

WASHINGTON FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES

3 April 2017

Meeting was called to order at 7:40 pm.

(Committee members attended part of Selectmen's Mtg regarding Wired West prior to Fin Mtg.)

In Attendance: Kent Lew, Dick Spencer, Sean Connors, and David Weissbrod

OLD BUSINESS

Finance committee meeting minutes from March 20, 2017 were approved.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Second Review of Draft FY18 Budget

- a. COLA: Discussed COLA raise for employees other than highway dept. We all agreed that our town employees do an excellent job. We defined cola from previous CY start to CY end. After thoughtful discussion, we will propose 2.5% cola increase.

Voted on, and approved unanimously.

- b. Highway Budget: Discussed Highway Supervisor and Crew positions and rates. Again, we voiced our approval for the dept's work and said that the supervisor was doing an excellent job in his first year in that job. We compared our town rates for these positions to other towns of similar size. We are near bottom in comparison... We fell \$3.00 below average for hourly rate for supervisor and \$0.75 below average for crew. We considered a number of scenarios, primarily comparing two scenarios, before agreeing on proposing to raise supervisor's rate from \$23.00 to \$25.00, and raising crew rate from \$19.00 to \$20.00. We also discussed effect of raises on overtime rate and effect on budget. For winter rds overtime, line item would increase to \$12,787 (from \$12,000), and for non winter rds overtime, line item would increase to \$5,328 (from \$5,000). Our town will still fall well below most of the other towns that we used in our hourly rate comparison.

Voted on, and approved unanimously.

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b. Other Adjustments.

(1) Ambulance service: Becket has asked for increase in our payment as discussed in previous meetings. We propose leaving in \$8,500 for now. We can adjust later, perhaps to \$8,215. Need to look at options and more data.

(2) Becket Beach: Becket seeks increase. We propose \$2,500 (in FY 17 it was \$1,000).

(3) Assistant Police Officer: Not much heads up on this. \$4,680 is starting point for salary for this proposed position. Chief Breen says he needs help – he's not getting any younger. Are we to assume that this is in addition to his present responsibilities or would he be relinquishing some? What is our town's philosophy for this position, moving forward? There would be additional costs, such as certification requirements, training, AED, mandatory education, insurance, equipment, background checking, added phone listing, and communication access. We probably haven't identified all additional costs. Will need to present this item to Executive Committee for more discussion.

(4) Compactor Bin: Tom Johnson now says he thinks we can get another year out of the compactor bin! (We may need retaining wall fix at transfer station.)

(5) Culvert work: We may need to add culvert estimate to include work at top of Frost Road. Kent said we need to adjust our numbers accordingly.

(6) Town Hall Maintenance: In particular, we need to address roof leaks. Ed Bond thinks we should have the roof treated with coating on a yearly basis to prevent leaks. We agree that this beats roof re-construction. We need to get more info from Ed.

(7) Assessors-related: Need "new growth" estimate from Assessors. Likewise, we need building inspector info to be cc'd to Karen. We also discussed the need for the building inspector to submit applications to assessor office on a monthly basis, rather than submitting them all at the end of the year.

(8) Stabilization Fund is in good shape ≈\$200,000, \$14,000 of which is encumbered. Free Cash stands at \$67,738. Projected borrowing increase starting FY19 – FY20.

2. Insurance Revisions

Discussed options, having received more information from our insurance carrier. We resolved to increase deductible for 5 pieces of large equipment 5K each, retaining collision and comp. Need Selectboard's approval. Dick noted we

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want to be sure to keep glass coverage. (We won't update insurance number in FY18 budget at this time.)

Voted on, and approved unanimously.

3. Revolving Funds

The departmental revolving fund statute, General Laws Chapter 44 § 53E1/2, was recently amended by the Municipal Modernization Act. The State Division of Local Services is recommending that legislation defer the requirement that the revolving funds be authorized by by-law or ordinance until FY2019, but would implement the elimination of the spending caps in FY2018 funds. We need to establish fund's amount. The Act would limit amount expended. This is especially important in cases where there are receipts received during the FY for a fund. We may need to require quarterly and annual reports or accounting statements to track receipts and expenditures for each revolving fund.

4. Any New Business

Discussed stumpage fees. We get 8% of net from DCR. Pittsfield Water Supply cutting rate is rated differently. Sean expressed interest in contacting Mr. Collingwood's replacement, given City of Pittsfield's recent cutting, to see how much and when Washington will receive their share.

Capital Mtg is next Monday, April 10. Next Finance Committee Mtg is April 24.

Meeting adjourned at 9:50pm.

Respectfully,

David Weissbrod, Clerk