**Finance Committee Meeting Minutes**

**Town Hall ~ May 14, 2020**

**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), James Waddick (JW), Joni Light (JL), Larry Morrison (LM),

Kevin Smith (KS), Michael Hager (MH), Jared Burns (JB), and Bruce Boyson (BB). Karen Davis (KD) arrived at 6:35 pm.

Guests: Jeff Bridges (JBr), Town Administrator; Barbara Barry (BBa), Finance Director; Ken Lacey (KL), Health Agent; Erin Nosek (EN), Tantasqua Regional School District Superintendent; Deb Boyd (DB), Tantasqua Regional School District Associate Superintendent.

This meeting was held remotely pursuant to Governor Baker’s March 12, 2020, Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, and the Governor’s March 15, 2020, order imposing strict limitations of the number of people that may gather in one place. The meeting was held via the GoToMeeting application, recorded, and posted on the Town website.

KN read an introduction to the virtual meeting.

**Review of Fiscal Year 2021 Landfill/Recycling Center**

The following items were reviewed for Landfill/Recycling Center. The motion was moved to recommend lines 53 and 54 for a total of $289,697.00 by JL.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Line** | **Account** | **Landfill/Recycling Center** |  |  |
|  |  | Salaries/ Wages | $118,462.00 |  |
|  |  | Overtime | $1,500.00 |  |
|  |  | Longevity | $100.00 |  |
| 53 | 14301 | Personnel Costs | $120,062.00 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  | 14302-52000 | Purchase of Services | $164,535.00 |  |
|  | 14302-54000 | Supplies | $5,100.00 |  |
| 54 |  | Total Expenses | $169,635.00 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | **Landfill/Recycling Center Total** | $289,697.00 | JL; KS seconds. Motion accepted 9-0-0. |

Roll call vote:

JL, yes LM, yes JB, yes JW, yes MH, yes

KS, yes BB, yes KD, yes KN, yes

JL stated that there is a marginal increase for the Landfill. BBa stated that the increase in salaries is due to steps and the general wage adjustment for department employees. KL explained that there is a need for a survey to give an estimation of how long the landfill can be expected to remain open. He added that he will not know if the landfill capping fund is on target until that survey is complete. He said that there is a Warrant Article for the survey and a capacity study to determine what is left and what can be put in.

When asked about the increase in the Disposal/Trucking item, KL explained that the recycling market crashed hard last year following a downtrend for the past decade. He added that he doesn’t know what will happen when the economy reopens, and the budget may have to be revisited in the fall. When asked how much money the Recycling Center is losing, KL explained that you cannot run a landfill without a recycling center, so those numbers are not available.

**Review of Fiscal Year 2021 Board of Health**

The following items were reviewed for Board of Health. The motion was moved to recommend lines 55 and 56 for a total of $111,363.00 by JL.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Line** | **Account** | **Board of Health** |  |  |
|  |  | Department Head Salaries | $75,680.00 |  |
|  |  | Salaries/ Wages | $26,833.00 |  |
| 55 | 15101 | Personnel Costs | $102,513.00 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  | 15102-52000 | Purchase of Services | $4,450.00 |  |
|  | 15102-54000 | Supplies | $2,600.00 |  |
|  | 15102-57000 | Other Charges | $1,800.00 |  |
| 56 |  | Total Expenses | $8,850.00 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | **Board of Health Total** | $111,363.00 | JL; KS seconds. Motion accepted 9-0-0. |

Roll call vote:

JL, yes JW, yes MH, yes KS, yes BB, yes

KD, yes LM, yes KN, yes JB, yes

JL stated that there are three additional Public Health nurses helping the Community Health Nurse with COVID-19 cases. She added that there is additional funding in the budget for personal protective equipment.

**Review of Fiscal Year 2021 Community Health**

The following item was reviewed for Community Health. The motion was moved to recommend line 57 for a total of $4,000.00 by JL.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Line** | **Account** | **Community Health** |  |  |
|  | 15152-53850 | Community Health Care Total | $4,000.00 |  |
| 57 |  | Total Expenses | $4,000.00 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | **Community Health Care Total** | $4,000.00 | JL: KS seconds. Motion accepted 9-0-0. |

Roll call vote:

JL, yes JW, yes MH, yes KS, yes BB, yes

KD, yes LM, yes JB, yes KN, yes

**Review of Fiscal Year 2021 Inspections & Testing**

The following item was reviewed for Inspections & Testing. The motion was moved to recommend line 58 for a total of $47,923.00 by JL.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Line** | **Account** | **Inspections & Testing** |  |  |
|  |  | Public Health Inspector | $47,923.00 |  |
| 58 | 15202 | Personnel Costs | $47,923.00 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | **Inspections & Testing Total** | $47,923.00 | JL; KS seconds. Motion accepted 9-0-0. |

Roll call vote:

LM, yes BB, yes JL, yes JW, yes MH, yes

KS, yes BB, yes KD, yes KN, yes

**Review of Item in the Capital Improvement Plan for Board of Health**

* Grinder Pump

KL explained that this request will fund the purchase and installation of a replacement grinder pump He said this pump pumps leachate from the landfill containment area to trucks that haul it away. He added that the leachate which the pumps sit in is more caustic than sewage. He said that there are two pumps which were replaced at about the same time. He added that he wants to proactively replace the lead pump in hopes of extending the life of the second pump to create more time between replacement of pumps. Discussion focused on the possibility of purchasing two grinder pumps and holding onto one until a later date or if it was a good idea to wait until the pump fails and to replace it on an emergency basis. KL said he had not looked into purchasing two pumps; he was hoping to do proactive maintenance at the landfill. He explained that waiting for pump failure could cause increased damage to the entire system, has the potential to create environmental issues, and would cost more to replace on an emergency basis.

**Review of Fiscal Year 2021 Building Inspector**

The following items were reviewed for Building Inspector. The motion was moved to recommend lines 39 and 40 for a total of $132,147.00 by JW.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Line** | **Account** | **Building Inspector** |  |  |
|  |  | Department Head Salaries | $86,700.00 |  |
|  |  | Salaries/ Wages | $40,837.00 |  |
|  |  | Longevity | $300.00 |  |
| 39 | 12411 | Personnel Costs | $127,837.00 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  | 12412-52000 | Purchase of Services | $1,620.00 |  |
|  | 12412-54000 | Supplies | $1,990.00 |  |
|  | 12412-57000 | Other Charges | $700.00 |  |
| 40 |  | Total Expenses | $4,310.00 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | **Building Inspector Total** | $132,147.00 | JW; KS seconds. Motion accepted 9-0-0. |

Roll call vote:

JW, yes MH, yes KS, yes BB, yes KD, yes

LM, yes JB, yes JL, yes KN, yes

JW explained that code books would not need to be purchased this year resulting in savings.

**Review of Fiscal Year 2021 Sealer of Weights & Measures**

The following item was reviewed for Sealer of Weights & Measures. The motion was moved to recommend line 41 for a total of $5,350.00 by JW.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Line** | **Account** | **Sealer of Weights & Measures** |  |  |
|  | 12442-52000 | Purchase of Services | $5,350.00 |  |
| 41 |  | Total Expenses | $5,350.00 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | **Sealer of Weights & Measures Total** | $5,350.00 | JW; KS seconds. Motion accepted 9-0-0. |

Roll call vote:

MH, yes KS, yes BB, yes KD, yes LM, yes

JB, yes JL, yes JW, yes KN, yes

JW stated that the Town pays for this service through a state contract with a flat fee.

**Review of Fiscal Year 2021 Inspectors (Electric and Plumbing)**

The following items were reviewed for Inspectors (Electric and Plumbing). The motion was moved to recommend lines 42 and 43 for a total of $53,399.00 by JW.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Line** | **Account** | **Inspectors (Electric and Plumbing)** |  |  |
|  |  | Salaries/ Wages | $50,000.00 |  |
| 42 |  | Personnel Costs | $50,000.00 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  | 12452-52000 | Purchase of Services | $593.00 |  |
|  | 12452-54000 | Supplies | $341.00 |  |
|  | 12452-57000 | Other Charges | $2,465.00 |  |
| 43 |  | Total Expenses | $3,399.00 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | **Inspectors Total** | $53,399.00 | JW; KS seconds. Motion accepted 9-0-0. |

Roll call vote:

KS, yes BB, yes KD, yes LM, yes JB, yes

JL, yes JW, yes MH, yes KN, yes

JW explained there was a spike in inspections a few years ago; but inspections have declined during the past two years, leading to a reduction of $5,000.00 in salaries.

**Review of Fiscal Year 2021 Tree Warden**

The following item was reviewed for Tree Warden. The motion was moved to recommend lines 44 and 45 for a total of $21,603.00 by JW.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Line** | **Account** | **Tree Warden** |  |  |
|  |  | Salaries/ Wages | $2,787.00 |  |
| 44 | 12941 | Personnel Costs | $2,787.00 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  | 12942-52000 | Purchase of Services | $16,956.00 |  |
|  | 12942-54000 | Supplies | $675.00 |  |
|  | 12942-57000 | Other Charges | $1,185.00 |  |
| 45 |  | Total Expenses | $18,816.00 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | **Tree Warden Total** | $21,603.00 | JW, KS seconds. Motion accepted 8-1-0. |

Roll call vote:

BB, yes KD, yes LM, yes JB, yes JL, no

JW, yes MH, yes KS, yes KN, yes

JW stated that the money budgeted for removal of dead trees due to the gypsy moth infestation was fully spent, and the scale of the damage is still large.

**Review of Items in the Betterment Budget for Tree Warden**

* Arbor Day Program
* Tree Maintenance (Town-wide)
* Town Common Tree Maintenance
* Main Street Tree and Park Maintenance (Street Landscaping)

The committee members noted that these are repetitive of last year’s requests.

**Review of Fiscal Year 2021 Education**

The following item was reviewed for Burgess Elementary School. The motion was moved to recommend line 46 for a total of $12,077,053.00 by KS.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Line** | **Account** | **Education** |  |  |
|  | 13002-53000 | Burgess Elementary School | $12,077,053.00 |  |
| 46 |  | Total Burgess | $12,077,053.00 | KS; KD seconds. Motion accepted 9-0-0. |

Roll call vote:

KS, yes BB, yes KD, yes LM, yes JB, yes

JL, yes JW, yes MH, yes KN, yes

DB explained that there will be a larger than anticipated turn back to the Town this year with savings in substitute teachers, bus transportation, gasoline, and utilities due to COVID-19 and the closing of the schools to students. She added that schoolbooks and other consumables are purchased at the beginning of the year for the entire school year. She stated that the teachers are working hard and the support staff is reaching out individually to students and families. She said that the custodians are in every day, and the cafeteria staff iss distributing food for breakfast and lunch twice weekly.

DB explained the system of transferring between accounts by the school committee as required by Massachusetts law. EN explained how the school shutdown has progressed through three phases. She added there is an end of remote learning exit survey planned to give families the opportunity to give feedback regarding how schooling at home has gone.

KN asked what the schools will do if the towns in the district need to make cuts. DB explained that there are two or three versions of what the school is prepared to do based on possible town cuts. They are considering cuts in Central Office and Professional Development. She added that they are waiting for state guidelines to be available so they can determine what is going to be required to reopen the schools. She said that possible changes include more medical assistance, more rigorous cleaning, and more transportation due to changes to the school schedule; the schools are doing their best to be prepared but may find out that the current budget numbers are not accurate. DB expressed concern that the Google Chrome Books lent out may not be in good condition when they are returned; she said that more people may need them in the fall if schools must send students home again due to a further COVID-19 outbreak.

The following item was reviewed for Tantasqua. The motion was moved to recommend line 47 for a total of $7,479,503.00 by KS.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Line** | **Account** |  |  |  |
|  | 13002-53200 | Tantasqua Town Share | $7,373,098.00 |  |
|  | 13002-53210 | Tant. Transportation Assessment | $106,405.00 |  |
| 47 |  | Total Tantasqua | $7,479,503.00 | KS; KD seconds. Motion accepted 9-0-0. |

Roll call vote:

KS, yes BB, yes KD, yes LM, yes JB, yes

JL, yes JW, yes MH, yes KN, yes

The following item was reviewed for Charter School. The motion was moved to recommend line 48 for a total of $6,000.00 by KS.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Line** | **Account** |  |  |  |
|  | 13002-53801 | Charter School Transportation | $6,000.00 |  |
| 48 |  | Total Charter School | $6,000.00 | KS: KD seconds. Motion accepted 9-0-0. |

Roll call vote:

LM, yes JB, yes JL, yes JW, yes MH, yes

KS, yes BB, yes KD, yes KN, yes

**Review of Fiscal Year 2021 Economic Development**

The following items were reviewed for Economic Development. The motion was moved to recommend lines 24 and 25 for a total of $21,168.00 by KS.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Line** | **Account** | **Economic Development** |  |  |
|  |  | Salaries/ Wages | $19,868.00 |  |
| 24 | 11771 | Personnel Costs | $19,868.00 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  | 11772-52000 | Purchase of Services | $150.00 |  |
|  | 11772-54000 | Supplies | $1,000.00 |  |
|  | 11772-57000 | Other Charges | $150.00 |  |
| 25 |  | Total Expenses | $1,300.00 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | **Economic Development Total** | $21,168.00 | KS; JW seconds. Motion accepted 9-0-0. |

Roll call vote:

KD, yes BB, yes KS, yes MH, yes JW, yes

JL, yes JB, yes LM, yes KN, yes

JBr stated that he is waiting for the Board of Selectmen to appoint the new hire for Economic Development and hopes the new person will begin work in the first week of June. He added that this is a 37 ½ hour, salaried position with the additional hours coming from Sturbridge Tourist Association for the coming year. JBr explained that this position helps develop regional and local events to bring more people to Town and will be even more critical with attractions closed and events canceled. He added that this position also works with the Town Planner to help businesses come to Sturbridge and to succeed in Sturbridge. KS stated that he believes that this position could be better utilized helping the Town Administrator as an Assistant Town Administrator. JBr said that he didn’t know if the Town is big enough for an Assistant Town Administrator – right now his office needs someone working on tourism, special events, with hoteliers, and with the tourist attractions in Town. He added tourism dollars that come to Sturbridge are very important to the budget, and the Town should use some of those dollars to keep those business viable and keep communication open. JBr explained that the money that will be used in Fiscal Year 21 have already been collected. JL stated that she believes the Economic Development Director brings better opportunities for small businesses in Town.

**Review of Annual Town Meeting Warrant Articles**

Article 1 – Town Reports – KS moved the motion to recommend Article 1 as written; MH seconds. Motion accepted 9-0-0.

Roll call vote:

LM, yes JB, yes JL, yes JW, yes MH, yes

KS, yes BB, yes KD, yes KN, yes

Article 3 – Community Preservation Administration Funds – MH moved the motion to recommend Article 3 as written; JB seconds. Motion accepted 9-0-0.

Roll call vote:

KS, yes BB, yes KD, yes LM, yes JB, yes

JL, yes JW, yes MH, yes KN, yes

There was discussion regarding how much was spent in Fiscal Year 2020 to date and that the amount was reduced by $2,000.00 for Fiscal Year 2021.

Article 4 – Community Preservation Debt Service – KS moved the motion to recommend Article 4 as written – JW seconds. Motion accepted 9-0-0.

Roll call vote:

LM, yes JB, yes JL, yes JW, yes MH, yes

KS, yes BB, yes KD, yes KN, yes

KN said there will be a page at the back of the book under Outstanding Debt which lists when each debt will be paid off.

Article 5 – Community Preservation Gravestone Restoration – it was decided to hold this Article for further information regarding what has been done and what the long term plan is.

Article 16 – Road Construction, Repairs and Maintenance – KS moved the motion to recommend Article 16 as written; JW seconds.

Roll call vote:

MH, yes KS, yes BB, yes KD, yes LM, yes

JB, yes JL, yes JW, yes KN, yes

Article 17 – Public Access Department – KS moved the motion to recommend Article 17 as written; JW seconds.

Motion accepted 8-0-0.

Roll call vote:

LM, yes JB, yes JL, yes MH, yes KS, yes

BB, yes KD, yes KN, yes JW, skipped

Article 21 – Ambulance Stabilization Fund – KS moved the motion to recommend Article 21 as written; JL seconds. Motion accepted 9-0-0.

Roll call vote:

JB, yes JL, yes JW, yes MH, yes KS, yes

BB, yes KD, yes LM, yes KN, yes

The question was raised as to when the next ambulance will be purchased. JBr said he will get the information from Chief Grasso.

Article 32 – Drone Survey and Landfill Capacity Analysis – JL moved the motion to recommend Article 32 as written; KS seconds. Motion accepted 9-0-0.

Roll call vote:

JB, yes JL, yes JW, yes MH, yes KS, yes

BB, yes KD, yes LM, yes KN, yes

**Meeting Minutes**

JW moved the motion to accept the April 16, 2020, minutes as presented with a typographical error corrected; JL seconds. Motion accepted 9-0-0.

Roll call vote:

LM, yes JB, yes JL, yes JW, yes MH, yes

KS, yes BB, yes KD, yes KN, yes

JW moved the motion to accept the April 23, 2020, minutes as presented; KS seconds. Motion accepted 9-0-0.

Roll call vote:

LM, yes JB, yes JL, yes JW, yes MH, yes

KS, yes BB, yes KD, yes KN, yes

JW moved the motion to accept the April 30, 2020, minutes as corrected; KS seconds. Motion accepted 9-0-0.

Roll call vote:

LM, yes JB, yes JL, yes JW, yes MH, yes

KS, yes BB, yes KD, yes KN, yes

**No Old Business**

**New Business**

KN pointed out that next week’s meeting will cover the Planning Board and Planning Department budgets and Zoning Articles in the Warrant.

The motion to adjourn was made by KS; JL seconds. Motion accepted 8-0-0.

Roll call vote:

LM, yes JB, yes JL, yes JW, yes MH, yes

KS, yes KD, yes KN, yes BB, skipped

Meeting adjourned at 9:02 pm.

/jme