

Finance Committee
Meeting Minutes
Monday, March 26, 2012

Board Members in attendance: Peter Beals, Nikki Newton, Gordon Andrews, Peg Fitzgerald, Dick Wright and Paul Weckbacher.

Others in Attendance: Sandy Nolan, Town Accountant; Charlie Seeling, Town Administrator; Mike Schleiff, Selectmen; Kim Roy, Selectmen; Maureen Rogers, Wage and Personnel.

Meeting called to order at 7:06pm
Meeting Adjourned at 10:10pm

Peg Fitzgerald made a motion to accept the Meeting Minutes from March 19, 2012. Peter Beals requested that a note about everyone agreeing that we have too many Debt Exclusions be added to the minutes. Kendra will make the addition and send another draft out to the Committee for review.

Both Police and Fire were not available to attend tonight's meeting. Peg is able to speak on both of their behalves tonight. Both Chiefs are available next week if we still need them to come in.

Local Receipts

All of the changes are driven by Local Receipts. We are re-projecting revenues for budgeting purposes. Local Receipts should be going up. They could possibly be 166,000.00 higher than FY12 but that is an estimate. Gordon asked if 100,000.00 would be a comfortable number to increase the Local Receipts by as discussed by the Committee last week. Sandy said yes, she would be comfortable with that as a more conservative approach. Peg felt that the best thing to do is approve the budgets first and see where we are, but also feels that 165,000.00 is a comfortable and reasonable estimate for budgeting. Sandy would really like to watch the receipt numbers through March and April to see what happens. This year the excise bills went out a little earlier and excise revenue should be increasing as the commitments have gone up. Bottom line is that if the receipts are larger, we will be able to lower the tax rate. Peter pointed out that we really should figure out how much to "put into savings" first and then budget with what is left, not the other way around. That is how we get into trouble.

Gordon Andrews made a motion to approve 165,000.00 in Local Receipts. Seconded by Peg Fitzgerald. Motion passed unanimously for a total of 1,482,425.00

Beautification Committee

There was discussion on the presentation made by Robin Bellinger from the Beautification Committee last week. Peg feels that we should approve some money if we can afford it as it would improve everyone's property value. Charlie looked into the legalities of adding an optional check box for a donation to the Tax Bill. Nothing can be

added to the bill without Legislation and that can take anywhere from 1-5 years to complete.

Peg Fitzgerald made a motion to approve 1,000.00 for the Beautification Committee. Seconded by Nikki Newton. Paul Weckbacher, Gordon Andrews and Dick Wright all opposed. Motion did not pass.

The Committee decided to look at it again once all of the required funds have been gone over. The general feeling of the Committee is that while it would be nice to be able to approve the funds, the Town just can not afford it at this time.

Article 5 Line Items

Line 16 – Gordon Andrews made a motion to approve 44,400.00 for Data Processing. Seconded by Peter Beals. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 50 – Based on existing Staff, no additional. 10 Full Time and an 11th that has not yet been hired. Peg Fitzgerald made a motion to approve 831,691.00 for Police Wages. Seconded by Peter Beals. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 53 – Additional expense is for 2 additional Sergeants tests and high range assessments. Dick Wright made a motion to approve 71,485.00 for Police Expense. Seconded by Paul Weckbacher. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 55 – Last year the request was for 16,000.00. It was cut to 12,200.00 and then had a 5,000.00 Reserve Fund Transfer that was approved so the feeling is that the approved budget should have been 16,000.00. Line item will be put on hold until the Capital Planning Budget is discussed.

Line 58 – The Government Study Committee has made recommendations for Step increases. Peg Fitzgerald made a motion to approve 516,920.00 for Fire Wages. Seconded by Dick Wright. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 59 – This line was not part of the Government Study. Hold the line item until Wage and Personnel Board votes tomorrow night.

Line 60 – Full Time changes and Steps based on what Wage and Personnel recommends. Hold the line for a discussion with the Chief next week.

Line 63 – Hold for discussion with the Chief next week.

Line 63.5 – Hold for discussion with the Chief next week.

Line 65 – The Committee would like this line split into two separate lines to separate out Clerical. Total approved for this line does not include 4,137.00 for Comm. Center Clerical. Peg Fitzgerald made a motion to approve 219,370.00 for Comm. Center Wages. Seconded by Dick Wright. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 65.5 – Peg Fitzgerald made a motion to approve 4,137.00 for Comm. Center Clerical. Seconded by Gordon Andrews. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 66 – Increases are for a new Xerox machine in the office that requires a maintenance contract. The rest is in anticipated increases. Line item will be held and Mike will follow up.

Line 67 – Gordon Andrews made a motion to approve 28,160.00 for Comm. Center Telephone. Seconded by Paul Weckbacher. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 81 – The Committee is going to vote to Level Fund this line item. It will be printed in the Warrant as 3,790,240.00. When Plympton votes we will be advised that we actually owe 3,939,451.00. We need to be mindful that we are actually funding the higher number but are printing the lower amount in the Warrant. It will have a letter

notated next to it in the Warrant that it is not supported by the Finance Committee. Gordon will have a number according to the population next week. Gordon Andrews made a motion to approve 3,790,240.00 for Silver Lake Assessment. Seconded by Paul Weckbacher. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 122 – The COA Director wants to re-grade an employee so she can be the acting Director if needed. She will still need an Outreach Director, separate from this position. She originally asked for 4 extra hours for Clerical however that would put the employee at 20 hours so she would be eligible for benefits. That request has been cut back to 3.5 hours. She also does not want to raise fees in order to cover the 2 extra hours that she is requesting for the driver. The Committee feels that this line is not only not level funded/serviced, that it is actually a request for an increase in funds and services which is not what the Committee had asked for. Line item will be held for regarding and the Wage and Personnel vote tomorrow night on the Outreach Director.

Line 123 – Peg Fitzgerald made a motion to approve 8,880.00 for Council on Aging Expense. Seconded by Nikki Newton. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 132 – State Law Ch. 78 Section 19A states that the State sets the minimum amount that must be appropriated for the Library to keep its accreditation. Included in the increase are Step increases and one increase to a management position. Money in the revolving account will be used towards decreasing the Library budget. Gordon is going to draft a letter to the State re: this law. Paul asked if the Library would provide us with info on how much borrowing between certified Libraries actually occurs. Peg Fitzgerald made a motion to approve 145,808.00 for Library Wages. Seconded by Nikki Newton. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 133 – Peg Fitzgerald made a motion to approve 90,832.00 for Library Expense. Seconded by Dick Wright. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 134 – Nikki Newton made a motion to approve 12,786.00 for Youth and Rec Wages. Seconded by Peg Fitzgerald. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 135 – Nikki Newton made a motion to approve 9,700.00 for Youth and Rec Expense. Seconded by Gordon Andrews. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 136 – Nikki Newton made a motion to approve 15,438.00 for Youth and Rec Director. Seconded by Peg Fitzgerald. Motion passed unanimously.

Peg Fitzgerald made a motion for 33,000.00 to be put into the OPEB trust account, plus 10%. Seconded by Dick Wright. Gordon Andrews amended the amount to 35,000.00. Seconded by Nikki Newton. Motion passed unanimously. Peg Fitzgerald will draft a letter to the Selectmen accordingly.

Summary

Next meeting on 4/2 will include: Fire Chief, Highway Dept., Water Tower Rental Discussion, and mail from 3/26.

Gordon Andrews made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Paul Weckbacher. Meeting adjourned at 10:10pm.

Richard Wright
Corresponding Clerk

