

## **FINANCE COMMITTEE**

### **Minutes**

**February 5, 2015**

Regular meeting of the Finance Committee was held on Thursday, February 5, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in Room #112, Town Hall with the following members present: D. Bruce, J. Denneen, A. Walsh, J. Burke, A. Healy, M. Iwanowicz, S. Lawson, M. Trudell, J. McDermott, T. Williams and A. Ragosta. Finance Committee Members absent were: D. Crowley, P. Hinton, C. Lane, and J. Lowre Also in attendance was Interim Town Administrator J. Johnson, Finance Director M. Thompson, and Town Accountant J. Cuneo.

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

#### **Town Administrator**

Congratulations were extended to Jim Johnson who has been appointed Town Administrator.

#### **Town Administrator Update**

Mr. Johnson spoke to being happy with the transition from West Suburban to MIIA on July 1, 2015. He is confident with money set aside for insurance will cover the anticipated \$100,000 increase from this year to next but there is a decrease in dental for FY2016.

**COLA Recommendations** – Personnel Board is recommending 2.5% COLA for non-union personnel. This is consistent with collective bargaining. Anticipated cost of \$105,000. Salary base needs to be increased, Town has been having problems filling key personnel. Health insurance contributions have been increased.

**Capital Budget** – Committee is reviewing what is on the table and working through the process. Biggest project is the purchase of a sidewalk plow (\$150,000) and reviewing the options. They have to keep repairing the present equipment. This is badly needed, they have looked into renting but none available

**School Department Capital Requests** – \$138,000 being requested by School Superintendent. Originally \$245,000 had previously been requested for phone

replacements. They are now requesting only \$85,000 allowing for the phones to be phased in. School Department has not met with the Capital Budget yet on other requests.

Committee discussed the reserves that the School Department has set aside. This is usually used up with the special needs budget and is not available for other items. School Department has complete authority of the School Budget, and only work within the bottom line. Committee had questions with the amount of vehicles operated by the School Department (approximately 17). J. Johnson to obtain from the School Superintendent a spread sheet on the number of School Department vehicles. Committee had questions that they don't always go through Capital.

**Downtown Improvements** is the largest request, traffic signals, sidewalks, road improvements, lights, and paving. Committee questioned whether the installation of sidewalks in neighborhoods could reduce the usage of one school bus.

### **Debt and Interest Budget**

Proposing a scaled back version of the facilities plan to fund a new police station, (\$9,000,000), Senior Center (\$410,000) a new fire station (\$900,000) This will be presented in three separate articles. Police station is the top priority of the Selectmen.

Account balances – Stabilization \$2,004,124, OPEB \$1,372,650. Reserve Fund \$307,500. Town Administrator is concerned with the following departments: Fire Department, Snow and Ice, and School Department for special needs deficit and money owed to P.J. Hayes for the recent demolition of the structure at Swan Pond caused by a fire. Town will attempt to recoup this money for this but dwelling was in foreclosure and there was no insurance coverage and funding the position of Assistant Town Accountant caused by the overlap of the new hire over the retirement of previous clerk.

### **Finance Committee Schedule**

Chairman spoke to proposing that meetings end at 9:30 p.m. and balance the schedule accordingly. Meetings to start at 7:00 p.m. and see if the earlier starting times is an issue. Consensus was to try the 7:00 p.m. starting time and see if there are any quorum issues. Members present had no issues with the starting and ending times, but consideration should be given for members that signed on for a 7:30 p.m. starting time, and now to change it. This will be evaluated going forward.

**Committee Appointments** – Committee has representatives on Capital Budget Committee and Master Plan Implementation Committee. C. Lane has served on Capital Budget for a number of years and does not wish to continue. J. Burke expressed an interest on serving and M. Trudell would also be interested but he would not be available on a regular basis.

**MOTION MADE** by D. Bruce, Seconded by J. Denneen to nominate J. Burke as the Finance Committee delegate to the Capital Budget Committee, Motion Passed (11-0-0) (11 voting). J. Johnson will check with the Town Clerk on whether or not there is an expiration date for this appointment. Committee will appoint on a year to year basis pending clarification of procedure.

Master Plan Implementation Committee, D. Crowley has been the Committee's appointment but has expressed a desire to not continue but would if necessary. This appointment will be left open at this time. No committee members expressed an interest on being appointed on this committee.

### **New Personnel**

J. Johnson spoke to recent new hires: Building Commissioner, Economic Development Officer, (This position is being relocated to the Planning, ZBA and Conservation Office), Deputy Health Agent and Recreation Director.

**Police Contract** – This is near settling, J. Johnson will provide the Committee with a breakdown of the contract.

### **Tours**

Chairman spoke to letting him know of a specific interest in touring a facility. Police and Fire were discussed for February 21. Secretary to coordinate with the chiefs. Other buildings of interest were DPW, Schools (Old Post Road has serious issues). Sewer and Water facilities won't be necessary if they come to our meeting. Committee discussed the creation of the Advisory Committee for the Sharon Country Day (Jarvis Farm) Committee to be comprised of 7 members (four appointed by the Sewer and Water and three from Selectmen). There has been a charge created for this committee. There is \$30,000 set aside in Water Budget for this facility.

### **Snow & Ice Deficit Authorization**

DPW Director R. O'Brien has requested permission to overspend the Snow and Ice Budget as authorized by MGL, Section 31D for FY2015 in a memo dated February 3, 2015. Selectmen have approved this request on February 4, 2015.

**MOTION MADE** by S. Lawson, Seconded by J. Denneen to grant permission for the DPW Director R. O'Brien to overspend the Snow and Ice Budget for FY2015, Motion Passed (11-0-0) (11 voting) Unanimous

### **Town Accountant's Budget Reports for FY2014**

Finance Committee  
Minutes  
February 5, 2015  
Page 4

Copies of the Town Accountant's Budget Reports for FY2014 were provided to the Committee.

**Minutes**

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by S. Lawson to approve the Minutes of the December 8, 2014 meeting, Motion Passed (11-0-0) (11 voting) Unanimous

**Adjourn:**

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by J. McDermott to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m., Motion Passed (11-0-0) (11 voting) Unanimous

Respectfully submitted,

Clare P. Abril  
Clerk