November 16, 2020 Minutes

Town of Sharon Finance Committee Meeting

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

Also present: Krishan Gupta - Director of Finance, Fred Turkington - Town Administrator

1. **Dan Lewenberg, Chair, Gave Opening Remarks**
   1. This meeting is being held through the Zoom online platform due to the State of Emergency based on the COVID-19 outbreak. He confirmed the meeting was being recorded and broadcast.
   2. Confirmed that an executive session would be held after the open portion of this meeting for Finance Committee members to receive updates
2. **CARES ACT Funding Update – Krishan Gupta, Director of Finance**
   1. $150 billion allocated for state and local governments on a per capita basis from the Federal government. $2.67 billion of that is allocated for Massachusetts.
      1. Sharon’s portion is $1,671,161 with restrictions for the monies going to specific pandemic response expenses.
   2. FEMA must reimburse first, which should cover approximately 75% of expenses, with the CARES ACT covering the remaining 25%.
      1. Unfortunately there is continuing confusion from FEMA regarding which specific expenses they will be covering. For example, they will not reimburse for personal protective equipment for schools, but technology hardware and software will be reimbursed.
   3. $2,423,418.73 has been requested by Sharon departments. The bulk of these requests come from:
      1. Schools, for technology to support remote learning and deep cleaning, etc.: $945,895.28
      2. BCBS, for COVID treatment and care: $1.142,422.07.
      3. Eligible requests from Sharon departments: $1,670,161. This leaves $574,590 for Town’s allocation of CARES ACT funds.
   4. Expenses are eligible through December 30, 2020. May face large budget deficit after that date as many pandemic-related expenses will continue but funding may end.
      1. Deficits in these accounts will be permitted in 2021 due to the pandemic. Will be receiving guidance for reconciliation of these accounts soon.
   5. Mr. Gupta stated he will continue to update the Finance Committee regularly.
3. **Sharon Schools Financial Update – Dr. Meg Dussault, Acting Superintendent, Liz Murphy, Assistant Superintendent, and Aziz Agahyev, SPS Finance Consultant**
   1. Dr. Dussault took over as acting superintendent in mid-September as the Town was prepping for Town Meeting, where the budget was passed.
   2. Mr. Agahyev discussed the school’s budget:
      1. Most accounts are on target for where we are in the fiscal year. The budget information presented tonight is for the first quarter, and therefore only includes one month (September) with typical school expenses.
      2. School Committee Accounts budget is $119,164, and year-to-date $113,151.43 or 94.95%, of this has been spent. Maintenance Operation, Substitutes and Overtime has a budget of $16,546 and has spent $10,977.28 or 66.34%. Some of these expenses are from getting buildings ready for the school year and some are COVID-related.
      3. Projection for legal expenses is approximately $240,000. Legal costs associated with the 6 day teacher strike was approximately $20,000. Last year the Town paid $341,000 in legal fees.
      4. Mr. Agahyev stated he will continue to update the Finance Committee regularly.
4. **Liaison updates:**
   1. Sharon Schools - Ann Keitner
      1. No updates.
   2. Library - Charles Goodman
      1. Special permit was defeated by the Zoning Board and the Trustees have filed their appeal. Lawyers are working on an appeal which will be filed by November 25th in land court.
   3. Planning Board - Arnie Cohen
      1. No updates.
   4. Standing Building Committee - Gordon Gladstone
      1. High school is moving along, including two rigs drilling 2500 holes for creating the bases for the new school building foundation.
5. **Meeting Minutes**

**Motioned:** by Patricia-Lee Achorn to approve the October 5, 2020 meeting minutes **Seconded:** Ann Keitner **Voted:** 9-0-0.

**Motioned:** by Patricia-Lee Achorn to approve the October 26, 2020 meeting minutes **Seconded:** Ira Miller **Voted:** 9-0-0.

1. **Adjournment:**

**Motioned:** by Ira Miller to adjourn the public body and move to executive session for the purpose of discussing pending and potential litigation that would have a detrimental effect on such litigation if it were held in open session and at the end of the executive session we adjourn for the evening **Seconded:** Patricia-Lee Achorn to adjourn **Voted:** 9-0-0.

The open portion of the meeting was adjourned at 8:32 pm.