

Minutes Holden Finance Committee March 22, 2023, Senior Center

Members Present: Paul Challenger, Dave White, Chris Lucchesi, Don Graves, Al Berg, Jane Titcomb, Stephanie Adams, Donna Wallace, Marilyn Foley

Also Present: Peter Lukes, Town Manager, John Woodsmall, DPW Director, Angela Greene, Recreation Director, Karen Phillips, Senior Center Director, Sue Sullivan, COA Board of Directors, Selectmen Anthony Renzoni, Geri Hurlihy, Tom Curran

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 P.M.

Angela reviewed the Recreation Budget narrative and answered questions. The Department is rebuilding and growing, adding new programs. The 3-day Holiday in Holden was successful and it is planned to continue. As with other departments there are challenges with staffing, especially with the Before/After school program and pool staff. Pool passes and some programs have increased in price. The Committee thanked Angela.

Karen reviewed the Senior Center narrative and answered questions. Karen started at the Senior Center in August, a new Clerk started in October and there will be a new program coordinator hire soon due to retirement. There are plans in the budget to replace the refrigerator and freezer in the Capital Budget and there has been a request to replace the cloth on the pool table. Dave questioned the need to replace the refrigerator and freezer, as they are commercial quality appliances that are only 20 years old. They should be easily repairable, and not need replacing. The Committee thanked Karen.

The Veteran's Budget is the same as F/Y 23 except for the purchase of a computer. The number of expected cases to handle is projected to decline as we emerge from the pandemic.

John reviewed the Water/Sewer Enterprise Fund Budget narrative. The budget is level funded as the Town awaits finalization of the court case against the City of Worcester and the DCR for breach of contract. The Judge ruled in favor of Holden, but after the verdict there are 4 different appeals from Worcester. The Committee is interested in the W/S contribution to the new DPW building as their operations and offices are now in that building. Peter will develop an appropriate allocation of operating and debt service costs and present it at a future meeting. There are staffing problems also in the W/S department. John reviewed the Capital plan for F/Y 24. There was an extended discussion about the methodology for determining which equipment to replace. John used a percentage of book value computation that the Committee thinks results in replacing equipment before its necessary. There was also discussion of the proposed Spring Street well rebuild, which is forecast for FY26, with planning in FY25. It seems like an expensive project for relatively small water output. The Committee thanked John.

A motion by Stephanie 2nd by Dave to approve the minutes of March 15, 2023 was voted unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marilynn Foley, Clerk