

Town of Fairhaven

Finance Committee

Minutes of the meeting for <March 7, 2013>at the BPW Administration Building, Arsene St., Fairhaven, MA

Members in attendance:

Chairman-John Roderiques, Robert A. Furtado, Scott Fernandes, Kim Hyland, Kathi Carter, Kevin Costa, Therese Szala, Colin Veitch, Dawn Devlin, Sid Martin, Phil Washko, Padraic Elliot

Town of Fairhaven:

Jeffery Osuch- Executive secretary

Vincent D. Furtado- BPW Superintendent

John M. Charbonneau- Highway Superintendent

Edward L. Fortin- Water Superintendent

Linda L. Schick- Sewer/Wastewater Superintendent

Geoffrey Haworth, II- Board of Public Works

Meeting was covered by government access television. Member of the press present.

Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Announced that the meeting was being recorded by government access TV. Chairman has to be notified if anyone else present is recording.

Motion made by Kim to accept the minutes from February 28, 2013. Seconded by Sid.

Vote: Unanimous

The Chairman and Mr. Osuch pass out new updated budget spreadsheet, updated Article spreadsheet, revised budgets from the Selectmen and the Fire Department, and information from William Roth- Planning Director concerning the CPC Article for the Nasketucket Bay Conservation Project

Chairman thanks all present for making the effort to attend the meeting during the latest snow storm.

Public Works Department presents their budgets:

BPW Administration

- Salary category is up approximately \$ 2,000 because of the June 30, 2013 1% increase & longevity.
- Advertising is reduced \$ 100. That money is split between Telephone and Miscellaneous. Miscellaneous is used for mileage for office staff.
Discussion follows about putting mileage under Purchase of Services. Mr. Furtado is advised to check with Town Accountant about moving this to Other Charges.
- All other categories remain the same as last year.

Park Department

- Salary category is up for the same reason.
- Miscellaneous category will be moved to Other Charges and Expenses
- Road Materials are up \$ 250 to cover increased grass seed and materials to maintain parks. This category has historically run low.
- All other categories remain the same as last year.

Highway Department

- Salary category is up for same reason.
- Overtime category is up. Mr. Charbonneau states that this category was cut last year and they are trying to get it back where they feel it should be. They generally like to carry 6% of the salary category in overtime.
- Repair & Maintenance-Vehicles is up \$ 3,000 because of the need.
- Repair & Maintenance-Buildings is up \$ 2,000 for same reason.
- Same issue with Miscellaneous as the other departments.
- Electricity : This category is increased \$ 7,000 this year. Mr. Charbonneau explains that \$ 7,000 was taken from his electricity budget last year because of the savings from the solar panels. As per the grant, any savings from the solar panels was supposed to go towards the operation of the Sewer Dept.. Mr. Charbonneau seeks to have the money returned to his budget and it then be transferred to the Sewer Dept. budget.
- Replacement Equipment: Seeks \$ 127,550 to replace truck #27 with a new 6 wheel dump truck equipped with an 11' plow. The existing truck has a bad transmission and can no longer be used for plowing.
Mr. Charbonneau states that currently the mechanic's truck is used for plowing, in place of this truck. However, when the mechanic needs the truck it must be called back in.
- Trash & Garbage Removal: is up \$ 14,000. This is the last year of the existing contract.
- Highway Hardsurfacing: is up \$ 20,000 because of the increase in material costs.
- Sidewalk Repair: is up \$ 6,000 for the same reason.

- Colin questions the discrepancy in the salary figure for FY 13. The number the BPW is using is \$ 15,870 higher than the number in the committee member's spreadsheets. After much discussion, it was decided that further analysis would be required to find out why.
- Terry questions \$570 charge under Contracted Services for Employee Assistance Program. This was supposed to have been eliminated last year. After discussion it is decided that this was inadvertently left in.
- Kevin questions \$ 14,000 for leaf collection. Mr. Charbonneau states that ABC Disposal does bring in a lot of leaves.
- Colin questions why the Highway Dept. salary seems to grow faster than other departments. Chairman states that because of a higher turn-over, the step increases seems to show up more.
- Chairman tells Mr. Charbonneau that unfortunately he should be prepared for cuts, because of the budget constraints. Consideration also comes down to supporting the infrastructure or labor.

Sewer/Wastewater Department

- Salary & Wages are up, same reason as previous departments.
- Contracted Services: is up \$ 7,900 because of increased testing.
- Supplies: has a new line for Grease& Oil. This is for a generator.
- Capital Outlay seeks:
 - \$ 40,000 for a new truck for the department electrician.
 - \$ 20,000 to replace about 20 valves throughout the system that are 30+ years old.
 - \$25,000 to replace a 4" Plunger Pump that is used during significant rain events in town.
 - \$ 6,000 for materials to install an intercom in the digester building. Labor to be provided by the department electrician.
- This department has the same salary figure discrepancy as the highway dept. In this budget it may be partially because of the sewer contract settling in December 2013.
- Padraic questions when will the Digester actually start saving the town money. Ms. Schick states that she is spending \$ 60,000 less on sludge disposal now, long term it will save more money.
- Terry finds the same problem with EAP listed under Contracted Services.

Water Department

- Salary & Wages are up, same reason as previous departments. This department has the same salary figure discrepancy as the previous departments.

- Contractor Assistance: is up \$ 20,000 because of the increased cost of road materials.
- Water Testing: has decreased. Some money has been transferred to Seminars for employee training.
- Water Purchase: The water assessment has been separated from this category. \$ 10,000 now covers flushing New Bedford line and 2 days of water use if necessary. \$ 56,000 is carried separately for Water Assessment.
- Gasoline & Diesel: Mr. Osuch wants to reduce this category to \$ 22,500.
- Capital Outlay: Seeks \$ 18,300 to replace 3 meter reading devices @ \$ 6,100 each. the existing units cannot be repaired. The dept. is down to 2 working units. Padraic questions whether they can be replaced at 1 every year. Mr. Fortin states they are needed now.
- Terry questions postage. Mr. Fortin states that all water and sewer bills are mailed in house.

- Discussion of Department Articles:
 - Article #6 Water Pollution Control Facility: from Sewer Enterprise
Seeks \$ 80,000 for the initial design of high priority items that need replacement at the treatment plant.
 - Article #8 Road Work: from General Fund
Mr. Charbonneau states he only has 1 street left to do this spring, Pleasant Street. The Chairman asks the BPW to pick their 2 for recommendation. After no response, he says if the department doesn't recommend, than the committee will recommend on their own. Mr. Haworth states that the Board of Public Works picked Dogwood, Cooke, & North Streets as their priority.
 - Article #24 Sewer System Collection Rehab I & I: from Sewer Enterprise
Seeks \$ 445,000 to inspect sewer lines with a camera. The lines that were believed to most likely fail will be done first. This includes \$ 80,000 to purchase a camera and the town employees will do the work.
This item was on the warrant last year but was passed over because of funding constraints.
Chairman asks if the cost will be made up. Ms. Schick states that last year they spent \$ 250,000 to have just 5 lines done by an outside company. She says it will pay for itself the first time it is used.
Padraic questions if town employees are qualified to do the inspections. Ms. Schick says that the forman was trained when the last company did the work.
 - Article #26 BPW Fuel Island Roof: from the General Fund
Seeks \$ 2,834 to replace the roof over the fuel pumps.
 - Article #27 Water Hydrant Replacement Program: from Water Enterprise

Seeks \$ 200,000 to replace 40 hydrants. The hydrants would be installed by a contractor.

The town has between 700 and 800 hydrants. The worst ones would be replaced first. The Fire Department makes a list of the hydrants that need attention each year when they test them. Some hydrants are more than 100 years old. The conditions on Sconticut Neck are especially hard.

- Article #28 Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan: from Sewer Enterprise Seeks \$ 100,000 to study the needs for the wastewater system. This would be phase 2. There would be 1 more phase after this. Study is needed to receive SRF money for improvements at the wastewater plant.
- Article #32 Matt. River Valley Water Protection
This article has not been discussed by the BPW yet.
- Article #35 Sewer Collection Pump Station Rehab-Taber Street: from Sewer Enterprise Seeks \$ 287,000 for phase 2 of upgrading the Taber Street pumping station. This phase would work on engine replacement, generator, and pumps.
- Article #37 Macomber Pimental Field: from the General Fund
Seeks \$ 6,003 to install the outfield fencing.
Discussion follows: The fence may have to wait because of budget issues. It is not a safety issue.

- Discussion of the water and sewer associated costs.
Water rates will probably have to be raised. Not necessarily so with the sewer rates. Sewer numbers are still not finalized.
- Discussion of increasing the Water & Sewer Reserve Accounts.
Chairman states he has no intention to increase the reserve accounts if it is going to increase the rates to the consumer.

Chairman calls a recess @8:40 PM to assess the conditions of the storm. Kim offers his assistance. Back in session @ 8:44 PM.

- Discussion of the CPC Article #31A Nasketucket Bay Conservations
Chairman states that as the article is written it does not meet the standard. It does not give Fairhaven control of the land.
- Chairman passes out copies of questions Terry had concerning several budget issues.
- Chairman advises that members should be prepared to meet on Tuesday, March 26, 2013.

- 8:50 PM Kim motions to adjourn. Seconded by Sid. Vote: Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted by:

Robert A. Furtado
Finance Committee Secretary

(accepted 3-14-2013)