

Finance Committee Meeting – 4/1/22

Present: Allen Rugg and Howard Goldstein

Not present: Mark Foster and Jim Newman (alternate)

Also present: Town Accountant Emily Day, Town Administrator Jeff Madison, Chief Belain, Select Board member Tom Murphy, Select Board Chair Gary Haley

Allen called the meeting to order at 9:33am.

- Committee requested the following revisions to the minutes: add names when someone abstains, spelling change. Allen motioned to approve 3/7, 3/9 and 3/11/22 minutes as revised. Howard seconded. Committee voted 2-0, motion passed.

- Discussion concerning warrant articles: Jeff originally suggested the removal/postponement of 3 articles that would potentially put the town into an override. However, Select Board makes the final decision on the warrant. Furthermore, the town projects article should be for residents to consider whether to move forward and if it were to be removed than it will set the town back 2 years. This will be discussed at the next Select Board meeting at which Jeff will suggest that the town consider an override to keep the town projects going. Fin Comm will await the Select Board review/approval of the warrant before making any comments. Tom noted that the amount for the Moshup Trial tree trimming article has been reduced to \$18,000. Fin Comm requested that should that article remain on the warrant, a representative of the article present to the Fin Comm.

- COLA discussion: bottom line impact of COLA to budget is \$40,914 (\$23,019 town employees and \$17,894 police). Emily presented a breakdown of the impact of COLA on employees and police wages: base salary impact for employees totals \$22,920; impact of COLA employee longevity totals \$100 (3 employees); police base salary impact totals \$12,529; police contractual longevity impact totals \$799 (4 employees); police education incentive totals \$466 (incentive is based on salary); police coverage for paid time off totals \$4,101. Overall increase to the wage compensation budget for town employees and police is \$66,123, a 5.7% increase (inclusive of 3% COLA and step increases). Fin Comm requested the increase calculation from prior year.

- Police Budget: major increase to budget is due to wages which were contractually approved by Select Board; Chief contract is still in draft form (includes longevity and COLA); budget includes a detective stipend line item (reinstated) which will not be a new rank rather an assigned position (Chief's intent is to assign Officer Mathias); detective line item will also cover accreditation manager stipend; \$1,000 increase to supplies and expenses line (accommodate increase in product costs); \$7,300 increase to data processing line item for RDA Softnet contract (this falls under general government data processing budget); paid time off coverage includes a 864 hour increase to budget; Chief noted that there were savings in the summer season officer line item (hiring an unarmed traffic officer this season while a special officer completes training (to return mid-summer)) and reduction to on-call line item; overall budget increase is \$18,280 (less than 3% increase); Brief discussion ensued concerning the reasoning behind adding the detective line item.

Police warrant articles:

Purchasing of new vehicle to replace a 2016 fleet vehicle (vehicle to be replaced has 119,000 miles). Two alternative articles: leasing (article to fund 1st year and then fall into the budget for remaining lease term) or purchase. Chief noted that the department needs 3 vehicles to operate efficiently. Emily suggested that

the lease alternative would be more appropriately included in the budget rather than presented as a warrant article for the first year. Chief noted that he followed the prior vehicle leasing process.

Town adoption of statute that relates to parking clerk and allowing officers to issue parking tickets (no budgetary commitment). Parking violation fines will be increasing this year.

Emily noted that there was a 3.44% reduction in the police compensation from FY 22 to FY 23.

- Warrant articles: Committee agreed to postpone review until Select Board final review and approval.

- Next meeting: Friday, April 8th at 9:30am.

Committee unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 10:44am.

Respectfully submitted,

Sophia Welch