

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

Meeting Minutes for March 20, 2014

Call to Order: 7:03 PM

PRESENT:

Committee (FC): Steve LaBelle (SL); Ann Spadafora (AS); Maria Wallington (MW); Jeremy Dunn (JD)

Board of Selectmen (B of S): Jeanne Pryor (JP)

Town Administrator: Ed Gibson (EG)

Public: Mark Karlberg

ABSENT: Dan Parnell (DP);

AGENDA:

1. **Review and approve minutes for March 6, 2014 meeting.** Acceptance of minutes moved by AS and seconded by JD. Unanimously accepted.
2. **Correspondence and transfers:**
 - a. A letter was received with our final budget assessment from CBRSD. We have a \$44,000 improvement in our projected assessment giving us a 2% increase from last year.
 - b. CBRSD wants a meeting with the SB and FC April 16 or May 7. April 16 is the better of the two since May 7 is close to the AGM. April 16 is the date we will offer them.
 - c. **EG requested \$5000 be transferred from Reserve Fund to Municipal Building Repairs** to cover repairs to the town hall. We did not have a building maintenance line item in the 2014 budget. Acceptance of request was moved by AS, seconded by JD, and **passed unanimously.**
 - d. The special town meeting April 5 will be presented with three financial articles.
 - i. Article 7 asks for transfer of \$20,000 from Vocational Tuition Account to Vocational Transportation Account. JD moved and AS seconded **that FC support article 7. Unanimously passed.**
 - ii. Article 8 asks for appropriation from Free Cash of \$9000 to Municipal Building Repair Account for Mullen House. AS moved and MW **seconded FC support of article 8. Passed unanimously.**
 - iii. Article 9 asks for a appropriation of \$7,500 from Free Cash to Highway Department Machinery Account. AS moved **support of FC for Article 9** and MW seconded. **Passed unanimously.**
3. **Town Administrator's input:**
 - a. The Ford Expedition has died.
 - b. We currently have a \$43,000 deficit in the snow and ice removal budget.
 - c. An updated current expenditure Report was distributed.
4. **Further discussion on Departmental Budgets for FY 2015:**
 - a. EG's proposed budget for FY 2015 was distributed.
 - b. Ambulance has collected \$66,000 dollar to date. FC wants a better understanding of why the budget should only estimate \$70,000. If we underestimate, it would be in our favor in the end.
 - c. Expenditure of Community Preservation Funds needs to be included in the Summary.
 - d. JD reminded us that we usually try to clear all debt for snow and ice, etc. so it does not carry over to the next year.
 - e. We had a discussion of the appropriateness of 2% COL increase. FC was divided but agreed not to object to the 2%.
 - f. EG brought the FC's attention to some accounts:
 - i. Legal expense seems to be covered for this year.

- ii. An audit of FY 2013 will be required for federal funds we have received. EG may be suggesting an article for free cash to be used for this audit rather than waiting for FY 2014 audit which would be the next scheduled one.
- iii. The Highway budget is complex and Chris will be available at the next meeting (March 27) for us to talk to him about his decisions and requests.
- iv. Line 96 Ambulance expenditures now reflect the charges paid for collection which has not in the past.
- v. Line 66 Vocational Transportation and Line 65 Vocational Tuition reflect changes due to changes in number of students.
- vi. Line 96 for Board of Health expenses represents a change in process of health board inspections. They are now using professionals for some inspections.
- vii. Line 106 Town Accountant Salaries allows for increasing town accountant's hours from 10 to 15 hours due to EG's need for more activities from the accountant. Some activities arise from the auditor's recommendations.
- viii. Line 126 Health Insurance is firm and represents only a 3.83% increase in health insurance.
- ix. Line 112 Municipal Building Repairs is a new line item to cover municipal building repairs being done by our employee whose position was developed last year. Building repairs have been covered by a warrant in the past.
- x. Workers' Comp will decrease next year if no large claims occur this year. It is currently high due a prior claim a few years ago which will not be considered in next year's calculations.

5. Further development of Capital Plan for Town of Becket:

- a. EG distributed his current proposed capital plan. Total recommendations come to about \$450,000 of which \$385,000 would be borrowed for the grader and will not show up until FY 2016.

6. School Committee budget discussion: Tabled until meeting with CBRSD meeting April 16.

7. Future Scheduling for FinCom meetings: March 27, April 3, 10, 16, and 17 if needed.

8. Any other business: None

Next meeting: March 27, 2014

Adjourn: 9:43 PM

Respectfully Submitted by Maria Wallington

Handwritten signature: Anna Spadofora, Vice Chair.

Approved by Steve LaBelle, Chair in pro in Steve LaBelle's absence -