February 11th, 2019

Finance Committee Meeting

**Present:** Patricia- Lee Achorn, Gordon Gladstone, Charles Goodman, Hanna Switlekowski, Edward Philips, William Brack, Ira Miller, William Brack, Daniel Lewenberg, Anja Bernier and Arnold Cohen.

**Absent:** Anil Ramoju

# Moderator re Consent Calendar Plans – Andy Nebenzahl

Andy Nebenzahl, Moderator, discussed the plans for town meeting.

* A consent agenda will be used.
* All non-controversial articles will be considered as one motion. If an objection, it will be set apart.
* Capital Outlay requests will be dealt with separately.
* Appointing Finance Committee members and Firefighter residency will be taken off the consent agenda.

# Capital Outlay – Paul Linehan

Paul Linehan, Chairman of the Capital Outlay Committee, presented the Capital Outlay budget.

* Replacement of DPW equipment including a dump truck and median excavator.
* Capital roadways and sidewalks needed for a total of $1,050,000.
* School needs wireless access points, renewal of 1:1 for chrome books, projectors for classrooms and replace lab computers costing $2,503,805.
* School obtained a new generator, early childhood retractable cover and special education vans.
* New vehicle needed for fire chief.
* Police update: vehicle replacement program, hand gun replacement and computer training.
* Recreation: contingency for picnic pavilion: $20,000
* Roof repair of library is $30,000.
* They are well below threshold of 6%.
* $6.6 billion in bonds at a 2.71% rate.
* Currently at 3.38% with projections for the next year at 4.25%.
* Voted to reduce the guideline from 6% to 4.5%.

# Selectmen Sector Budgets – Selectmen and Fred Turkington

Fred Turkington, Town Administrator, provided a summary of the Selectman sector budgets.

* Financial services had a savings due to new hires.
* Allocation of salaries and specific technology costs is 15% to the Water department enterprise fund and 5% to solid waste and recycle revolving fund.
* Funds included in line 529000 for valuation and inspection services were moved to fixed costs for 2019.
* Elections and Registration budget reflects assumption of the following: November 4th, 2019 Special Town Meeting and November 19th, 2019 debt exclusion ballot vote for high school building project, the March 3rd, 2020 Presidential preference primary, May 4th, 2020 Annual Town Meeting and May 19th, 2020 Annual Town Election.
* Budgets for Planning Board and Historic District Commission include marginal increases in funding for the Master Plan in FY2020.
* Conservation Commission budget includes funding in the land management line item to further study Cedar Swamp.
* Police budget reflects full staffing and assumption of adjustments in compensation for senior leadership due to promotions following retirement of Chief Tilden Kaufman in April 2018.
* Police training account increased by $50,000 to continue leadership skill-building and respond to expected retirements.
* No savings included for anticipated retirement of Lt. Donald Williams ($29,029).
* Budget funds Police overtime at $399,780.
* Ambulance fees of $700,000 offset a portion of the annual budget and fund capital equipment purchases.
* Board of Health budget increases by $10,000 due to rising solid waste disposal costs.
* Recreation budget includes an increase in the hours of the Assistant Director from 37.5 to 40 hours.
* Council on Aging may increase the hours for the receptionist from 19 to 30 hours, but funding is not in the current budget.
* Potential retirement of the social worker in January of 2020 will allow for re-evaluation of the number of hours for a new role.

Initiatives that were considered during budget deliberations but were not funded in preliminary FY2020 budget include:

* Four additional firefighters/EMT’s at $247,121.00 plus employee benefits, net $80,378 to Sharon in FY2020).
* Increase in administrative support for Council on Aging from nineteen to thirty hours per week with an additional cost of $14,773.)

# DPW Budget – Eric Hooper

Eric Hooper, Superintendent of Public Works, presented the DPW Budget.

* The DPW supports all sections of the town in terms of expenses.
* Salaries and wages up by 2.9%.
* Materials and services have an addition due to the expected town hall expenses.
* Forest and grounds have savings due to 5- year plan.
* East Elementary maintenance still has not been spent.
* Proposed budget is an increase of 5.4%.
* Septic Engineer is the one anticipated retirement.
* One promotion from Laborer to Equipment Operator.
* Study will be conducted to look at the area around the train station and impact on the neighborhood with an expansion.
* Norwood Street had a gas mane replaced and the road was left a mess, therefore needs replacement.
* Livingston Road has not been touched since the 1950’s. It scored the highest for replacement.
* Sidewalks attached to the roads are also being done due to cost.
* Walking routes are a priority for the town.

Suggestion was made for better marketing of the community center to bring in larger funds.

1. **Water Department Budget – Eric Hooper**

Eric Hooper, Superintendent of Public Works, presented the Water Department budget.

* Insurance and retirement are separate from the town’s portion and represent $700,000.
* Collector’s office is now a full time equivalent.
* Materials and services took a bit of a cut due to pumping less water.
* Capital based projects have been taken out from the operating budget.
* Three major capital projects include phase two of water mane replacement in the Heights, emergency connection to NWRA and a new tank at Massapoag Avenue.
* Norwood connection and tank totals $3,000,000.
* Three different models are being considered in terms of how to finance future projects.

# Liaison Updates:

## Sharon Schools - Bill Brack

William Brack will meet with Dr. Victoria Greer later this week.

* 1. **Library – Hanna Switlekowski**

Hanna Switlekowski shared that on February 8th, 2019 a breakfast presentation was held. In April the Trustees will have open houses along with tours of the library.

* 1. **Planning Board – Arnie Cohen**

No update at this time.

* 1. **Standing Building Committee – Gordon Gladstone**

No update at this time.

# Documents Distributed Since the Last Meeting

## S&P Global Ratings for Town

* 1. **State Ethics Law and Conflict of Interest**
  2. **Requested information regarding Town building projects**
  3. **Board of Health- will pull article**
  4. **Four Daughters Compassionate Care**

Anja Bernier provided an update on Four Daughters Compassionate Care.

* Sold to Verano Holdings. New name will become Zen Leaf.
* Stan and Brian will be in charge locally as employees.
* Anticipated summer 2019 opening.
  1. **Capital Outlay projects**

# Minutes to be voted: January 28th

**MOTION:**  by Gordon Gladstone to approve the January 28th, 2019 minutes **SECONDED:** by William Brack **VOTED:** 11-0-0.

# Adjournment

**MOTION:** by Anja Bernier to adjourn **SECONDED:** by William Brack **VOTED:** 11-0-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:51 pm.