

Minutes Holden Finance Committee April 13, 2022, Town Hall
F/Y 2023 Budget Deliberations

Members Present: Paul Challenger, Dave White, Joe Dolak, Chris Lucchesi, Don Graves (via Zoom), Stephanie Adams, Jane Titcomb, Marilyn Foley

Member Absent: Al Berg

Also Present: Peter Lukes, Town Manager, Stephanie King, Assistant Town Manager, Lori Rose, Town Accountant (via Zoom), Geri Herlihy, Selectman, 2 Guests

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 P.M.

Peter reported on the BOS and W/S Advisory Committee discussions on the proposed W/S rate increase. With making some budget adjustments and putting off the purchase of one vehicle the rate increase would be under 10%. The BOS would like to defer the Education Articles to the end of Town Meeting. The Finance Committee discussed this but feels this is the purview of the BOS. Peter reported that the 911 Grant money could not be released until all the EMS employees had completed the training course, which won't be until July. Chapter 70 transportation funds have been increased by the State, so any increase to WRSD and MRTVHS would reduce their assessments to the member towns, but it is unclear how much of an impact that will have.

The Committee continued to review the Capital budgets. The Committee discussed W/S capital. The water main replacement project has been reduced from \$2.4M to \$1.5M, and the water meter replacement program will be reduced from \$100,000 to \$50,000. The Committee asked if one of the three W/S pickup trucks could be deferred a year, to avoid buying so many in one year, which might require replacing them all at the same time in a few years. The Committee looked the Cable, DPW and Recreation Capital Budgets. Since the pool is now 15 years old, it is time for a comprehensive review of its condition, so the pool Consultant would be part of a project to rehabilitate the pool and accompanying structures.

The Committee started the review of the proposed changes to the municipal budgets. Moderator, Finance Committee, Selectmen, Town Manager (change, wage adjustment dropped \$40,000.00), IT (change, software support increased to \$58,000.00, equipment maintenance increased to \$4,524.00, total budget is \$416,455.00), Accounting, Treasurer/Collector, Assessors, Legal, Town Clerk (archival materials now in operating budget), Insurance, Retirement, Debt, Planning (health agent not budgeted because of a state grant, new total \$312,890.00), Sealer of Weights and Measures, Police (there were questions on community policing and court overtime), Dispatch (increase due to wages to meet the market rate), Animal Control, Fire (education stipend is contractual), Emergency Preparedness, Public Safety Building, Public Works (Engineering up 30% due to items moved from capital budget to operating, Highway, Mechanics, Buildings and Grounds, DPW Garage, fuel increase line to \$18,000.00). Veteran's, Senior Center (create a revolving fund for more transparency, they now have a discretionary fund), Library, Historical Commission. Many departments received an adjustment to the petro and diesel accounts based on recent gas prices.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Foley, Clerk

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