

Minutes of the Finance Committee for October 19, 2011

Held in the Police Department meeting room

Members Present

Peter Greenberg Chairman; Daniel Healy-Clerk; Peter Landon; Richard Liasse; Mark Barowsky; Edward (Ned) Steiger

Members Absent

James Law

Others in Attendance

Paul Pasterczyk-Finance Manager; Mark Gold-Chairman Select Board; Paul Santaniello-Select Board; Marie Doyle-Superintendent of Schools; Tom Mazza-Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations; Mike Clark-School Board; Mike Wrabel-DPW Director

The meeting was called the meeting to order at 7:05

Prior Meeting Minutes: The Minutes of the September 14th 2011 meeting were reviewed. A motion was made to accept the minutes, seconded and it was approved 4-0.

Reserve Request for DPW

Mike Wrabel discussed Article 18, a request for \$5,000 for to reimburse the Reserve Fund for repairs for removal of failed equipment, replacement of new equipment and utility pole for the irrigation system at Turner Park. After discussion the request was approved 6-0.

Discussion of the 10/06 revised budget instructions

Tom Mazza expressed the School Board's concern regarding the revised budget instructions which seemed to indicate that the department would have to budget on a zero based line item basis. Tom, Marie Doyle and Mike Clark walked through how the budget for the School Department was prepared and reviewed currently. It was explained by Paul Santaniello that the directive had not changed and it was a bottom line justification and not line by line justification. Any FY 13 request that increased the overall bottom line over the adjusted budget would need justification. Marie explained the difficulty of operating with a level funded budgeted if we wanted to continue as a top school in Massachusetts. Peter Greenberg asked from Marie periodic updates regarding the progress of the study produced last year.

Article 4

The discussion of the Article was on the merits of transferring the utilities into a new centralized Utilities budget under the direction of the Finance Manager or leaving the utilities in the school budget managed by Tom Mazza. Mike Clark discussed the merits of not transferring the utilities from the School Budget and felt the school department manages the utility budget well. The argument for transferring the utilities was voiced by most members of the Finance Committee on the basis it should reduce some duplicate management of the Utilities and produce better purchasing power from the Utility companies. The Finance Committee decided to recommend the Article as written.

Finance Committee's recommendation of the Warrant Articles

Mike Wrable provided further detail on Articles 5 concerning funding additional Forestry Expense and Article 14 to complete painting of Center School. After a discussion on the Articles, motions were made and seconded to recommend both articles. The vote was 6-0 in favor.

Article 15 and 16 is to purchase vehicles for the DPW. The Capital Planning Committee had no input to these requests so the Finance Committee decided it could not recommend these Articles and it was decided to let Article 15 and 16 be recommended on the town floor. Motions were made and seconded to let Article 15 and 16 be recommended on the town floor. The vote was 6-0 in favor.

Article 19 is to request money for the purpose of hiring a consulting firm to assess the DPW fleet was discussed. A motion was made and seconded to recommend the article. The vote was 4-2 in favor.

Article 17, the funding Phase 2 of the Reynolds Pool Improvements was discussed and approved. A motion were made and seconded to recommend the article. The vote was 6-0 in favor.

Articles 1 through 4 and 6 were recommended as written after some discussion. A motion was made and seconded. The votes on each were 6-0 in favor.

Article 7 is to transfer funds from the Ambulance Fund to fund the 2012 Firefighters Collective Bargaining Agreement. A motion was made and seconded to recommend the article. The vote was 4-2 in favor.

Article 8 is to fund the Fire Department's promotional exam, Article 9 is to fund the Patrol Officers contract and Article 10 is to fund the transfer from Solid Waste Recycling, Sewer and Water Retained Earnings to fund approved collective bargaining agreements. A motion was made and seconded to recommend these articles. The vote was 6-0 in favor.

Article 11 is to fund the Veterans service Officer for the Town. After discussion this article was recommended. A motion was made and seconded to recommend this article. The vote was 4-2 in favor.

Article 12 required no vote.

Article 13 is to transfer funds from a Town account to a special account know as the Council on Aging Donations account. A motion was made and seconded to recommend this article. The vote was 6-0 in favor.

Article 18 is to reimburse the Reserve Fund for repairs to failed equipment at Turner Park. A motion was made and seconded to recommend this article. The vote was 6-0 in favor.

Article 20 is to transfer funds from the Ambulance funds for the purpose of purchasing a new ambulance and equipment. A motion was made and seconded not to recommend this article. The vote was 5-1 in favor.

Article 21 is to transfer funds for the purchase of computers and related equipment and software. The Discussion centered around the Capital Planning Committee addressing these issues versus this type of equipment and software be made part of the various departments operating budgets. A motion was made and seconded not to recommend this article. The vote was 6-0 in favor.

Article 22 is to transfer funds for the purchase of continuing the wireless internet access program in the town and school buildings. A motion was made and seconded not to recommend this article. The vote was 6-0 in favor.

Article 23 is to transfer funds to the Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) liability. A motion was made and seconded to recommend this article. The vote was 6-0 in favor.

Article 24 is to transfer available funds to the Operational Stabilization Fund. A discussion was initiated around formulating a better Investment policy for this specific liability. A motion was made and seconded to recommend this article. The vote was 4-2 favor.

Article 25 is to transfer funds to the Employee Benefits Stabilization Fund. A discussion on the size of the fund was initiated and a further discussion on limiting the size of the fund was agreed to. A motion was made and seconded to recommend this article. The vote was 4-2 favor.

Peter Greenberg said he would contact Richard Foster of the Capital Planning Committee to determine if a meeting could be set up to review the capital items that were not recommended or recommended to the floor prior to the fall Town Meeting.

The next meeting was scheduled for November 16th 2011.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 10:45pm