**Finance Committee Meeting Minutes**

**Town Hall ~ May 7, 2020**

**Sturbridge, MA**

**Call to Order**

James Waddick, the Finance Committee Vice Chair, called the Finance Committee meeting to order at 6:30 pm. The following committee members were present: James Waddick (JW), Joni Light (JL), Larry Morrison (LM),

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

Guests: Jeff Bridges (JBr), Town Administrator; Barbara Barry (BBa), Finance Director; Rebecca Gendreau (RG), Conservation Agent; Leslie Wong (LW), Director, Council on Aging; Butch Jackson (BJ), Director, Department of Public Works; John Grasso (JG), Chief of the Fire Department.

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.

JW read an introduction to the virtual meeting.

**Review of Fiscal Year 2021 Conservation**

The following items were reviewed for Conservation. The motion was moved to recommend lines 19 and 20 for a total of $100,677.00 by JW.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Line** | **Account** | **Conservation Commission** |  |  |
|  |  | Department Head Salaries | $65,143.00 |  |
|  |  | Salaries/ Wages | $22,149.00 |  |
| 19 | 11711 | Personnel Costs | $87,292.00 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  | 11712-52000 | Purchase of Services | $11,068.00 |  |
|  | 11712-54000 | Supplies | $1,650.00 |  |
|  | 11712-57000 | Other Charges | $667.00 |  |
| 20 |  | Total Expenses | $13,385.00 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | **Conservation Commission Total** | $100,677.00 | JW; KS seconds. Motion accepted 5-4-0. |

Roll call vote:

KN, yes BB, no KD, yes JB, no MH, yes

JL, no LM, yes KS, no JW, yes

RG explained the new request for $5,000.00 for consulting services; she stated that typically these services can be included in the scope of the project, but sometimes things come up requiring third party review of engineering, inspectional, or monitoring services and are usually related to enforcement activity or needed feedback. Examples given were disputes with an applicant or disputes between experts. JBr explained that the focus is providing Town departments with access to the right information to make decisions based on necessary expertise. When asked how this was handled previously, RG explained that her department had used the DPW’s engineering budget during two fiscal years when the DPW did not need it. BJ added that the DPW will be using the engineering budget in FY21, so the funds are not always available to share.

RG explained that the budget also includes an additional five hours per week for the administrative assistant and that these hours falls under the Wetland Protection Fund. She stated that this may not be a good long-term solution, but these additional hours will be used for administration or enforcement specifically related to the Wetland Protection Act. RG said that the long meeting hours reduce the office hours available to be worked by the administrative assistant; she said that she would prefer the assistant position to be full-time.

RG stated that the budget includes a clothing allowance such as shirts, reflective vests and coats for site inspections. She said she has also requested basic field supplies such as a shovel, tick and bug spray, and hard hats.

BB recommended that the department keep doing its best at the previous level. LM recommended that a 2 or 2 ½% of the total Town budget be built into the budget as a contingency on a justification basis. KD recommended putting the engineering in FY21 and reviewing it next year to see if it is cost effective for the Town and if it helps the departments do what they needed to do. JL questioned if Reserve Fund Transfers would be a better way to handle engineering fees that are not included in department budgets.

JW turned the meeting over to KN.

**Review of Fiscal Year 2021 Council on Aging**

The following items were reviewed for Council on Aging. The motion was moved to recommend lines 59 and 60 for a total of $142,799.00 by LM.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Line** | **Account** | **Council on Aging** |  |  |
|  |  | Department Head Salaries | $58,119.00 |  |
|  |  | Salaries/ Wages | $73,605.00 |  |
|  |  | Longevity | $475.00 |  |
| 59 | 15411 | Personnel Costs | $132,199.00 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  | 15412-52000 | Purchase of Services | $2,150.00 |  |
|  | 15412-54000 | Supplies | $1,975.00 |  |
|  | 15412-57000 | Other Charges | $2,475.00 |  |
|  | 15412-57110 | Transportation | $4,000.00 |  |
| 60 |  | Total Expenses | $10,600.00 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | **Council on Aging Total** | $142,799.00 | LM; 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

LW explained that the Memory Café funding was removed due to lack of participation with its intended audience, but she is working with Charlton to create a new, dual-town program which will not require funding.

**Review of Fiscal Year 2021 for Department of Public Works**

The following items were reviewed for Department of Public Works (DPW). The motion was moved to recommend lines 49 and 50 for a total of $1,106,531.00 by KD.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Line** | **Account** | **Department of Public Works** |  |  |
|  |  | Department Head Salaries | $84,304.00 |  |
|  |  | Salaries/ Wages | $833,667.00 |  |
|  |  | Overtime | $14,000.00 |  |
|  |  | Longevity | $1,250.00 |  |
| 49 | 14101 | Personnel Costs | $933,221.00 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  | 14102-52000 | Purchase of Services | $72,010.00 |  |
|  | 14102-54000 | Supplies | $94,500.00 |  |
|  | 14102-57000 | Other Charges | $6,800.00 |  |
| 50 |  | Total Expenses | $173,310.00 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | **Department of Public Works Total** | $1,106,531.00 | KD: 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

KD noted that the DPW repairs and maintains most of the vehicles in Town. BJ explained that the first aid kits in the buses are maintained by the DPW, but the schools pay for the glucose in the kits. BJ said that the Signs budget was formerly included in the Road Construction budget but that it was not an appropriate use as there are signs need that are not related to road construction. BBa added that signs purchased with the Road Construction budget is for signage directly related to road construction, not for stop signs and street signs. She said that this is an attempt to put the expenses where they belong. BJ stated that when a sign is hit and a police report is made, that replacement is covered by insurance, but signs that are included in the Sign budget are not covered by insurance. BBa explained that the Road Construction budget was reduced more than the Sign budget amount.

As discussion centered around making budget cuts, JBr reminded the committee that the DPW is a unionized work force whose salaries are negotiated through a collective bargaining process. KD noted that the DPW has a full crew; memberships, dues and training are more expensive due to the number of employees. KN added that there may be a time to slash budgets, but she does not believe that this is the time.

KS asked where the DPW project stands. JBr stated that there are three building projects in various stages; the first project is the Senior Center building project, then the DPW project, followed by the Public Safety Complex. He added that the DPW building is woefully inadequate for what the Town is asking it to do.

BJ explained that he has an aggressive program to take care of the roads that have been identified as poor or very poor by the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC). He stated that the CMRPC wants to update the listing of the Town’s roads and explained some of the factors that go into a road’s rating given by the CMRPC.

**Review of Fiscal Year 2021 Town Road Maintenance**

The following item was reviewed for Town Road Maintenance. The motion was moved to recommend line 51 for a total of $6,000.00 by KD.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Line** | **Account** | **Town Road Maintenance** |  |  |
|  | 14212-52410 | Private Road Maintenance | $6,000.00 |  |
| 51 |  | Total Expenses | $6,000.00 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | **Town Road Maintenance Total** | $6,000.00 | KD; KS seconds. Motion accepted 9-0-0. |

Roll call vote:

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

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

**Review of Fiscal Year 2021 Snow and Ice Removal**

The following item was reviewed for Snow and Ice Removal. The motion to recommend line 52 for a total of $220,000.00 by KD.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Line** | **Account** | **Snow & Ice Removal** |  |  |
|  |  | Overtime | $50,000.00 |  |
|  | 14231 | Personnel Costs | $50,000.00 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Purchase of Services | $70,000.00 |  |
|  |  | Supplies | $100,000.00 |  |
|  | 14232 | Total Expenses | $170,000.00 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 52 | 14231/14232 | **Snow & Ice Control Total** | $220,000.00 | KD; KS 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

**Review of Fiscal Year 2021 Items in the Capital Improvement Plan for Department of Public Works**

* F350 Dump Truck

BJ stated that this truck will replace the 2007 one-ton with a badly rusted and cracked frame.

* F150 Pickup

BJ explained that this truck replaces a 1997 F350 which is in bad shape.

* Gas Pump Replacement

BJ said that because the gas pumps are very old and need many repairs, it is necessary to replace them before they fail and the DPW cannot pump gas.

* 9’ Stainless Steel Slide in Sander Body

BJ stated that this sander is for use on the Town’s dirt roads.

* Power Washer with Undercarriage Attachment

BJ explained that many of the vehicles are rusted out because the DPW has no way to wash vehicles. This piece of equipment has an attachment to pass under vehicle, trucks, and buses to clear out salt after every storm.

**Review of Fiscal Year 2021 Fire Department**

The following items were reviewed for Fire Department. The motion was moved to recommend lines 37 and 38 for a total of $1,771,316.00 by MH.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Line** | **Account** | **Fire Department** |  |  |
|  |  | Department Head Salaries | $115,897.00 |  |
|  |  | Salaries/ Wages | $1,188,061.00 |  |
|  |  | Overtime | $254,952.00 |  |
|  |  | Longevity | $2,050.00 |  |
| 37 | 12201 | Personnel Costs | $1,560,960.00 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  | 12202-52000 | Purchase of Services | $127,656.00 |  |
|  | 12202-54000 | Supplies | $75,800.00 |  |
|  | 12202-57000 | Other Charges | $6,900.00 |  |
| 38 |  | Total Expenses | $210,356.00 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | **Fire Department Total** | $1,771,316.00 | MH; KS seconds. Motion accepted 9-0-0. |

Roll call vote:

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

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

MH and JG explained that the Safer Grant will be ending in January 2021 and the Town will be responsible for the total amount of the four Safer Grant fire fighters’ salaries after that date. JG stated that the administrative assistant’s hours have increased by ten hours per week because the responsibilities of that position continue to increase. JG said that the Purchase of Services item should be reduced by $1,260.00 for ambulance sanitizing because he has ordered the AeroClave sanitizing unit which will eliminate the need for an outside vendor to sanitize the ambulance. He explained that the TECC Training goes with the ALICE drills, allowing medics to be trained to integrate with the tactical team to enter a building as they will have been trained to provide care in a combat situation. He added that Police Chief Ford is supportive of the idea. JG said that the Fire Department Policies and Procedures are inadequate, including policies that are no longer valid. He plans to bring in Lexipol to build policies according to best practices and Massachusetts case law which will lower risk and litigation costs and improve safety of personnel.

**Review of Fiscal Year 2021 Safety Complex**

The following item was reviewed for Safety Complex. The motion was moved to recommend line 32 for a total of $86,395.00 by MH.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Line** | **Account** | **Safety Complex** |  |  |
|  | 11972-52000 | Purchase of Services | $76,895.00 |  |
|  | 11972-54000 | Supplies | $9,500.00 |  |
| 32 |  | Total Expenses | $86,395.00 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | **Safety Complex Total** | $86,395.00 | MH; 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

**Review of Fiscal Year 2021 Items in the Capital Improvement Plan for Safety Complex**

* Copier at Public Safety Complex

Questions arose concerning the price of the copier. BBa explained that the pricing is for a comparable machine to the one being replaced. JBr added that they will look into pricing.

* Replacement of Security Camera System

JG stated that the current security camera is failing; the new system will replace the entire interior and exterior security system at the Safety Complex. He added that the Facilities Coordinator and the Information Technologies Department worked with him on this proposal. JBr stated that the cameras will be wired rather than wireless.

* Executive 24/7 Chairs

JG said these chairs are for the three dispatch positions and are specially designed to be used 24/7.

* Exterior Storage Containers

JG stated that the equipment which is stored outside is getting weather beaten; he plans to store boats, UTVs, a snowplow, generators, and other equipment in the containers. He said that the three containers can be repurposed after the Safety Complex is remodeled. He added that an alternate location for the storage containers is at Town Barn rather than at the Safety Complex.

* Station Alerting System

JG explained that there is currently no central way to alert staff to calls. This system will alert on duty personnel audibly and visually when a call for service is dispatched.

* Fire Pumper

MH said this pumper is a planned replacement and will replace Engine #2 (purchased in 1998) which has reached the end of its useful life. JG stated that currently the Town is borrowing a pump truck from Spencer. JG added that the next truck is scheduled to be replaced in Fiscal Year 2023, and it is a rescue truck from 1997.

KS asked how the floor in the Police Department garage is holding up after the replacement four or five years ago. JG stated that it is holding up well, but at some time the door from the garage to the hallway will have to be replaced. He added that money was appropriated in Fiscal Year 2020 to renovate the front entrance which included Unfortunately, Medicare requires the exam but does not pay for it.

some trim work of the overhead doors leading into the Police Garage.

**Review of Fiscal Year 2021 Items in the Betterment Budget for Fire**

* Special Events Overtime

JG said the PanMass Challenge has been cancelled. He expects the dollar amount of this request to be reduced due to the cancellation of events in July, but he has not recalculated the new number yet.

* Protective Firefighting Gear

JG explained that protective gear has a service life not to exceed ten years, and most of the gear will require replacement at the same time. These funds are carried forward to purchase gear in Fiscal Year 2022.

* Bleeding Control Kits

These funds will purchase training kits for a “Stop the Bleed” class for the community. LM stated that he has taken this training, and he believes community training is an excellent idea.

* Ventilation Saw

JG stated that a ventilation saw, used to cut holes in the roof of a burning building, has failed.

KS asked if a phase-in is planned for firefighter’s breathing apparatus as they were all replaced within a three-year timeline. JG said he is not to that step yet but hopes to obtain a grant to begin a fund to replace self-contained breathing apparatus.

**No Meeting Minutes**

**No Old Business**

**New Business**

KN stated that the plan is to finish line item budget next week and to start on the Town Meeting Warrant. JBr stated that June 29 is definite for Town Meeting.

KS stated that the engineering line item suggested by LM has already been discussed as new business.

**No Public Access**

JB moved the motion to adjourn; 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

Meeting adjourned at 9:11 pm.

/jme