



Town of Medway

**FINANCE COMMITTEE**

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**April 9, 2014 – 7:00 PM  
Sanford Hall  
155 Village Street**

Present: Jeff O’Neill, Chair; Todd Alessandri, Meghan Hoffman, Neil Kennedy, Chris Lagan, Jim Sullivan (remote by phone). Documentation verifying Mr. Sullivan’s remote participation is attached to these minutes.

Absent: Christine Devine; Frank Rossi, Vice-Chair; Barry Schroeder, Clerk.

Also Present: Carol Pratt, Town Accountant; Allen Tingley, Police Chief; Jeff Lynch, Fire Chief; Andy Rodenhiser, Planning and Economic Development Board.

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**Public Hearing:**

At 7:00 PM Chairman O’Neill convened a public hearing for the purpose of receiving public input on any articles being presented at the 2014 Special Town Meeting and 2014 Annual Town Meeting that will not be heard in public hearings held by other municipal boards.

Chairman O’Neill announced that member Jim Sullivan was participating remotely via phone and asked if any members had any objections to this. There were none.

It is noted that no members of the public were present at the hearing.

**At 7:02 PM Mr. Chris Lagan moved to close the public hearing; Ms. Meghan Hoffman seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 6-0-0. The hearing was subsequently closed.**

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At 7:04 PM Chairman O’Neill called the regular monthly meeting of the Finance Committee to order.

**Discussions/Presentations: ETR – Police Department, Improved signage:**

*The Committee reviewed a document entitled Request for Transfer from the Finance Committee Reserve Fund, dated March 28, 2014.*

Police Chief Allen Tingley reported that the requested funds would pay for improved signage at the intersections of Holliston Street and Lovering Street and the intersection of Holliston Street and Coffee Street. Many motorists are running the stop signs. In the last several months there have been two fairly serious accidents. He would like to install solar-powered signs with lights around them to draw attention to the intersection ahead. He briefly described the signs.

**Mr. Chris Lagan moved that the Committee approve the request of a transfer of \$4,239.00 from the Finance Committee Reserve Fund to account 5400 – Police Supplies for the purchase of traffic signs for two intersections; Ms. Meghan Hoffman seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 6-0-0**

Responding to Chairman O’Neill’s question on the budget, Chief Tingley responded that he is fairly confident the department will be able to make things work within the budget, noting that a few purchases may come out of funds that are left in this year’s budget. The staff is up to twenty officers, including the detective position. While he would always accept more officers, staffing is good right now.

Mr. Jim Sullivan noted that the preliminary budget suggested reductions in funds supporting overtime and court time. Chief Tingley responded that he hopes to be able to move some money around to make it work. The overall shortage will be approximately \$3,300.

**Discussions/Presentations: Fire Department – Departmental needs:**

*The Committee reviewed handouts entitled 2015 Operational Budget, EMS Budget and 2015 Wish List.*

Fire Chief Jeffrey Lynch addressed general budget and equipment needs. Mr. Chris Lagan wanted to know if, with the increased departmental budget, there is any expectation of any emergency transfers in the coming year. Chief Lynch acknowledged that it was possible, due to a firefighter being unable to work due to illness, which affects staffing and overtime costs.

Chief Lynch expressed concern about the station behind Town Hall, noting that newer engines do not fit into that size of station. In time, it will not be useful to the department for the housing of engines.

Chief Lynch briefly reviewed his 2015 Operational Budget handout. He noted that the 55+ community could potentially increase calls just due to increased age in those communities. He expressed special concern for short staffing on Engine 2, meaning less than three trained firefighters as probationary firefighters are not authorized to enter fire situations due to lack of training. The number of engines dispatched depends on the type of call, i.e., smoke alarm chirping will get one engine to investigate as a fire is not present. Brief discussion followed. It was noted that short staffing is also due to the fact that on-call personnel are not always available.

General discussion followed on dormitory situation now that there is a female firefighter. Chief Lynch responded that lockers were initially arranged to provide a divider, but now all resting firefighters are required to wear shorts in the dorm should the alarm go off.

Responding to a question from the Committee, Chief Lynch stated he is not anticipating any major equipment repairs. He noted that Department of Public Services handles routine maintenance things such as oil changes, tires, etc., but specialized repairs to ladders and pumps are often outsourced.

Chief Lynch expressed concern for the heat in Station 1. He indicated that, during a period of very cold temperatures, both blowers went on the blink. They are very old and should be replaced at some point. Brief discussion on items included on free cash list.

EMS budget – There will be a general fund transfer to offset reduced revenues. When ambulance staff is fully ALS-certified, this may change.

**DPS – Budget Update, Departmental Needs:**

Mr. Tom Holder, Director, Department of Public Services, was unable to attend. This matter will be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

**Miscellaneous Discussion:**

Mr. Andy Rodenhiser, Chair, Planning and Economic Development Board, wanted to know if there would be discussion on the Planning Board budget. Chairman O’Neill responded the Committee had received the budget only a few days ago and had not had time to review it all. Mr. Rodenhiser stated he was not prepared to speak to it, but would like to be on hand when that discussion takes place.

**Warrant Review -- 2014 Special Town Meeting and Annual Town Meeting – Final Preparations including Finance Committee recommendations**

*The Committee reviewed the 2014 Special Town Meeting Warrant and the 2014 Annual Town Meeting Warrant, revised editions.*

It was noted that, as the Board of Selectmen had not yet given recommendations on warrant articles, the Committee would reserve its recommendations until a later date.

The Committee reviewed the Special Town Meeting Warrant with the following notable comments:

- Ms. Carol Pratt, Town Accountant, explained the OPEB policy.
- Article 3 – the street acceptance account will be created via town meeting article.
- The difference between unissued vs. unexpended -- unissued is money that was needed for a project and voted at TM but it was not borrowed.
- Article 5 – a one-time expense to train the Health Agent on permitting software.
- Article 6 – Ms. Pratt explained that funds cannot be transferred into a revolving account which requires that the entity must be self-supporting. The funds will be transferred into a monetary article so that it could still be used in the project, but not deposited into the revolving account.

**Annual Town Meeting Warrant**

Review of the warrant brought the following notable comments:

- Sewer enterprise fund – It was noted that the user fees are not sufficient to balance the budget which necessitates use of retained earnings.
- Cassidy field – Why is so much being contributed from free cash if funds are being repurposed in Special Town Meeting article? Ms. Pratt confirmed that \$20,000 is for paving, and \$58,000 is the cost of the modular bathroom.
- Thayer House accounts will be tracked.
- Is there any plan in the budget for maintenance of the new synthetic turf fields?

**Chairman’s Report:**

Chairman O’Neill asked members to look at the budget and send him any questions they may have. He will try to get answers prior to the next meeting.

**Clerk's Report:**

In the absence of the Clerk, Chairman O'Neill commented on the Finance Committee's account, noting that there is still a balance exceeding \$90,000.

**Liaison Reports:**

There were none.

**Approval of Minutes:**

*The Committee reviewed the following information: (1) Draft minutes from March 12, 2014; and (2) Invoice from Gatehouse Media.*

**Mr. Chris Lagan moved that the Committee approve the minutes of March 12, 2014, as drafted, Ms. Meghan Hoffman seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 6-0-0.**

**Ms. Meghan Hoffman moved that the Committee pay an invoice from Gatehouse Media in the amount of \$70.87 for the publication of the public hearing notice; Mr. Todd Alessandri seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 6-0-0.**

**Next Meeting(s):**

Brief discussion followed on the next meeting, which will be scheduled after members are polled as to availability. Chairman O'Neill suggested several nights in the coming week and will send out an email for members to respond.

There will likely also be a meeting immediately before Special Town Meeting and Annual Town Meeting on May 12, 2014.

**At 8:53 PM Ms. Meghan Hoffman moved to adjourn; Mr. Jim Sullivan seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 6-0-0.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Jeanette Galliardt  
Night Board Secretary