March 15th, 2018 Minutes

Finance Committee Meeting

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

**Absent:** Daniel Lewenberg

1. **Conservation Commission Bylaw Article – Peg Arguimbau and Greg Meister**

Peg Arguimbau, Chair and Greg Meister, Administrator of the Conservation Commission presented the bylaw article.

* It was completed as of October of 2015.
* A public hearing was held in March of 2016, in which only two people attended.

Changes to the bylaw include:

* Definitions
* Jurisdiction reorganization
* Applicant fee from $35.00 to $50.00
* Section four re-numbering
* Clearer wording
* Deletion of no longer used procedure
* Removal of guidelines in section eight
* Allowance for citations rather than criminal prosecution
* Addition to Section 262.11, incorporating language from the old section of the bylaw
* Addition for applicants to further coordinate with other boards going forward

**MOTION:** by Anja Bernier to approve the Conservation Commission Bylaw Article **SECONDED:** by Ira Miller **VOTED:** 10-0-0.

1. **Board of Health Nuisance Article and FY19 initiatives - Beverly Anderson**

The Board of Health will attend the March 19th, 2018 meeting.

1. **Municipal Electric Aggregation Article – Fred Turkington**

Silas Fyler, Co-Chair of Energy Advisory Committee, presented the Municipal Electric Aggregation Article.

* The article provides authorization by the Board of Selectman to look into the process of aggregating residents’ electric bills into one contract.
* 120 towns have done it so far; 30 for green reasons.
* Residents will receive one bill covering generation and transmission.

**MOTION:** by Alexander Korin to start the planning process for the Municipal Electric Aggregation Article **SECONDED:** by Gordon Gladstone **VOTED** 9-0-1. Ira Miller abstained.

1. **Commercial Solar on Municipal Parcels – Fred Turkington**

Fred Turkington, Town Administrator, discussed the Commercial Solar on Municipal Parcels article.

* The proposed article would allow the Board of Selectman to lease land for commercial solar purposes.
* Land being considered includes the MBTA parking lot and the landfill.
* An RFP will be done for both locations.
* This article is a zoning change request.

1. **Town Clerk and Election/Registration Budgets – Marlene Chused**

Marlene Chused, Town Clerk, presented the Town Clerk’s and Registration budgets.

Election Budget:

* Salary is a huge change due to three elections and two town meetings.
* The tax work offs no longer qualify due to new regulations and therefore the workers must be paid hourly for services.
* Other costs include the servicing and testing of equipment.

Town Clerk Budget:

* There is an increase in salary of $1,728.00.
* There is an increase in printing and postage due to the new online dog licensing program.

1. **Moderator Budget – Andrew Nebenzahl**

A hard stop to town meeting was discussed due to the high interest in the marijuana article.

The warrant will state this in the table of contents to inform residents prior to town meeting.

1. **School Committee Budget Presentation – Dr. Victoria Greer, Superintendent**

Susan Owen, Business Director and Dr. Victoria Greer, Superintendent, presented the School Committee’s Budget.

* Basic staff rollovers totaled $1,378,457.54.
* Estimated retirement savings of $150,000.
* Decrease in circuit breaker funding from 70% to 65%.
* Special education tuitions are up by $730,000.
* The School Committee will use $80,000 in their contingency fund to offset costs.
* In 2020 there will be no money in the contingency fund.
* There are projections of 240 kindergarten students in September of 2018.
* Increase in salary for the Community Education Director of $6,071.00 due to additional needs in the arts program.
* Technical integrations specialist decrease from three full time employees to one and a half.
* Reduction of a Social Worker position.
* 3.31% increase over the current FY18 voted budget.

Additional staff needs include:

* One Middle School Half Time Specialist for students in between core classes.
* One High School math teacher.
* Two ELL teachers due to state mandates.
* At least one additional Nurses due to insulin dependency for students.
* One School Adjustment Counselor for students with mental health needs.

1. **Warrant Article Reviews and Votes (final data for write-ups)**

Fred Turkington, Town Administrator, discussed two articles including Article 12: Stabilization and Article 24: Marijuana Moratorium.

**MOTION:** by Gordon Gladstone to not fund the Stabilization account **SECONDED:** by William Brack **VOTED:** 8-2-0. Opposed by Anja Bernier and Ira Miller.

Opposition points include:

* It’s good to build up money in stabilization in case unexpected things occur.
* Free cash is a variable number and stabilization is more steady.
* Stabilization requires a higher number of votes (2/3).

Favorable points include:

* There is enough money in the stabilization fund now.
* Free cash can carry what is unforeseen.
* There is no need to set aside funds for the future because the town can always raise taxes for unforeseen developments.

Article 24:

* On March 23rd, 2018 the state will publish the regulations regarding marijuana.
* The warrant article can be pulled afterwards.

1. **Documents Distributed Since Last Meeting**

* **Civil Defense – Mike Polimer**

The Board of Selectman voted on March 14, 2018 in favor.

1. **FY17 Audit Report – Krishan Gupta**

No additional information was provided.

1. **Vote Minutes—February 12th, 2018**

**MOTION:** by Alexander Korin to approve the February 12th, 2018 minutes **SECONDED:** by Anja Bernier **VOTED:** 9-0-1. William Brack abstained.

1. **Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair in 48 hours**

Charles Goodman, Ira Miller and Edward Phillips have expiring terms in 2018. There is currently one vacancy available.

1. **Adjournment**

**MOTION:** by William Brack to adjourn **SECONDED:** by Alexander Korin **VOTED;** 10-0-0. The meeting was adjourned at 10:25 pm.