

Jennifer Tabakin
Town Manager

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TOWN OF GREAT BARRINGTON MASSACHUSETTS

OFFICE OF THE TOWN MANAGER

SELECTBOARD and FINANCE COMMITTEE

JOINT FY 18 BUDGET MEETING

TOWN HALL, 334 MAIN STREET

March 1, 2017 at 6:00 PM

PRESENT:

SELECTBOARD:

SEAN STANTON
STEVE BANNON
DAN BAILLY
ED ABRAHAMS
BILL COOKE

FINANCE COMMITTEE:

WALTER ATWOOD
EUGENE CURLETTI
JANET LEE
THOMAS BLAUVELT

TOWN MANAGER
TOWN ACCOUNTANT

I. Call to Order.

Chairman Sean Stanton called the meeting to order at 6:00PM

II. FY 18 Budget.

Jennifer Tabakin addressed the changes in the operating budget, \$20,000 has been added to the total. This includes the travel and training expenses and other expenditures for departments not yet discussed. The new proposed FY18 operating budget totals \$11,097,185. This increases the tax rate from \$14.95 to \$14.96.

Department of Public Works (DPW)

The Town Manager introduced the new DPW superintendent Sean VanDeusen, she thanked Tim Drumm and Pete Soules for their hard work in the interim. Ms. Tabakin noted an increase of \$20,749 to the DPW budget in FY18. This figure does not include the renegotiations of union contracts, however wage increases are not projected to affect the bottom line of the budget. Mr. Tabakin highlighted an increased stipend for the tree warden, stating that this is long overdue. The Housatonic School, a building maintained by the Town has been added to the DPW budget. Sean VanDeusen explained the increase in contracted services is to properly maintain the new plantings downtown. Mr. Atwood asked for an explanation of the different trash hauling lines, and why DPW doesn't do the pick up. Ms. Tabakin explained that DPW does not have enough staff to properly service all the public buildings. Dan Bailly asked for a list of the contracted services. Some of them include; heating, electrical, and general maintenance. Eileen Mooney asked about the 20 Castle St. facility lease. Ms. Tabakin responded that this figure will eventually decrease. The Town is going to rent out a section of the garage. The Town vehicles are tentatively going to be stored at the transfer station. Dan Bailly asked if the price for salt and sand has been steadily going up. Mr. VanDeusen responded that FY17 rate is comparable to FY16, however it did go up significantly for FY15.

Capital Improvement Budget:

Chief Walsh spoke on behalf on the Police Department requests. Air conditioning for the computer room server is needed to keep the technology at room temperature. Paint/Repair outside upgrades such as gutter repairs. Antennae replacement, which is beneficial to both the Police and Fire Departments. Verizon is discontinuing the currently used copper transmission lines so the Town will replace this method with Fiber optics. Chief Burger said this is going to provide the Town with a more reliable communication connection. The Police Department proposed a two cruiser replacement for FY18. Chief Walsh explained that this allows the fleet to remain in good repair. Sean Stanton asked about the difference in cost between the Chevy Tahoe and the Fords. The Tahoes are priced \$49,184 and the Ford SUV are \$48,000. The Town Manager announced that the police dog has had recent medical issue so the Town is anticipating having to purchase and train a new dog in the near future. The Town Manager noted that the purchase of health insurance for the police dog has helped counter the medical costs. This insurance is grant funded.

Mr. VanDeusen presented the proposed capital spending for the Department of Public Works. The streets proposed for FY18 are Christian Hill Road and Division Street. Mr. VanDeusen plans to combine the bid for the existing Mass Works grant in order to do Bridge Street and School Street. Dan Bailly asked where we are with the Division Street bridge repairs. Mr. VanDeusen said we are in the engineering phase of the project. The DPW Superintendent plans to develop a comprehensive 40year pavement plan. Janet Lee asked how it is decided which roads are priorities for repair. Mr. VanDeusen said that this year the factors were a combination of usage and condition of the road. Sean Stanton mentioned that he would like to see some of the road reconstruction prioritized by those that need guard rails. Also under DPW capital is a request for two Highway dump trucks, \$253,000. Pete Soules, Highway Superintendent suggests Freightliner as well as reconstructing the body with stainless steel in order to get more life out of the vehicles. The Highway Dept. is also requesting to purchase a Skid Steer as a backup to the snow blower for sidewalk cleanup. The addition of this equipment will allow for faster snow removal and access to shops and restaurants.

Ms. Tabakin presented the library improvements capital. Ramsdell is seeking funds for design focusing on ADA accessibility. Mason Library would like to replace the carpet on the first floor and begin renovations on the cupola. Chairman Stanton raised the concern of borrowing funds before having a complete design for Ramsdell. The Town Manager clarified that this is the first step and they are seeking approval to borrow the funds, they will not borrow the money until the design is complete. Ms. Tabakin further explained that the library is not ADA compliant and therefore very

limited in what it can be used for. Dan Bailly stated the importance of moving forward with this project. Steve Bannon suggested bringing this discussion to the Town Meeting in order to decide if this is a FY18 priority.

Parks is requesting \$30,000 for a bathroom installation at Olympia Meadows. Information Technology is requesting funds for cyclical server replacement. Town Hall is requesting \$95,000 in office reconfigurations. The Health Department and the Building Inspector are to be relocated into the Town Hall offices and an employee bathroom will be added to the first floor. This reconfiguration is intended to generate efficiencies in workflow among the different departments. Eileen Mooney, of the Newsletter asked where these new offices are going to be located in the building. Ms. Tabakin responded that the design is not ready for presentation. Ms. Tabakin mentioned that the costs for this reconfiguration will be offset by the Town no longer having to pay rent for 20 Castle Street. The Town Hall is requesting to repair the front steps, this as a safety issue and therefore a FY18 priority. Mr. VanDeusen said they are hoping not to use the entire allotment for these repairs but it is in the budget in case it is needed.

Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP)

Tim Drumm, Superintendent spoke on behalf of the WWTP budget proposal. Mr. Drumm noted a \$30,000 increase in contracted hauling due to increased rates among sledge haulers. The WWTP plans to reline the sewer line on Bridge Street in April.

III. Citizen Speak Time.

None.

IV. Adjournment.

On a motion made by Steve Bannon, seconded by Dan Bailly with a unanimous vote the meeting was adjourned at 8:15PM.

Respectfully submitted

By:  Rebecca Jurczyk

Recording Secretary