

FINANCE COMMITTEE
Town of Becket
557 Main Street
Becket, MA 01223

Minutes for Tuesday, April 10, 2012

Call to Order: 10:20 am

Present: Ann Spadafora, Jeremy Dunn, Dan Parnell

Absent: Chuck Andrews, Steve LaBelle

Public Present: None

AGENDA

1. Discuss budget

The budget was discussed by line item and the attached summarizes the Finance Committee position on the related topics. All other proposals per the Town Administrator were accepted by the Finance Committee. A meeting to review such proposals with the Select Board will occur on Wed April 11 at 7:00 PM.

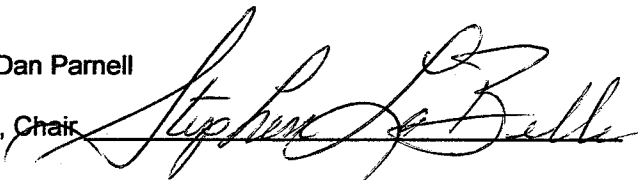
Other business:

Bill Girard attended the meeting very briefly to review a budget item he forgot to review at the previous meeting. It concerned automating the permit process. After a discussion the Finance Committee understood the goals and incorporated a recommendation which is included in the attached.

Adjournment: 1:45 PM

Respectfully Submitted by Dan Parnell

Approved by Steve LaBelle, Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve LaBelle", written over a horizontal line.

Becket Finance Committee 10-April-2012.

FY 2013 Budget: discussion points for joint SelectBoard / FinCom meeting 11-April-2012

Recommendations

1. Reserve Fund: recommend \$30,000 to allow for more contingencies like demolition (see #3)
2. Building inspector expenses. Agree to +\$4,100/year for software/kiosk ONLY if SB increases building fees to offset the costs. 300 "actions"/ year avg +\$15/ea would cover costs. Bldg inspector says our current fees are very low compared to other towns.
3. Demolition fund. Recommend against increase. Suggest SB get town counsel to render legal opinion about our liability.
4. Town Acct Salary. Change line title to "Town Accountant" or "Accounting Services" & amount to \$14,500. This is really an annual professional services fee not salary.
5. Police Dept. Salary. TA proposed \$219,600. FinCom recommends \$202,000 which is F/T chief w/ benefits; without backfilling 1x P/T @ 17.60/hr x 1000 hrs. Total hours are flat.
6. Town Reports. Recommend \$3,000 based on current year cost overrun
7. Literacy Network. recommend \$0 unless they are really serving Becket citizens
8. Stabilization. recommend \$50,000
9. Added lines for previously debt-excluded purchases (\$ from Chris Bleu)
 - a. Fire truck : 3yrs. First 1/3 principal + interest \$109,285
 - b. Ambulance/Truck Bodies: 2yrs. Second 1/2 principal + interest. \$92,051
10. Dump Truck: removed from budget - let it be debt-excluded 2 yrs. Hits FY 14/15 budgets.
11. In-sourcing Payroll: FinCom does not support. 5-year initial payback. May cost additional \$ to support the system with in-house personnel. Recommend that town employees hold outsourcer accountable for accuracy and if not performing, come to SB & FC with a proposal next year which includes new Outsource bids and total in-house costs.
12. overall recommendation - allow the tax rate to go down. We have surplus levy capacity.

Questions

1. Veterans Benefits - how do we get refund?
2. Voc Tuition - any basis for numbers ?
3. Health Insurance: Current FY \$329,000 +7.82% (\$25,728) +1 FT position should not be anywhere near the proposed increase of \$92,481 over FY12. Why?
4. Voc. Transport reimburse \$40,000 where does this come from ?
5. Electricity: why are electric costs up? Didn't we lock in rates thru 2013? is anyone working on locking in future electric rates?
6. Our Local Revenues have been in the \$450K range in past budgets. Budget is \$425K this year. What is correct? Why the reduction?