

West Newbury Finance Committee

Date & Time: Tuesday, September 15, 2020; 7:00 pm

Location: First Floor Conference Room, 1910 Building Main Street West Newbury.

Attendees: Gary Roberts, Jr., Jim Sperelakis, Nathan Kelly, Jessica Knezek (remote), Joe Heyman (remote), Wayne Amaral, Angus Jennings

Agenda

1. Call to Order, 7:01 p.m.
2. Approval of Minutes, 7/13/20; 3-0-1
3. Public Comment. None.
4. Discuss and re-vote on Articles that had been previously considered from the Spring Town Meeting.

Article 2: Board of Selectmen have reraised. Transfer would make it so there is no tax impact from school on taxpayer for FY21.

Motion to approve, seconded.

Discussion: Committee jointly discussed what happened at Town meeting, and how the will of the voters was to vote this issue down. Continued concern about burning through this account more quickly than originally planned, and potential impacts that may be felt in future years economically. Issue should be determined by the voters. The dollar amount impact is \$0.42 per \$1000 assessed. A fair point is that we are taking less money out of the account than we are putting into it this year. Withdrawing the full \$404K amount reduces the ability to take a higher amount in the future.

JH had questions as a new member to the committee to become familiar with the issue.

AJ: New option this year is overlay. Recommended by state statute to maintain an overlay balance for things such as abatements. Potentially \$220K available for BOS to use to reduce the tax rate.

Vote: 0-5-0

Article 5: Resubmittal of dump truck. Issue is the lead time to purchase.

Motion to approve, seconded.

WA: price went up from manufacturer, and takes 8-10 months to get the truck built. Old truck is starting to rust and needs to be replaced.

Sunset date recommended by WA: 2 years.

Vote: 5-0-0, Sunset date, end of FY23.

Article 3: Warranty for Electric Vehicle Chargers

GR: maintaining asset is an important component of Town services.

AJ: Town cannot prepay for goods/services for anything, including stand alone warranty purchases.

Issue tabled.

5. Establish schedule for review of new Articles for the Fall Town Meeting

Issues at hand:

Article 4 - health insurance increase for water department. A contingency for hiring a new operator. Money comes from water fees.

Article 6 - extend sunset date on Fire Rescue vehicle.

Article 7 - zoning amendments

Article 3 - in a normal cycle, it would be multiple articles. Looking to amend the budget, instead of drawing from free cash, because of how they balance.

Line 23 - reduce amount by however much is coming out of Stabilization

Line 24 - Whittier assessments are down

Line 40 - health insurance was over budgeted.

Line 3 - Town Manager Expense - help needed for revision of personnel policies

Line 6 - Finance Dept. - trying to fix issues from many years, need help.

Line 7 - Special Counsel - have had time intensive personnel issues, and expect to be overspending this line item.

Line 8 - Town Clerk - November election, money is reimbursed.

Line 15 - Police Dept. - hybrid cruiser no longer available. Only have SUV's

Line 26 - DPW - charging stations, high hazard tree removal, hanging flower baskets downtown.

Line 32 - Recreation - cost of port-a-potties at park/fields

Line 39 - Unemployment Compensation

Motion to approve. Article 4. 5-0-0.

Motion to approve. Article 6. 5-0-0.

NK: our new position to not vote on zoning articles, like Article 7 should continue. Some say everything relates to finance but it is often not clear at all. General consensus of agreement amongst others.

Next meeting - 9/22/20, 7:00 p.m.

Town Meeting, 10/17/20, 10:00 a.m., outside again.

Other business:

JS - Investment Policy Committee. Meetings have been very interesting. Very well educated group.

NK - Capital Improvement Committee. No meeting, but meeting coming up. Voting on truck, setting schedule, and setting officers.

6.Adjourment, 8:06 p.m.