**Finance Committee Meeting Minutes**

**Town Hall ~ March 26, 2019**

**Sturbridge, MA**

**Call to Order:**

The Finance Committee chair called the Finance Committee meeting to order at 6:33pm. The following committee members were present: Kathy Neal (KN), James Waddick (JW), Karen Davis (KD), Larry Morrison (LM), and Michael Hager (MH). Kevin Smith (KS) arrived at 6:39 and Jared Burns (JB) arrived at 6:54.

Absent: Bruce Boyson (BB) and Joni Light (JL).

Guests: Ann Murphy (AM), Assessors’ Office; Lynn Girouard (LG), Town Clerk and Elections & Registrations; Nelson Burlingame (NB), Building Inspector and Inspections; Barbara Barry (BBa), Finance Director

KN welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the FY20 budget season. LM mentioned that BBa will have worked with three town administrators to create this budget and appreciated her skill. He presented a brief introduction of the Finance Committee’s responsibilities under the Town Charter to the voters of the town.

**Review of the Fiscal Year 2020 Assessors’ Budget**

AM stated that the Assessors’ budget is fairly level funded. KN asked about the decrease in the data collections services item. AM explained that it is a cyclical program and that visual inspections may now be done on a ten-year cycle.

There was discussion regarding how to proceed with the motions – whether to wait for the new Town Administrator’s and Board of Selectmen’s recommendations prior to voting on the line items or to vote as each budget is reviewed by the Finance Committee. The question of voting on the salaries was addressed and BBA explained the longevity item in the salaries budgets. Further discussion regarding voting on the individual items or the total for the departments ended with the decision to vote the totals.

The following line items were reviewed for Board of Assessors. The motion was moved to recommend line items 15, 16, 17, and 18 for a total of $142,196.00 by LM.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Line** | **Account**  | **Board of Assessors** |   |   |
|   |  | Department Head Salaries | $80,687.00 |   |
|   |  | Salaries/ Wages | $30,930.00 |   |
|   |  | Longevity | $250.00 |   |
| 15 | 11411 | Personnel Costs | $111,867.00 |   |
|   |   |   |   |   |
| 16 | 11412-52000 | Purchase of Services | $27,249.00 |   |
| 17 | 11412-54000 | Supplies | $1,700.00 |   |
| 18 | 11412-57000 | Other Charges | $1,380.00 |   |
|   |   | Total Expenses | $30,329.00 |   |
|   |   |   |   |   |
|   |   | **Board of Assessors Total** | $142,196.00 | LM; KS seconds. Motion accepted 6-0-1 (JB abstained). |

MH questioned whether recommending the personnel costs was accepting former Town Administrator Leon Gaumond’s salary policy. KS explained that the policy was accepted last year. JW explained the chart of salaries and the function of each component of department head salaries.

**Review of Fiscal Year 2020 Town Clerk’s Budget**

LG explained that the Town Clerk’s budget is basically level funded.

The following line items were reviewed for Town Clerk. The motion was moved to recommend line items 28, 29, 30, and 31 for a total of $107,914.00 by KS.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Line** | **Account** | **Town Clerk**  |   |   |
|   |   | Department Head Salaries | $67,717.00 |   |
|   |   | Salaries/ Wages | $36,796.00 |   |
| 28 | 11611 | Personnel Costs | $104,513.00 |   |
|   |   |   |   |   |
| 29 | 11612-52000 | Purchase of Services | $826.00 |   |
| 30 | 11612-54000 | Supplies | $1,575.00 |   |
| 31 | 11612-57000 | Other Charges | $1,000.00 |   |
|   |   | Total Expenses | $3,401.00 |   |
|   |   |   |   |   |
|   |   | **Town Clerk Total** | $107,914.00 | KS; LM seconds. Motion accepted 7-0-0. |

LM read a letter to the Finance Committee from Assistant Town Clerk Sheila O’Connell regarding the exemplary performance of the Town Clerk. KS asked if the town clerk position is included in the step and grade matrix; MH and KN said it is.

**Review of Fiscal Year 2020 Elections & Registration Budget**

LG stated that the Elections & Registration budget is basically level funded with a decrease due the fact that there will be only two elections in FY20 rather than three. She added that there is an increase due to the need for storage for the early voting ballots and for an additional ballot box for the absentee and early ballots to be processed during the elections.

The following items were reviewed for Elections and Registration. The motion was moved to recommend line items 32, 33 and 34 for a total of $28,448.00 by KS.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Line** | **Account**  | **Elections & Registration** |   |   |
|   |  | Board Salaries | $300.00 |   |
|   |  | Salaries/ Wages | $9,000.00 |   |
| 32 | 11621 | Personnel Costs | $9,300.00 |   |
|   |   |   |   |   |
| 33 | 11622-52000 | Purchase of Services | $15,148.00 |   |
| 34 | 11622-54000 | Supplies | $4,000.00 |   |
|   |   | Total Expenses | $19,148.00 |   |
|   |   |   |   |   |
|   |   | **Elections & Registration Total** | $28,448.00 | KS; KD seconds. Motion accepted 7-0-0. |

There was discussion with BBa regarding town meeting voters only voting totals for each account. Discussion followed as she explained that this is an attempt to eliminate deficits by having the ability to transfer funds within a department’s accounts with Town Administrator approval. This eliminates BBa’s having to request funds at special town meetings or to ask for reserve fund transfers when there is a valid reason for a shortage and funds are available due to explainable circumstances. She gave the example of the police overtime budget. It is currently very high while the salaries and wages is very low due to the lack of personnel on the force. BBa stated the auditors review this annually and have had no issue with this procedure.

**Review of Fiscal Year 2020 Building Inspector Budget**

NB stated that the Building Inspector budget is level funded. He stated that the line item for code books is necessary because he never knows when Massachusetts will release the revised code books. JW asked if the schools need to purchase the code books also. NB stated that they do and he has done seminars at the high school to train the students to use the code books to find the proper information to perform a job correctly. JB asked if NB foresees any use for the proposed police department drone in his inspection work. NB said that he uses binoculars for inspecting roofs and that would be the only use that he could imagine at this time. MH inquired about the level of activity around town. NB stated that he is keeping busy and there currently are more new commercial inspections than residential ones. There were discussions regarding the property at 7 Main Street and sign bylaw enforcement.

The following line items were reviewed for Building Inspector. The motion was moved to recommend line items 75, 76, 77 and 78 for a total of $125,729.00 by JW.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Line** | **Account** | **Building Inspector** |   |   |
|   |  | Department Head Salaries | $81,404.00 |   |
|   |  | Salaries/ Wages | $39,055.00 |   |
|   |  | Longevity | $150.00 |   |
| 75 | 12411 | Personnel Costs | $120,609.00 |   |
|   |   |   |   |   |
| 76 | 12412-52000 | Purchase of Services | $1,620.00 |   |
| 77 | 12412-54000 | Supplies | $2,800.00 |   |
| 78 | 12412-57000 | Other Charges | $700.00 |   |
|   |   | Total Expenses | $5,120.00 |   |
|   |   |   |   |   |
|   |   | **Building Inspector Total** | $125,729.00 | JW; KS seconds. Motion accepted 7-0-0. |

**Review of Fiscal Year 2020 Inspectors (Electric and Plumbing) budget**

NB explained that the Inspectors (Electric and Plumbing) budget is level funded and that the budget is an estimate.

The following line items were reviewed for Inspectors (Electric and Plumbing). The motion was moved to recommend line items 80, 81, 82 and 83 for a total of $58,465.00 by JW.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Line** | **Account** | **Inspectors(Electric and Plumbing)** |   |   |
|   |  | Salaries/ Wages | $55,000.00 |   |
| 80 |   | Personnel Costs | $55,000.00 |   |
|   |   |   |   |   |
| 81 | 12452-52000 | Purchase of Services | $500.00 |   |
| 82 | 12452-54000 | Supplies | $500.00 |   |
| 83 | 12452-57000 | Other Charges | $2,465.00 |   |
|   |   | Total Expenses | $3,465.00 |  |
|   |   |   |   |   |
|   |   |  **Inspectors Total** | $58,465.00 | JW; KS seconds. Motion accepted 7-0-0. |

**No RFTs**

**No Meeting Minutes to Approve**

**No Old Business**

**New Business**

KS asked if the agenda allows for budgets that are not listed to be voted on. KN stated that if it is not on the agenda, the committee cannot vote on it. There was discussion of the school budgets; LM stated that the public has the right to hear all the questions and answers that the committee has. KN stated that she had been asked to be specific in the agenda; MH suggested adding a generic line regarding reviewing budget items.

**No Public Access**

JW moved the motion to adjourn. JB seconds. Motion accepted 7-0-0 and meeting adjourned at 7:46pm.

/jme