

Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: 2/13/21

Finance Committee Attending: Bob Daley, Judith Dalesandro, Jason Fogue, Jonathan Glionna, Andy Myers, Jessica Sakaske

Public Attending: Kathe Warden, Mary Ann Pease, Terry Donovan, Tammy Weidhaas, Carl Baldasaro

All committee members present and meeting called to order at 2pm. The quality of the recording-to-text service was discussed and both Andy and Bob agreed the quality was not as high as hoped. Bob also opined the cost effectiveness of the service was not in our best interests. All members were in agreement that going forward the Zoom recordings would continue to occur and would be archived for future reference. Committee members, on a rotating basis, will transcribe and present to remaining members for approval.

Mary Ann Pease presented the budget for the library. Extraordinary efforts made by our librarian to continue to offer services including some time open to the public. Library also received several grants for unique offerings during the pandemic. State mandates a 2.5% increase in overall budget (3-year rolling average) to continue to receive state aid. Increase proposed to be made to the expenses line item. Mary Ann gave thanks for the numerous townspeople that have volunteered to do the community reading which has been very popular.

Terry Donovan presented her budget requests. First is inspector of animals, in which it was requested to be level-funded. For animal control officer, a presentation was made to bring the salary in line with neighboring towns. Terry noted that the state requires a vehicle be made available as personal vehicles are not supposed to be used for animal transport. Also typically ACO provided with a laptop and a cell phone to conduct their responsibilities. Terry requested access to the dog licensing software. Town clerk will look into any costs/restrictions associated with that added access.

Andy referenced a discussion with our fire chief during which it was indicated the fire department budget should be level-funded. We were requested to continue adding to the fire truck replacement fund (this would be year 3) as well as money to be allocated for a new boiler at the Bromley station. We discussed the potential impacts of a new fire truck not fitting in our current stations, and perhaps utilizing grant money to cover the cost of the boiler replacement.

Andy indicated treasurer has also requested a level-funded budget and has elected not to meet with us.

Kathe indicated for water department, wages should be level-funded and we should level fund expenses as well unless our consultant (Dr. Gullick) suggests otherwise through the ongoing study. A review of our fee structure is going to take place to analyze trends and determine any necessary updates to maintain viability.

Kathe presented a revised proposal for the town administrator assistant position and is still working on finalizing numbers for the maintenance position.

Chief Tammy Weidhaas presented her updated budget for the Police Department. This new proposed budget more closely resembled the initial budget presented to the committee by former Chief Dan Illicky. Tammy presented two separate line items referencing two separate amounts of on-duty time and requested the amounts with the increased time. Chief Weidhaas was asked to continue looking into the expense detail prepared by the former chief to see if there are any potential costs savings.

Carl Baldasaro presented his budget request for the highway department. Committee asked questions and discussed a few line item increases requested including salaries, contract services, and tree removal. Several participants noted the excellent work done on grading this year. Carl stated he believed the department can still function as required with the changing plans regarding the recently approved Department of Public Works proposal. Carl indicated some of the increase in salary line existed due to the uncertainty surrounding the additional requirements of his position and the possible need of adding a secretary to handle paperwork/filings/etc. Carl summarized a couple of upcoming large projects to take place in the town, both in the current fiscal year and the next. The heat and lighting budget was discussed with follow-up to occur regarding the solar panel installation on the main garage and salt shed. Carl was asked to provide further detail on a couple of items for additional review during our next meeting.

Additional questions were answered regarding health insurance and property/casualty insurance. It was noted there is enough remaining in our current budget to cover the additional elections of our police chief. An analysis of land court fees will take place to see if an adjustment can occur.

Meeting adjourned at 4:10 pm