

**FINANCE COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

April 30, 2018

Members in attendance: Chairman Ed Hoak, Secretary Michele Hamilton, Nancy Gajoli, Joe Freitas, Barbara Miller and Melinda Paine-Dupont.

Selectman, Wendy Cochran

Accountant, Kathy Avila

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Ed Hoak at 6:30pm.

The minutes for the meeting of April 23, 2018 were not available for voting and a request was made to postpone until next meeting.

The purpose of this meeting was designed strictly around establishing two budgets; first if the override should not pass and the second if the override should pass.

The first few minutes of the meeting, Chairman Ed Hoak went through the information available in the packet. The front page of the FY19 budget with out override shows the revenues, back-charges, expenses, request from the departments and the Finance Committee recommendation. With the revenue coming in at \$19,645,016.18; expenses coming in at \$19,468,398.00 and back-charges coming in at \$806,616, this gives us a deficit of \$629,998. Ed also pointed out the funding highlighted in yellow were changes made at the request of the towns input.

The finance portion or numbers, highlighted in green, indicated the input of funding plugged in by Chairman Ed Hoak to provide a direction and a ruff idea where we stood relative to funds needed to balance the budget.

Now comes the line by line discussion on each of the accounts for FY2019 operating budget. First the accounts listed below are accounts that were discussed and were determined by the Finance Committee to level fund the accounts, no changes made.

Reserve Fund; Moderator; Finance Committee; Town Accountant; Town Counsel; Data Processing; Town Clerk; Elections & Registrations; Planning Board; Town Buildings; Public Safety Buildings; Pensions; Workers Compensation; Unemployment Compensation; Health Insurance; Liability Insurance; Building Department; Communications Department; Forestry; Miscellaneous; Veterans Graves; Street Lights; Cemetery; Health Department; Library Department; Historical Commission; Retirement of Debt; and Interest.

The accounts listed below are accounts that were discussed and was determined by the Finance Committee that changes were necessary.

Selectman; A request for additional monies for the clerical position was discussed and decided by the Finance Committee that the amount requested was not sustainable and a reduction was made in the amount requested. Reduced to 2%, for the account coming in at a recommendation of \$91, 871. The

Clerical contract for this location is under negotiation and at the advice of Selectman Wendy Cochrane we are not allowed to vote or put in a number until the actual contract has been signed for this specific account. The number plugged in by the Finance Committee for this account was \$91, 871, which includes the 2% additional funding for clerical contract.

Town Treasure/Town Collection; the request for the Town Treasure clerical line was increased to \$15,376. The Town Collection clerical line has decreased to \$25,975. The increase/decrease reflects from FY 2018. The clerk works for both departments, is entitled to a step increase and it was explained that these funds were added into the Town Treasure clerical line.

Police Department; Included in the request for FY 2019 was the cost for an additional police officer. After a bit of discussion, it was decided by the Finance Committee to remove this funding as it was not sustainable. Also, there was an additional error made on the committee's recommendation (\$80,000 should be \$8,000) that needed to be adjusted. The Finance Committee recommendation was decreased from original request. New total is \$946,503.

Fire Department/Emergency Medical Services; The Fire Chief, who covers both departments, contracts have yet to begin negotiations. The Finance Committee does not have a figure to officially plug in for these accounts. A 2% increase was added to cover increase for salary. Also, there was additional error made on the committee's recommendation (\$5,000 should be \$500) that needed to be adjusted. It was advised by Selectman Wendy Cochrane that we cannot approve figures until contracts have been signed. New total was Fire Department \$158,631 and Emergency Medical Services at \$429,431 and this includes the 2% increase for salary.

School Department; K-8 school spending line, with heavy hearts, was reduced to 2% and all the remaining lines were level funded. Bring in a new total of \$11,833,471.

Council on Aging; after discussion it was determined that adding a director was not sustainable and the cost of Director at \$20,000 was removed. Brings a new total of \$8,692.

After the discussions, funding changes, the Finance Committee had a surplus of \$78,547. \$20,000 was returned to the Highway Department that was taken out in error and the remaining balance of \$58,547 was given to the schools and is a part of their new total.

A few other items discussed were regarding line items such as Pension, which is up a little; Health Insurance bill increase is a rate that was set and our Liability Insurance was also questionable and needed to be increased.

The Finance Committee FY 2019 budget recommendation came in at \$18,838,400. A recommendation was made and seconded to approve this budget. Unanimously voted. Without override.

Now that we have completed "Without Override" budget it was requested that we take a 5 minute break prior to moving on to the "With the Override" budget.

We were able to enjoy a slice of pizza, provided by Joe. Grab a delicious brownie provided by Barbara and a Donut provided by Nancy. To quench our thirst several bottles of water were provided by Melinda. Thanks to all of you, it was greatly enjoyed.

In the event that the override passes funds that may be available for disbursement is \$796,214 and several discussions took place regarding where the funding should go.

It was brought to our attention that there is consideration of increasing the Town Offices from 8:30-3:30 Monday thru Thursday and this will be an increase in revenue for employees. This would be a \$41,300 increase for the year.

The committee will still be faced with pending contract negotiations and will have to fund these departments. In this discussion, it was recommended that we suggest an increase of 2% for the Town Treasure, Town Collector and Town Clerk also.

It was also suggested that we provide \$250 increase to the Veterans Graves. Increase the care of the Cemetery to \$5,000. Also, funding to restore a clerk for the Accountant Department.

Including the above discussions it was on the recommendation of the Finance Committee to provide the Police Department with two police officers at a cost of \$56,000 each (\$112,000 total) and this figure includes benefits. To provide the Council on Aging the director as requested for \$20,000. Highway Department \$20,000 to restore lost personal. Add funds to the k-8 school budget in the amount of \$100,000 and \$125,459 to the town stabilization account.

The override budget came in at \$19,509,155. A motion was made and seconded to approve this budget, unanimously voted. Override budget approved

Michelle Hamilton
~~Felicia Lane - Dept~~
~~John M. J.~~
Bode M
Nancy B. Gayali
E. S. Ark

May 7, 2018

Members in attendance: Secretary Michele Hamilton, Nancy Gajoli, Joe Freitas, Barbara Miller.

The Finance Committee scheduled the emergency meeting at the request of the Selectman. The Selectman of Berkley were not in agreement with recommended budget of the Finance Committee due to excess funding for certain departments.

This meeting was a joint effort for the Finance Committee and the Selectman to review, discuss and amend the Finance Committee budgets approved at Finance Committee meeting of April 30, 2018

The following accounts were items that were requested for discussion, "override does not pass and if it should pass:"

- Hours of operation for Clerical Staff must be bargained by contract and working conditions. After discussion, the total amount was adjusted by \$28,588 less than what was recommended by the Finance Committee.
- The Town Administrator and Fire Chief signed new contracts and level funded a difference of \$1,200 less than recommended by Finance Committee.
- Accounting Clerk and Two additional police officers remain as recommended by Finance Committee.
- Agreement was made to reduce Animal Control Budget for vehicle repair with new vehicle. No financial change made. Went with Finance Committee recommendation.
- A new assessment came in from the Bristol Agricultural High School and an adjustment of \$2,304 needed to be added to the previous assessment provided by the school.
- A correction was made on the Veterans Department account. For training and testing, it was requested by the department for \$300 and a typo error on the Finance Committee side increased the request. This was corrected and it now remains at requested amount.

In addition, a great deal of discussion took place regarding the 111F (police) insurance line be increased and the Medicare line will need to be increased if adding additional personal.

Also discussed, was Health Insurance for both the town and school will need to be increased if additional personnel are hired.

Berkley K-8 was not affected by the changes. Their budget remained as recommended by the Finance Committee. It was brought up on the floor that 4 current teachers will be retiring and this will help the insurance by roughly 10% or more if the teacher should not wish to continue with the insurance. Also, it was advised that they are looking to hire one Health Teacher, one Special Needs Teacher and one Library Aid.

The school will have to make adjustments to their budget lines to cover the Health Insurance. The current rate is 60/40 and the adjustment needed could be roughly \$60,000.

A motion was made to open the Finance Committee approved budget of April 30, 2018 for review and discussion on line changes. The motion was seconded and approved by the members of the Finance Committee in attendance.

It was advised by Town Administrator Allen Coutinho that the budget is coming in at roughly 1.62+ million and the Finance Committee needs to be vigilant regarding the stability of this budget going forward.

Joe Freitas advised the Selectman that we would take each item line by line we were going to schedule another emergency meeting for May 14, 2018 to review the budget and have it approved by Wednesdays Selectman meeting of May 16, 2018.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 7:10pm. Those in attendance of the Finance Committee unanimously voted to adjourn.

Michele Hamilton
Joe Freitas
Bob Smith
Nancy B. Bayliss