Minutes

February 29th, 2016

Finance Committee Meeting- 219 Massapoag Avenue Sharon, MA

Present: Alexander Korin, Gordon Gladstone, Ira Miller, Patricia-Lee Achorn, William Brack, Hanna Switlekowski, Charles Goodman, Edward Phillips and Arnold Cohen.

Absent: Laura Nelson, Steven Ross and Aaron Agulnek.

1. **FY Budget Review: Selectman Sector**
2. **Overview**

Fred Turkington began by reviewing the budget. It includes all of the town departments except the Town Clerk and other miscellaneous items. The 3.18% increase meets the budget guideline. There are no additional FTE.

1. **Fire Department**

James W. Wright, Fire Chief, began by discussing a couple of challenges this year due to sick, and injured or disabled cases. There has been a resulting $175,000 deficit in the sick leave budget for this year. For FY 17 the radio dispatch with the Town of Holbrook costs increase by $150,000 (33%) reflecting a better allocation of costs among towns utilizing their services . There have also been some other small increases in apparatus maintenance (under medical supplies budget), safety supplies and additional training.

The Fire Department Capital Outlay requests for FY 17 include new ladder truck that will cost $975,000. A new alarm system has been requested; the total cost will be $60,000 In addition, the department has put in a grant for an ambulance power-lift. They have received $25,000 in donations for the radio receiver site and require an additional $33,000 to finish the project, which will benefit both their department as well as the police.

Progress on the Public Safety building was discussed. The first floor has been poured and once the second floor is done they can begin framing the roof. Things are going well, meeting milestones, and they anticipate the Police and administration portion will be finished in the fall. The primary challenge of the construction was site work and that has been completed. The budget has been met and the Department of Public Works has provided gas and water lines as well as electrical services.

1. **Police Department**

Tilden Kaufman, Police Chief, began by discussing their need for new Police Officers. The department currently has three openings that he hopes to fill within the next three months, through academy training and on the street late 2016. He has also been in contact with the Fire Department and they will be working on a five-year plan in for public safety operations. The department will be in the new station in late 2016 and they will be responsible for utilities (additional $25,000) until the DPW can assume responsibility for those costs. There are plans to sell a boat that is not being used.

For Capital the department is requesting the IMC computer system ($210,000) that would directly and immediately share information on police activities across towns; the Fire Department already has this system in place. Three new cruisers are being requested ($100,000) and the expectation is that there will be three cruisers replaced each year as “cash capital.” The department has repurposed their old vehicles. The department will not be looking at a weapons upgrade for couple of years. The expense of bullet-proof vests (replaced every five years) is completely reimbursed by the federal government.

1. **Department of Public Works and the Water Division**

**Public Works**

Eric Hooper, Superintendent of the Department of Public Works, began by discussing changes that occurred last year including two new personnel. There are no structural changes within the DPW proposed for FY 17.

DPW: Salaries and wages have increased by 2.3% over the last year due to standard contractual obligations. Materials and services is also at an increase, of 3.3%, for an overall budget increased by about 2.6%. The snow and ice, the salt budget has been expended, however labor and other costs are running under budget. In FY 2018 the department will take on utilities and maintenance One School Street, and the Public Safety Building. Two supervisor retirements (Operations and Water) are expected one in the spring and another in the summer.

Water: Salaries increase 2% plus contractual steps. Increases in materials and services are primarily driven by the expense of chemicals. Systems improvements are funded by retained earnings and income rather than by capital requests. For FY 17 there are three projects (Belcher Street, Pleasant Street and MWRA connection via Norwood) and no new borrowing.

1. **FY 2017 Budget Schedule- Set dates for the School Sector and Open Items**

The School Sector will meet with the Finance Committee on March 7th, 2016.

1. **ATM Warrant and Schedule Review**

A review of the Warrant was discussed, beginning with items up to Article 17 being standard every year. Fred Turkington outlined the remaining articles. Article 18, Tax Title Payment Agreements, implements changes consistent state legislation last year. Article 19 is a proposed bi-law change to household distribution of the annual Town. Article 20 is to transfer One School Street from the School Committee to the Selectman. Article 21 and 22 were involving the library participation in the state construction grant process. Article 24 a citizens petition regarding the Spectra natural gas line is current in-review status.

Warrant article reviews were assigned to the Finance Committee members. On March 7th, 2016 the School Committee and citizens petition representative will come before the Finance Committee. The Personnel Board, CPC and Capital Outlay will be scheduled or March 21st, 2016. The write ups will be finished as well as the final votes on March 28th, 2016.

1. **Votes Minutes including from December 14th, 2015, January 11th, 2016 and January 25th, 2016**

**MOTION** by Gordon Gladstone to accept the drat minutes of December 14th, 2016 as written **SECONDED** by Alexander Korin **VOTED** 8-0-1

**MOTION** by Alexander Korin to accept the draft minutes of January 11th as written **SECONDED** by Patricia-Lee Achorn **VOTED** 8-0-0

**MOTION** by Edward Phillips to accept the draft minutes of January 25th as written **SECONDED** by Hanna Switlekowski **VOTED** 7-0-1

1. **Other Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated**

The Personnel Board will meet on March 10th, 2016 and Fred Turkington will send the cover letter to the Finance Committee with the merit increases of 2 - 3 ½% for the E-group positions. The salary range minimum and maximum remain unchanged. The peer town salary review has also now been conducted and on a three-year basis going forward.

In VisGov, all of the back data has been uploaded and when the budget for this year is finalized in March that will be sent as well.

Major changes to budgets requested by the Selectman were reviewed by Fred Turkington who referenced his memo to the Finance Committee of January 11th for details.

1. **Adjournment**

**MOTION** by Edward Phillips to adjourn **SECONDED** by Hanna Switlekowski **VOTED** 8-0-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 pm.

The next meeting will be held on March 7th, 2016.