

Finance Committee Meeting - 3/12/20 - Opened at: 7:00 PM
Present: Roberts, Durey, Kelly, Knezek, Beaudoin, Sperelakis

No Public Comment

Approval of Minutes

3/10/20 Minutes

Durey: Motion to Approve; Passed 3-0-1; Beaudoin, Sperelakis not present yet.

Water - Presentation by Town Manager, Mr. Jennings - 4% wage line increase; 2% COLA; employee turnover; change in on-call pay

Present: Mr. Janes and Mr. Gootee

Mr. Gootee: on-call pay for operator - \$150/week increase to \$200/week, and \$200/week to \$300/week for Superintendent. On call is every third week. \$500 increase to attend a conference. \$2000 increase due to increased testing requirements. Work is still going on near the water tank - painting, National Grid, Comcast. Want contractors to do all of the work once. Durey: will there be an increase in the debt service next year? Gootee: not unless new debt is taken on next year.

Durey: Motion to Approve Budget as presented by TM, inclusive of Indirect Costs assumed by TM.

Knezek - what is a full year value of the savings, once the well is fully online?

Gootee: potentially \$60k/year, but it will take a year to get a better idea.

Approved: 5-0-1.

Article 5

Water Dept.

Durey: Motion to approve Article 5 with numbers as presented in the Water Department Budget.

Approved: 6-0-0

Community Preservation Committee

Presentation by Town Manager, Mr. Jennings - Spring 2019 it was brought to attention that it does not allow for access to any student in a wheelchair. Existing equipment is in poor shape. Mr. Hadden from Pentucket told Mr. Jennings that certain parts cannot get replaced because it is not made anymore and is blocked off with caution tape. Got a 20k grant to improve on the swingset. CPC voted in January to approve eligibility, and 2/20/20 voted to recommend the project, a total reconstruction of the playground, deal with the water issues, DPW would help with some of the work. Poured in place is best for long term, as opposed to a combo bottom, which would require maintenance. Multiple quotes will be sought for the project. Once you have formal notice of noncompliance with ADA, we could get a letter from the architectural access board, and potentially close the facility.

Durey: square footage difference between existing structure and revised structure?

Jennings: roughly smaller than existing.

Durey: reduction saved how much money? Jennings: \$95K

Roberts: fundraising efforts? Jennings: Board of Selectmen created a gift account. Until the CPC approved a project, there was not a project to raise funds around. There is an expectation that there will be private funds raised, potentially to add things like benches.

Tricia Sabulis: expectation is that if we raise funds, it will reduce the amount of funds received out of CPA.

Kelly: Could we be liable to civil suit? Concerns about compliance issues at Action Cove?

Jennings: should not be liable if we show that we are making progress

Amaral: Action Cove needs replacement, beyond repair.

Knezek: would CPA funds make the playground open to the public during the school day, or only on weekend? Jennings: it would not be open to the public during the school day

Article 15

Page School Playground

Durey: Motion to Approve Article 15 as presented by TM. .

Roberts: concerned about cost of project in light of Carr Post, High School, and other projects.

Vote: Tie: 3-3-0 (Kelly, Knezek, Sperelakis approve, Beaudoin, Durey, Roberts disapprove).

Jennings: a number to get majority support?

Roberts: it would be nice to see something like Greenbelt with split funding.

Kelly: supported, but concerned about cost with all of the other costs that are increasing, and with concerns about the long term viability of the Page School

Knezek: lifespan of the project? Jennings 20-25 years, 10 year warranty.

Police

Presentation by Town Manager, Mr. Jennings - still working on contract negotiations, hope to have it approved before Town Meeting.

Durey: Motion to Approve Public Safety Budget, with exception of Salary & Wages, and OT Wages, as presented by TM.

Durey: concerned about SRO being fairly funded by Pentucket. Less than 30% of the total cost is being reimbursed.

Knezek: what happened in negotiations for the SRO? Jennings: \$30K is what Pentucket agreed to; the Town gets value from having the officer there, and he is still in service to the Town. MOU has not been voted on yet.

Approved: 5-1-0 (Durey dissent).

Durand: Different designs of the new Explorers. None of the equipment fits. That makes the Explorers not an option. Chief vehicle is an older Explorer, so that will be fit to be a regular marked cruiser. The expectation should be that for the next four years the equipment changeovers will make the cost of yearly cruiser replacement go up to \$54K for the next four years.

Article 19

Radio replacement. Old technology is not nearly as good as modern technology. Best condition old radios will be kept for backups and details.

Durey: Motion to approve Article 19. Approved 6-0-0.

Sunset clause: FY21

Municipal Dispatch

Durey: Motion to Approve Budget as presented by TM. Approved 6-0-0.

Animal Control

Durey: Motion to Approve Budget as presented by TM. Approved 5-1-0 (Beaudoin disapproved).

Article 17

Plow/Sanding Dump Truck

Kelly: if this is not done, 25% reduction in response to winter weather

Durey: Motion to Approve Article 17. Approved 6-0-0.

Sunset clause: FY21

Article 18

Page School Fire Alarm

Kelly: if this is not done, the school could be closed.

Durey: Motion to Approve Article 18. Approved 6-0-0.

Sunset clause: FY22

Article 19

Page School Floor Repair

Durey: Motion to Approve Article 18. Approved 6-0-0.

Sunset clause: FY23

Article 20

Improvements/Repairs to Council on Aging, Public Safety Complex, old DPW garage, and unforeseen emergency repairs.

Motion to Approve Article 18.

Durey: Why aren't these part of the budget or part of the Capital plan?

Amaral: These are larger scale projects than what is funded in the budget. Not large enough for Capital Planning (\$20K), but more costly than smaller projects (less than \$8K).

Beaudoin: agreed with Durey, but DPW money is well spent, good return on investment.

Split vote: 3-3-0 (Beaudoin, Kelly, Sperelakis approved; Durey, Knezek, Roberts disapproved).

Sunset clause: FY23

Article 21

Snow/Ice

Motion to Approve Article 21, with temporary number of \$27,452.

Approved 4-2-0 (Roberts, Kelly disapproved).

Sunset clause: FY20

Debt Service

Presentation by Town Manager, Mr. Jennings

Beaudoin: how does debt service look, in relation to the whole budget, which should be 5-10%?

Jennings: well less than that percentage.

Approved: 6-0-0.

Capital Stabilization

Motion to approve \$500,000 transfer to stabilization in omnibus budget, as presented by TM.

Approved: 6-0-0.

Article 12

Durey: Motion to Approve Article 12. Approved: 6-0-0.

Articles 7, 8, 9, 10

Durey: Motion to Approve Articles 7, 8, 9, 10. Approved: 6-0-0.

Health Insurance

Presentation by Town Manager, Mr. Jennings - multipliers ended up as a good predictor of the numbers that actually came about. We build in an assumption in case upto two employees switch onto a family plan.

Durey: Motion to Approve Budget as presented by TM.

Approved: 6-0-0.

Medicare

Presentation by Town Manager, Mr. Jennings - added 2.5% to number, and expect this should be a reasonable prediction.

Durey: Motion to Approve Budget as presented by TM.

Approved: 6-0-0.

COLA

Presentation by Town Manager, Mr. Jennings - 0.5% increase on COLA is approximately \$64K

Durey: Motion to Approve Budget as presented by TM.

Approved: 5-1-0 (Beaudoin disapproved).

Recreation

Presentation by Town Manager, Mr. Jennings - there are other funds outside the operating budget that are sitting in accounts.

Durey: Motion to Approve Budget as presented by TM.

Sperelakis: who does the wage line go to?

Jennings: some kids do work to get the park ready in the spring

Approved 6-0-0.

Communications

Jennings - Board of Selectmen want to add an Article to Warrant to add a revolving fund for Solid Waste & Recycling

Adjournment: 8:40 PM, 6-0-0

Next meeting: 3/23/20 @ BOS meeting regarding Free Cash

Minutes by Kelly