

Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

Monday April 4, 2019 held at 1st Floor Conference Room, Town Hall

Members Present: Fletcher, Sullivan, Goldman, Hilario, McNerney, Rosenberg, Titcomb

Members Absent: Dorsey,

Others Present: Ronald Mendes (minutes taker & Asst Town Administrator); Cheryl Herrick-Stella, (Town Accountant); Sylvia Belkin (Resident).

Called to order 7:03pm

Ms. Fletcher called the meeting to order at 7:03pm as Mr. Dorsey was unable attend this evening. Ms. Fletcher distributed copies of the Capital Status Sheet, the Draft Town Meeting Warrant and mentioned that copies of the Draft Harbor Plan are available for people interested.

Ms. Fletcher then suggested that the Committee begin with a review of the proposed Capital Plan. The Committee members updated the points from Monday's joint meeting with the Capital Improvement Committee. The committee reviewed each of the proposed capital plan as it is presented in the draft warrant beginning with a discussion about the proposed \$25,000 for design of a bath house at Phillips Beach surrounding whether this is the right number for design of a project of this size. On Redesign of Construction of Beach Entrances there was discussion on what beaches will this project entail, as well as discussion about the cost of the remaining beaches. The cost of Kings & Fisherman's beach was just over \$67,000, but the remaining beaches will require additional resiliency work, but it is not clear to the committee what beaches are going to be done in FY2020 and in FY2021.

The committee then proceeded to move on with several of the projects listed in the capital plan. The discussion then moved on to the proposed Sidewalk Snow Tractor. There is concern about the cost and the committee members would like to have Mr. Cresta provide a quote for the equipment he is proposing to purchase. The committee continued with the list of proposed capital projects that are not considered controversial. There was discussion about the proposed electronic signs and the possibility of "sign pollution" in town. The project to fund the study on the status of repair of the Middle School was raised and there was some discussion about this project. There was much discussion about the timeline for developing the study and whether there would be an update before fall town meeting, and on the process for applying for funding with the MSBA. The Committee had a lengthy discussion concerning the possibility of funding of the Middle School study with the Finance Committee reserve. Mr. Mendes reminded the committee that the reserve fund can only be used for operations and not a capital expense.

The discussion then moved to the next project, which was the request for security upgrades. The committee talked about whether there is a security plan in place for the schools. Ms. Fletcher explained that she went the Police Station and discussed school security with staff at the Police Station, including the School Resource Officer. The Committee then talked about whether this proposal is properly a capital expense. The committee feels it needs more information on the security upgrades.

Discussion then turned to the proposal for re-designing the current space housing the Building Department & Community Development Department. There is concern about the need for this project as well as the cost of the project. The sense of the committee was to not approve these upgrades to town hall.

The discussion moved onto the tactical gear being proposed jointly by the Fire Department and Police Department to purchase helmet, ceramic plates, and other tactical gear for both departments. The sense of the committee was to support the proposal, as well as the Fire Department's air lift bags and the Police Department's proposal to replace its radio equipment. The purchase of a police car is requested to be increased by \$3,000 to \$43,000 to enable the Police Department to purchase a hybrid police car. The committee turned to the Windsor Ave Playground and the need for new equipment on that playground. The committee then discussed the proposal of \$325,000 on School Technology needs. Members questioned whether this expense was operating vs. capital. The sense of the committee was to support the town & library technology, as well as the new voting machines.

The committee then reviewed the capital status report, which Ms. Fletcher suggested members could review at home and bring back comments to a later meeting.

The committee then turned to the operating budget. The committee decided to review the proposed operating budget to either approve line items that are not controversial. The committee reviewed the legislative/town meeting section and had no changes. Under the Selectmen's proposed budget there was some discussion on funding community programs such as the Idea Exchange and ultimately agreed with the proposal. The committee moved on to the budget of the Town Administrator and reviewed the line items. There was some discussion about the specific items that comprise the Town Administrator's budget. The committee members would like to obtain a copy of the Town Administrator's employment contract to be distributed to committee members before the next meeting. The committee would also like to know how the Town Administrator came up with \$26,500 on contracting/consulting services.

Ms. Fletcher asked to defer any further discussion on the budget to the next meeting, and then discussed the tri-chair meetings. Ms. Fletcher asked if there are any items members would like brought up at the tri-chair meeting. There was then some discussion about the Finance Committee receiving notifications of personnel changes that have a large financial impact to town finances, such as new employment contracts and new hires. Ms. Sullivan wanted to make the point that major decisions made at tri-chair meetings should be shared with Finance Committee members. Ms. McNerney said that if minutes are taken at tri-chair meetings the minutes should be shared with committee members.

Ms. Fletcher then asked Ms. Belkin to offer any comments she would like to offer. Ms. Belkin indicated that she was impressed with the discussion taking place throughout the meeting.

Meeting Adjourned 9:01 pm.

APPROVED ON 4/22