**Finance Committee Meeting Minutes**

**Town Hall ~ April 16, 2020**

**Sturbridge, MA**

**Call to Order**

The Finance Committee Chair called the Finance Committee meeting to order at 6:35 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), Bruce Boyson (BB), Jared Burns (JB), and Karen Davis (KD).

Guests: Jeff Bridges (JBr), Town Administrator; John Grasso (JG), Fire Chief; Barbara Barry (BBa), Finance Director; Butch Jackson (BJ), DPW Director.

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.

**Reserve Fund Transfers-Fire Chief (2)**

Fire Chief request for $30,807.00 to purchase a portable AeroClave room decontamination system. KS moved the motion to approve the transfer of $30,807.00 to Fire Department Supplies, Account #12202-54000. JW seconds. Roll call vote:

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

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

Motion accepted 9-0-0.

JG explained that this unit creates an aerosol mist which would be used to disinfect the interior of the ambulance and other fire department equipment. He added that he believes that it would be available for use town-wide to disinfect police vehicles, school buses, Town buildings, offices and cell blocks. He stated that currently an outside vendor is used when disinfection is required. He explained that this expense may be submitted to the Federal Emergency Management Agency and/or the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency once the current emergency order is waived. During the discussion, it was learned that cleaning would still be required; the unit provides disinfection. JG stated that the expense of supplies should be a few hundred dollars per year and that it is unknow at this time who would clean non-fire department items.

The Fire Chief’s second Reserve Fund Transfer for $5,025.00 to replace the portable fire pump for Brush 1. KS moved the motion to approve the transfer of $5,025.00 to Fire Department Supplies, Account #12202-54000. MH seconds. Roll call vote:

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

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

Motion accepted 9-0-0.

JG explained that the Brush 1 is used to fight brush fires; the vehicle and pump are forty years old. Without the pump, it is impossible to get water off the truck. He stated that this pump is an exact replacement to the original pump.

**Reserve Fund Transfers – DPW Director (2)**

DPW Director request for $7,000.00 for replacement tires for the Case loader. JW moved the motion to approve the transfer of $7,000.00 to DPW Supplies, Account #14102-54000. KD seconds. After discussion, JW amended the motion to include the phrase “preventative maintenance to prevent unforeseen repair” to explain the purpose of the request. KD seconds. Roll call vote:

BB, no KS, yes MH, yes KD, yes JW, yes

JL, no JB, yes LM, yes KN, yes

Motion accepted 7-2-0.

BJ stated that the six-year-old tires are original to the loader and will not make it another year. Discussion centered on whether to wait for Town Meeting or to approve the request. JBr stated that he has not spoken with the moderator or the schools regarding when Town Meeting will be held. JW proposed that preventative maintenance is better than repair for this sizeable piece of equipment.

The second DPW Director request for $10,000.00 to repair the landfill loader. KS moved the motion to approve the transfer of $10,000.00 to DPW Purchased Services, Account #12202-52000. BB seconds. Roll call vote:

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

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

Motion accepted 9-0-0.

BJ said that the loader at the landfill is worn out, almost undriveable, and needs repair. He added that he expects that it has many years of useable life after the repair. Discussion was held regarding a preventative maintenance program or an equipment evaluation program to properly maintain the Town’s equipment. BJ stated he is looking at preventative maintenance programs and that the new head mechanic is responsible to watch out for the equipment and to report back to BJ regarding issues.

**Reserve Fund Transfers – Finance Director (2)**

Finance Director request for $703.00 to cover costs associated with the Board of Selectmen’s (BOS) attending the Annual Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) conference in Boston. JB moved the motion to approve the transfer of $703.00 to Board of Selectmen – Other Charges, Account #11222-57000. Roll call vote:

LM, yes JB, yes JW, yes MH, yes KD, yes

BB, yes JL, yes KS, yes KN, yes

Motion accepted 9-0-0.

JBr explained that more BOS members attended the MMA meeting than in past years. He added that it is a resource that is available and should be taken advantage of. He stated that he has increased the amount for next year’s budget.

The second request is for $20,000.00 to create a COVID-19 Expense Account. KS moved the motion to transfer $20,000.00 to COVID-19 Expense, Account #\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. JW seconds. Roll call vote:

KS, yes LM, yes JB, yes JW, yes MH, yes

KD, yes BB, yes JL, no KN, yes

Motion accepted 8-1-0.

JBr stated that the COVID-19 pandemic has caused resources to be expended. BBa added that the Massachusetts Department of Revenue had suggested that towns create a specific COVID-19 account for specific expenses that have not been budgeted for. JBr explained that it is helpful in seeking reimbursement if the COVID-19 expenses are paid from a dedicated fund. KS stated that this was done by the Town after the tornado came through in 2011, making it easier for the Town to track tornado expenses and get reimbursement; now this account may be used to prove to state and federal agencies that expenses are COVID-19 related. BBa clarified that the account may be used to pay labor expenses.

**Review of Fiscal Year 2021 Town Budgets**

JBr offered an overview of the FY20 budget. He stated that some revenue projections may not materialize; he said that most likely the economy will be reopened by July 1, but the Town is operating in a non-shutdown state. He added that the Town is still collecting revenues from pre-COVID-19, and it will probably be necessary to adjust revenue as the committee works through the budget. Discussion was held concerning the new Line Number system in place. BBa and JBr explained the flexibility allowed by the system, and BBa reminded the committee members that this was discussed and agreed upon during last year’s budget meetings.

**Review of Fiscal Year 2021 Board of Selectmen Budget**

The following line item was reviewed for Board of Selectmen. The motion was moved to recommend line 1 for a total of $3,600.00 by LM.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Line** | **Account** | **Board of Selectmen** |  |  |
|  | 11222-52000 | Purchase of Services | $2,200.00 |  |
|  | 11222-57000 | Other Charges | $1,400.00 |  |
| 1 |  | Total Expenses | $3,600.00 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | **Board of Selectmen Total** | $3,600.00 | LM; KS seconds. Motion accepted 9-0-0. |

Roll call vote:

LM, yes JB, yes JW, yes MH, yes KD, yes

BB, yes JL, yes KS, yes KN, yes

JBr indicated that that the amount included increased funding for the Massachusetts Municipal Association conference.

**Review of Fiscal Year 2021 Town Administrator Budget**

The following line items were reviewed for Town Administrator. The motion was moved to recommend lines 2 and 3 for a total of $261,293.00 by LM.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Line** | **Account** | **Town Administrator** |  |  |
|  |  | Department Head Salaries | $153,750.00 |  |
|  |  | Merit Based Pay Incentive | $29,751.00 |  |
|  |  | Salaries/ Wages | $39,442.00 |  |
| 2 | 11231 | Personnel Costs | $222,943.00 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  | 11232-52000 | Purchase of Services | $22,500.00 |  |
|  | 11232-54000 | Supplies | $2,850.00 |  |
|  | 11232-57000 | Other Charges | $8,000.00 |  |
|  | 11232-58000 | Matching Grant Funds | $5,000.00 |  |
| 3 |  | Total Expenses | $38,350.00 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | **Town Administrator Total** | $261,293.00 | LM; BB seconds. Motion accepted 6-3-0. |

Roll call vote:

LM, yes JB, yes JW, yes MH, no KD, yes

BB, yes JL, no KS, no KN, yes

Discussion centered on the Project Funds item and whether it is better to have funds available when the Board of Selectmen (BOS) has questions or to ask for Reserve Fund Transfers as needed. Questions were raised regarding oversight and checks and balances. JBr stated that the BOS would know where the funds were going and why they were expended.

JBr explained that the COVID-19 situation has delayed the compensation study results, but he expects the new compensation plan to be competitive, have a new process and to maintain competitiveness over time.

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**Review of Fiscal Year 2021 Finance Committee Budget**

The following line items were reviewed for Finance Committee. The motion to recommend lines 4 and 5 for a total of $7,334.00 by KN.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Line** | **Account** | **Finance Committee** |  |  |
| 4 | 11311 | Personnel Costs | $3,734.00 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  | 11312-52000 | Purchase of Services | $3,400.00 |  |
|  | 11312-57000 | Other Charges | $200.00 |  |
| 5 |  | Total Expenses | $3,600.00 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | **Finance Committee Total** | $7,334.00 | KN; KS seconds. Motion accepted 9-0-0. |

Roll call vote:

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

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

***This salary is for the Recording Secretary and not any Finance Committee members.***

**No Meeting Minutes to Approve**

**No New Business**

**No Old Business**

**No Public Access**

KS moved the motion to adjourn; KD seconds. Roll call vote:

JW, yes KD, yes MH, yes BB, yes JL, yes

JB, yes KS, yes KN, yes LM, yes

Motion accepted 9-0-0 and meeting adjourned at 8:59 pm.

/jme