

Town of Fairhaven

Finance Committee

Minutes of the meeting for <March 12, 2015> at the BPW Administration Building, 5 Arsene St., Fairhaven, MA

Members in attendance:

Chairman-John Roderiques, Robert A. Furtado, Scott Fernandes, Padraic Elliott, Kathi Carter, Lisa Plante, John Mota

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

Meeting was not covered by government access television. Member of the press was not present.

Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Announced that the Chairman has to be notified if anyone present is recording the meeting by video or audio.

Motion made by John M. to accept the minutes from February 26, 2015. Seconded by Pat. Vote: Unanimous

- Mr. Osuch distributes updated copies of the ATM warrant, an updated Article spreadsheet, and an updated Article 4 spreadsheet
- Chairman presents a Request for Deficit Spending from Vincent Furtado for Snow & Ice, in the amount of \$15,000.
 - Mr. Furtado explains that they presently have a deficit of \$7,561. If we don't get any more snow, \$15,000 should be enough.
 - Scott motions to Authorize Deficit Spending for Highway-Snow & Ice, in the amount of \$15,000. Seconded by Lisa. Vote: Unanimous

- Chairman gives Mr. Osuch a packet of material to return to Lori.

7:06 PM. Meeting with BPW begins

- BPW Administration
 - Mr. Furtado states the increase in Salary is contractual and the retirement incentive for Kathy Tripp.
 - Telephone is down because they eliminated a Nextel phone.

- Highway Department
 - Mr. Charbonneau states that Salary is up for the contractual increase and steps.
 - Inspection Stickers is up because the price of the inspections on the larger trucks has increased.
 - Miscellaneous is up to cover DOT physicals.
 - Uniforms has a large increase because of the increase in the contract.
 - Snow & Ice Removal is being held at \$35,000.
 - Chairman states that, in FY 17, the committee should look at a 3-4 year average of expenses.
Number cannot be raised too high because if you reduce it at some point, that year you would not be able to deficit spend.

▪ Capital Outlay consists of:	EZ Screen 1200XL	\$45,000
	Replacement of 1991 Ford F350 pickup	\$57,750
	Replacement of 1994 GMC C1500	\$47,250
	New plow for truck #14	\$5,000

Mr. Charbonneau states they are spending \$10,000 per year screening loam now. The existing plow on #14 is completely rotted now and cannot be used.

- Pat asks about the condition of the existing trucks.
Mr. Charbonneau states they have "flapping fenders" and rotted frames.
- John M. asks what the lifespan of the Screener would be.
Mr. Charbonneau states if it is maintained it could last 15 to 20 years.

Chairman states the Capital Planning Committee will be in on March 26th. @ 7:00 PM.

- Park Department
 - Chairman tells Mr. Charbonneau that the Selectmen have cut the new position from the Park Dept.
 - Mr. Charbonneau states that they cut 65 acres of grass and have the 2 old school buildings to cut also. This is done with 1 full time position and 3 summer help.

- Discussion of cutting the grass at the school yards.
- Chairman states he is against adding positions before seeing if the Board of Public Works is eliminated.
- Chairman states there are cheaper ways to maintain the playgrounds than adding a man.
- Discussion of whether the department should be paid to cut Hoppy's Landing.
- Mr. Furtado states he didn't expect to get the new position, but was just putting it out there.

States they have to rob help from the Highway Dept. during the busy construction season to help with the grass.

- Chairman again states that the grass at Hoppy's Landing should be cut with money from the Hoppy's account.
 - Mr. Charbonneau states he was always against cutting Hoppy's.
 - Mr. Charbonneau states Playground Expense is up \$1,000 because of the special wood chips that are required by the insurance company for the Roger's playground.
 - Capital Outlay includes \$1,200 for 2 new composite lifeguard stands for the Town Beach.
 - Scott asks about the old stands.
 - Mr. Charbonneau states they are 20 years old, weigh 250 lbs. each, and are causing workman's comp. issues.
- Discussion of Highway Department Articles
 - Article 17- BPW Door Replacements
 - Mr. Furtado states this will do the 2 doors they couldn't do last year because the bids came in higher than expected.
 - Article 9- Roadwork
 - Discussion of additional Chapter 90 money coming in because of the storms this winter.
 - Chairman advises getting a place holder Article on the STM within the ATM, for that money.
 - Mr. Furtado states, of the streets listed, the BPW is recommending A, B, D, E.
 - Pat states he didn't find Elm Ave. that bad.
 - Mr. Charbonneau states it is perfectly flat, and when it rains there are major drainage issues.
 - Discussion of Billy's Way and the small number of houses on it.
 - Chairman asks about the dirt roads in East Fairhaven.
 - Asks how do you determine which gravel roads get done.
 - Mr. Charbonneau states he didn't pick any gravel roads.

- Discussion again of the BPW vote in the April election.
- Mr. Osuch suggests possibly moving some of the money into the Highway Dept. Road Resurfacing line.

- Water Department
 - Mr. Fortin states Salary is up because of the 1% contractual and step increases. 5 Employees get additional money for holding a Hoisting License.
 - Advertising is increased because they can't keep up with the cost. Used for advertising projects and bids.
 - Misc. is transferred to Contracted Services to cover drug testing.
 - Capital Outlay consists of:

Replacement of 1997 Ford Utility Truck	\$44,000
Replacement of the 1982 AL Gas Propane Vaporizer and piping at the Wolf Island Emergency Generator	\$5,000
Replacement of a 1990 trench compactor	\$3,000
 - Pat questions the Uniforms.
 - Mr. Fortin states it is because of the same reason as the Highway Dept.

- Article 6- Water Enterprise Capital Plan
 - A. Engineering- Water Main Replacement - West Island Causeway \$40,000
 - B. Water Main Construction- West Island Causeway \$150,000
 - C. Tinkham Lane Well Improvements \$60,000
 - D. Replacement of 19997 Ford Utility Truck #132 \$44,000

 - Chairman questions water rates increasing.
 - Mr. Furtado states they are just breaking even now. They bill for approx. \$2.7 million but collect only \$2.5 million.
 - Discussion of the procedure when people don't pay. What are other communities doing.
 - Mr. Furtado states they will use approx. \$500,000 from the Water reserve to balance the budget, but this can't continue in future years.
 - Mr. Furtado states they are investigating going to an automated metering system so they could bill monthly, with smaller bills.
 - Mr. Fortin states the meters need to be replaced- Newer equipment is always better.

- Sewer Department
 - Ms. Schick states Salary is up for the same contractual increase and steps.

- Money in the Purchase of Services categories is shuffled to realign them using a 3 year average and because of changes in expenses with the Digester.
- Repairs to Equipment is up because the plant is getting older and requires more repairs.
- Contracted Services is up for services on the Digester.
- Heat, Light, Power is up \$10,000 for the Digester.
- Power is down \$15,000 because of the Digester.
- Discussion of the Power budget.
- \$2,950 has been moved from Misc. to Uniforms.
- Chemicals are up \$6,100 for the Digester.
- Sludge disposal is down \$30,000 because of the Digester.
- Article 7- Sewer Enterprise Capital Plan
 - A. Wastewater Treatment Plan Nitrogen Pilot Study \$50,000
 - B. Abbey/Manhattan/Marguerite/Pilgrim/Railroad Pump Station Equipment Evaluation \$140,000
 - C. Engineering Sewer System Phase 2-Howland Rd. south to Pilgrim Ave, Alden Rd. west to Acushnet River \$80,000
 - D. Engineering Sewer System Phase 3- Howland Rd. south to Pilgrim Ave, Alden Rd. west to Acushnet River \$65,000
 - E. Replace Sewer- Francis Street \$50,000
 - F. Replacement of 2000 Ford Pickup #48 \$44,000
- Scott asks if Sewer is having any issues with collections
 - Mr. Furtado states that the Sewer rates are better and they don't have an issue.
- Discussion of the Board's reluctance to raise water rates in the past.
Money needs to be put aside for infrastructure repairs.
- Mr. Furtado brings up some issues with the FY15 budget:
 - Mr. Furtado states he will be submitting a Reserve Fund Request for Highway Overtime. They are presently \$42,000 over budget. They have 1 person on Workman's Comp, but will probably be looking for a transfer of \$15,000.
 - The Water Dept. has \$22,000 for overtime and presently is \$7,000 over that because of water main breaks.
Mr. Furtado states they will probably be looking for \$15,000 from the Water Reserve.
 - Highway- Equipment Repair & maintenance had a major repair to the loader, and will be looking for \$20,000 to cover that repair.
 - Chairman advises Mr. Furtado to put a place holder Article on the STM for Highway- Purchase of Services in case the transfer is not made from the Reserve.

- Mr. Osuch states that FEMA is trying to combine the major snow storms into 1 big storm for the sake of emergency money.
Mr. Osuch states the Town has submitted for \$188,000, but even if approved we would not see the money until after July 1st.

8:17 PM. BPW staff leaves, Chairman calls a recess. Back in session @ 8:23PM.

- Chairman presents a Reserve Fund Transfer request from Mr. Osuch requesting \$1,214.54 for postage and printing, for notifying voters of a change in polling location.
 - Chairman states he understands that the Town Clerk said she would do the work but stated that she didn't have the money to pay for it.
She was told to give the bill to the Selectmen.
The Selectmen then refused the bill when they found out the amount.
 - Mr. Osuch states there is money in the Election & Registration budget to cover it, but the Town Clerk is refusing to pay it.
 - Chairman states he wants "Chapter and verse" from the DOR that states it can in fact be paid from that account.
 - Chairman states that the cost of the bill should have been obtained before authorizing the work.
 - Chairman states the law states that the Selectmen are responsible for issuing the notice to voters. The Town Clerk did the work and the Selectmen are sticking her with the bill.
 - Discussion of the use of the Reserve Fund and if this qualifies. Not extreme or an emergency. We have a STM coming up.
 - Chairman advises Mr. Osuch that he needs a place holder Article on the STM for this.
 - Chairman states he wants an explanation from the Board of Selectmen why this was authorized without having money to pay for it.
 - The request is tabled for now.
- Discussion of Road Work and studies that have been done of the roads.
- Discussion of whether the Selectmen coming in will be rescheduled.
- Chairman states Selectman Espindola will be in on March 19th to discuss his Wellness Article.
- Mr. Osuch states that the old Article 21 for the Fire CPR has been withdrawn. The Shellfish Propagation Article has been moved to Article 21.
- Discussion of Article 29- Information Technology Assessment
 - Chairman states he is not in favor of this before the TA could become involved with it.
 - John M. states, in his professional opinion, \$15,000 may not be enough for a complete assessment of everything.

- Article 30- Street Lights
 - Discussion of locations again.
 - A. Temple Place, pole #266/2 will hold off and some members will view again.
 - B. Wayne Street, pole #281/1
 - Lisa motions for \$800. Seconded by Pat. Vote: Unanimous

- Discussion of Article 31- Finance Committee Restructuring
 - Discussion of language of hiring a secretary.
 - Discussion of the diversity of the backgrounds of current members.

- Discussion of revenue spending. Will Selectmen hold to their number.
- Discussion of the additional Fire position.
- Discussion of the Cherry Sheet.
- Discussion of the cuts Selectmen have made already.
- Discussion of the Wellness Article.
- Chairman states he feels Article 33- Town Meeting Procedure Changes is not under our purview.

9:29 PM. John M. motions to adjourn. Seconded by Lisa. Vote: Unanimous

Respectfully submitted by:

Robert A. Furtado
Finance Committee Secretary
(accepted 3-19-2015)