage meter and the municipal phone system. Municipal has approximately 200 phones and the phone system is on the state bid list.

**MOTION MADE** by J. Burke, Seconded by P. Hinton for Favorable Action on the Municipal Office Expenses in the amount of \$58,450, Motion Passed (11-0-0) (11 voting) Unanimous

### **Legal Services**

Budget has been increased to \$175,000 from FY2015 of \$162,000. Town Administrator is recommending this increase due to a lot of pending litigation (South Street, Barberry Homes, Islam Cemetery, Cumberland Farms). If money isn't used, it will be turned back. \$2,000 for small claims is consistent with last year's request, claims are forwarded to the insurance company. He doesn't anticipate he will need to spend money for contract negotiations.

**MOTION MADE** by J. Burke, Seconded by P. Hinton for Favorable Action on the Legal Services Budget in the amount of \$175,000, Motion Passed (11-0-0) (11 voting) Unanimous

### **Ponds Management**

\$1500 requested, \$500 is for printing and copying and \$1,000 for miscellaneous landscaping equipment. They receive about \$6,000 that goes into the revolving account.

Committee members spend their own time and use their own funds, and provide a lot of volunteer man hours. This money is budgeted in case they need it. To date they haven't spent any money out of this year's budget. .

Finance Committee members suggested reducing this budget, and if they run into an issue, they can come back to the committee for money. Money that isn't used goes into Free Cash. Committee members suggested that the to Ponds Management come in and have a conversation on their needs. If the budget is reduced they should be informed.  
Held

### **Recreation**

C.Riley, Council on Aging Director has been assisting in this department with the absence of a director and was unable to attend this meeting. It will be rescheduled.

### **Historical**

Budget is level funded in the amount of \$615, of which \$300 is for part time clerk who does the minutes. Expenses cover dues and membership, mailings.

**MOTION MADE** by J. Burke, Seconded by P. Hinton for Favorable Action on the Historical Commission in the amount of \$615, Motion Passed (11-0-0) (11 voting) Unanimous

### **Trails Committee**

\$650 being requested for printing of maps, office supplies, and supplies for Eagle Scout Projects and for other miscellaneous projects throughout the town.

**MOTION MADE** by J. Burke, Seconded by P. Hinton for Favorable Action on the Trails Budget in the amount of \$650, Motion Passed (11-0-0) (11 voting) Unanimous

### **Town Celebrations**

\$1500 being requested for the town's participation in conjunction with the Chamber of Commerce for Christmas and bandstand lighting. Recreation Department has paid for some of the bands at the bandstands.

**MOTION MADE** by J. Burke, Seconded by P. Hinton for Favorable Action on the Town Celebrations' Budget in the amount of \$1500, Motion Passed (11-0-0) (11 voting) Unanimous

**Town Administrator Updates**

**Tri-County** Town Administrator spoke to the assessment reflecting a 5% increase (\$64,000 approximately). He did not anticipate this increase. There has been an increase in students from 64 to 68 students at \$14,125/student. Town has no control over the assessment. He has contacted Walpole's School Committee Members T. Hoegler and J.

Held for further information. Tri-County does not charge for bus or athletic fees. They are also including capital costs in this year's budget. They do provide for special needs students. School Superintendent questioned why vocational training costs are so much higher than regular students. S. Lawson would like to see a coalition to review vocational school costs.

**Adjourn:**

**MOTION MADE** by M. Trudell, Seconded by P. Hinton to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m. (11-0-0) (11voting)

Respectfully submitted,

Clare P. Abril  
Clerk