**Finance Committee Meeting Minutes**

**Town Hall ~ April 30, 2019**

**Sturbridge, MA**

**Call to Order:**

The Finance Committee Chair called the Finance Committee meeting to order at 6:30 pm. The following committee members were present: Kathy Neal (KN), Michael Hager (MH), Bruce Boyson (BB), Karen Davis (KD), James Waddick (JW), Kevin Smith (KS), and Larry Morrison (LM). Jared Burns (JB) arrived at 6:33. Absent: Joni Light (JL).

Guests: Barbara Barry (BBa), Finance Director; Butch Jackson (BJ), Department of Public Works Director; Shane Moody (SM), Veolia Water; and Jeff Bridges (JBr), Town Administrator.

JW updated the Finance Committee on the latest funding numbers available from Deb Boyd, Tantasqua Associate Superintendent, regarding the replacement windows and doors project.

**Review of Annual Town Meeting Warrant Articles**

Article 30 – Fluoride Analyzers for Water Treatment Plants – KS moved the motion to recommend the revised Article 30 as written: *To see if the Town will vote to transfer from the Water Reserve Fund Balance the sum of TEN THOUSAND AND 00/100 DOLLARS ($10,000.00) to install fluoride analyzers at the water treatments plants; or to take any action relative thereto*; MH seconds. Motion accepted 8-0-0. BJ stated that the Town has been adding fluoride to the water system since the 1980s. SM added that the Town has won a fluoride award every year for more than thirteen years. SM stated that Massachusetts has a new regulation that requires either fluoride saturators or fluoride analyzers for water treatment plants that add fluoride to the water supply. He said that Veolia had initially thought that it was best to purchase fluoride saturators, but after doing additional research, it was decided that there is a reliable analyzer available that will be less expensive to purchase and install. SM explained the analyzers will continuously monitor the water plants and stop the water flow from the plant(s) if the fluoride is out of range; he said currently the fluoride level is tested once daily. When asked about the costs to maintain the analyzers, SM stated that there is a repair and maintenance line item in the contract that will cover the cost.

KS moved the motion to reconsider Article 40 – Borrowing Authorization – Tantasqua Regional School District; KD seconds. Motion accepted 8-0-0. KS moved the motion to recommend the revised Article 40 as written: *To see if the Town will approve the Two Million Dollar ($2,000,000) borrowing authorized by the Tantasqua Regional School District, for the purpose of paying costs of replacing doors and windows in the Tantasqua Regional Jr High School at 320 Brookfield Road, Fiskdale, Ma, including the payment of all costs incidental or related thereto (the “Project”), which proposed repair project would materially extend the useful life of the school and preserve an asset that otherwise is capable of supporting the required educational program, and for which the District may be eligible for a school construction grant from the Massachusetts School Building Authority (“MSBA”), said amount to be expended at the direction of the Tantasqua Regional School District Building Committee. The MSBA’s grant program is a non-entitlement, discretionary program based on need; as determined by the MSBA, and any Project costs the District incurs in excess of any grant approved by and received from the MSBA shall be the sole responsibility of the District and its member municipalities. Any grant that the District may receive from the MSBA for the Project shall not exceed the lesser of (1) fifty-five and sixty-three hundredths percent (55.63%) of eligible, approved project costs, as determined by the MSBA, or (2) the total maximum grant amount determined by the MSBA. Any premium received by the District upon the sale of any bonds or notes approved by this vote, less any such premium applied to the payment of the costs of issuance of such bonds or notes, may be applied to project costs in accordance with G.L. c.44, Section 20, thereby reducing the amount authorized to be borrowed for the project by a like amount*; KD seconds. Motion accepted 8-0-0.

Article 58 – Funding for Police Union Contract – KS moved the motion to recommend the revised Article 58 as written: *To see if the Town will vote to transfer from Free Cash the sum of ONE HUNDRED FORTY-FOUR THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED AND SIXTY-FOUR DOLLARS ($144,864.00) to the following accounts:*

*FY18 Salaries and Wages Retro Account  $45,116.00*

*FY18 Overtime Retro Account                      $12,660.00*

*FY19 Salaries and Wages                          $67,130.00*

*FY19 Overtime Account                            $19,958.00*

*for the purpose of funding the Police Union Contract for Fiscal Year 2018 and Fiscal Year 2019; or take any action relative thereto*; KD seconds. Motion accepted 8-0-0. BBa explained that this Article covers two different fiscal years and must be worded accordingly.

When asked if she anticipated any prior year bills, BBa stated that she did not but Article 55 must be on the Warrant.

Discussion turned to the South Pond Article. BBa stated that additional costs associated with the Article would be staff time and a possible single audit if the Federal grants go over the $750,000.00 threshold. The fairness and equity of the funding distribution of the project was questioned.

KN stated that she had sent the Committee members the Massachusetts General Laws concerning Public Marijuana Consumption. Questions arose regarding why Sturbridge needs a public marijuana consumption bylaw when there is no local bylaw prohibiting public consumption of alcohol.

**Review of Fiscal Year 2020 Town Budgets**

The motion to reconsider Facilities Department Head Salaries was moved by JW; BB seconds. Motion accepted 5-0-3 (KS, JB, and LM abstained). KS moved the motion to increase Facilities Department Head Salaries to $65,000; KD seconds. Motion accepted 8-0-0.

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| **Line** | **Account Number** | **Facilities** |  |  |
|  |  | Department Head Salaries | $65,000.00 | KS: KD seconds. Motion accepted 8-0-0. |

BBa stated that it is hoped that the increase in salary will bring in applicants for the position

The motion to reconsider Town Administrator Personnel Costs was moved by KS; LM seconds. Motion accepted 5-0-3 (MH, JB, and BB abstained). KS moved the motion to increase Merit Based Pay Incentive to $27,999.00 and Line 3 (Personnel Costs) to $216,684.00; KD seconds. Motion accepted 7-1-0 (MH against).

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| **Line** | **Account** | **Town Administrator** |  |  |
|  |  | Department Head Salaries | $150,000.00 |  |
|  |  | Merit Based Pay Incentive | $27,999.00 |  |
|  |  | Salaries/ Wages | $38,685.00 |  |
| 3 | 11231 | Personnel Costs | $216,684.00 | KS; KD seconds. Motion accepted 7-1-0 (MH against). |

BBa explained that the Merit Pay has been included in recent offer letters as part of compensation for the department heads’ positions. MH stated that he would like to see a compensation element in the proposed Personnel Classification Study. JBr stated that it is his intent for the Personnel Classification Study to include salary ranges to find out where the Town is currently and to include a mechanism for keeping it relevant.

**Report of the Finance Committee – Topics for Consideration**

Topics were raised and discussed for essays, but it was decided to think it over and decide at the next meeting what, if any, topics would be included.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes**

JW moved the motion to accept the April 23, 2019, minutes as submitted. KS seconds. Motion accepted 8-0-0.

KS moved the motion to accept the April 25, 2019, minutes as amended. MH seconds. Motion accepted 8-0-0.

**No New Business**

**No Old Business**

**No Public Access**

JB moved the motion to adjourn. JW seconds. Motion accepted 8-0-0 and meeting adjourned at 8:20 pm.

/jme