



Town of Medway
FINANCE COMMITTEE
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April 1, 2015– 7:00 PM
Medway High School Library
88 Summer Street

Present: Frank Rossi, Chairman; Chris Lagan, Vice-Chair; Members: Rohith Ashok; Todd Alessandri; Ellen Hillery; Meghan Hoffman; Jeff O’Neill.

Absent: Barry Schroeder, Clerk; Jim Sullivan.

Also Present: Michael Boynton, Town Administrator; Selectman John Foresto.

Medway Public Schools: Superintendent Judith Evans; Dr. Armand Pires, Assistant Superintendent; Don Aicardi, Director of Finance and Operations; and Diane Borgatti, Chair, School Committee.

Chairman Rossi called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM.

Discussion – School Department Budget:

Present: Dr. Judith Evans; Don Aicardi.

As liaison to the School Department, Mr. Alessandri explained that there was a huge jump in salaries for FY16 from FY15, noting that some positions were reclassified. Many of the dollar amounts presented in the budget as actuals were pulled directly from MUNIS. Brief discussion followed. Mr. Alessandri will get the breakdown and send it to members.

Dr. Evans stated she could not answer questions from the prepared report as it was not her report. She explained that, with regard to special education, the personality of the student weighs heavily on the staff who will be working with him/her. Staff is shifted around to accommodate those students. She noted that some staff members are contract employees, not salaried, and as those contracts are negotiated, those salary figures go up and down each year.

Brief discussion followed on test scores, administrative costs of standardized testing, transportation, students with disabilities, specialized educational plans, collaboratives, current and projected student populations. Dr. Evans noted that class sizes were larger when she came to Medway seven years ago.

Dr. Evans explained that they to educate students in-district so have created programs with that in mind. However, in a small community like Medway, there are students who come in from outside, have behavior issues that we cannot address at school and are often hospitalized. That is the kind of student who may leave in the middle of the year, possibly to become part of a special program and specialized plan. What we try to do is evaluate each student and give it our “best guess” as to whether that student may be returning for the next school year. Responding to a question from Mr. Lagan, Ms. Evans stated there are currently 2,450 students in the district, and 38 of those are the ones with these kinds of unique situations.

Responding to a question from Chairman Rossi about the solar arrays, Dr. Evans stated that Mr. Verdolino had been involved in discussions to consolidate electric services. He has since left the Medway Public Schools. Now we would like to consider an arrangement for gas (heat) as well. This year we had a very conservative number allocated for utilities, and it is likely that we will not expend the full amount this year. Mr. Aicardi added that, on the basis of those initial discussions, the contract would be with a consortium. Based on actual usage, he has opted to decrease the dollar figure for natural gas and electricity. Savings from the solar panels are just beginning to come in. While there are still a number of issues to be worked out, the projected savings may be around \$65,000. Brief discussion followed.

Chairman Rossi asked how the schools plan to handle the fields going forward, i.e., shifting some funds for the Town to maintain the fields. Dr. Evans responded that it is a complicated issue, noting that they will still be doing the mowing around the schools and there are also some shared costs involved in maintaining the fields. Hanlon Field fees were deposited into a revolving fund with the intent to fund a new turf field. There are associated costs not covered by fees such as the concession stand, heat for the restrooms, etc. The turf fields do not require a lot of maintenance, but there is trash and other cleanup duties performed by custodians. We have all the equipment for mowing around the school, but our maintenance people are not landscapers. So there are tasks that need more direct oversight than just moving the grass. The grass can grow six inches over the summer. Discussion followed on proposed improvements such as the speaker system upgrade, enclosing the bottom of the bleachers, etc. Ms. Evans reported that, in an effort to keep that account balance up, they did not charge any expenses against the revolving account.

Referring to school choice, Mr. Alessandri asked if there was a plan between now and the end of the year to draw down school choice. Dr. Evans responded that the agreement was that we would retain no more than \$500,000 in School Choice. Right now we have over 70 students. Our annual target is to bring in around \$400,000 in on school choice. The School Committee has a list of initiatives with associated dollar figures, and there are no plans to move forward with any of them. An unanticipated expense is \$45,000 is to do a temporary fix on the McGovern School driveway as well as repair broken pavement in the parking lot caused by frost heaves. These funds will come from School Choice as will the funds to do improvements at Burke Memorial School. Discussion followed, noting that circuit breaker funds are still unknown. It was noted that the School Department may have a better handle on the School Choice figures in five or six weeks. Mr. Boynton added that the Town will likely be contributing some funds toward the paving projects.

Discussion followed on factors affecting retiring staff members, eligibility, impact on hiring, and other reasons why staff leave.

Chairman Rossi thanked Ms. Evans and her colleagues for coming to the meeting, as well as expressing appreciation for working with her during her tenure as Superintendent. Ms. Evans will be leaving Medway Public Schools to pursue another opportunity.

Mr. Boynton stated there was a revised summary that came out yesterday. He noted that the figures are actuals pulled from MUNIS. The “bottom line” is accurate. He added that early retirement, “steps and lanes”, and energy savings are all factors that can affect the School Department budget. Mr. Alessandri explained that Mr. Aicardi is trying to match up the FTE with the MUNIS listing and has added notations as necessary within the report. Mr. O’Neill added that this report is much clearer and easier to understand.

Warrant Review:

The Committee reviewed revised Special Town Meeting and Annual Town Meeting Warrants, dated March 31, 2015.

Members briefly reviewed warrant articles with occasional discussion. Following discussion, the Finance Committee voted on each Annual Town Meeting article as follows:

Article 1 – ESCO: John – Mr. O’Neill moved that the Finance Committee recommend Article 1, as presented; Ms. Hoffman seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 7-0-0.

Article 2 – Operating Budget: Ms. Hoffman moved that the Finance Committee recommend Article 2, as presented; Mr. Ashok seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 7-0-0.

Article 3 – Water Enterprise Fund: Ms. Hoffman moved that the Finance Committee recommend Article 3, as presented; Mr. Ashok seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 7-0-0.

Article 4 – Sewer Betterment Stabilization: Mr. O’Neill moved that the Finance Committee recommend Article 4, as presented; Ms. Hoffman seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 7-0-0.

Article 5 – Sewer Enterprise Fund: Mr. O’Neill moved that the Finance Committee recommend Article 4, as presented; Ms. Hoffman seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 7-0-0.

Article 6 – WHAT -- Mr. O’Neill moved that the Finance Committee recommend Article 6, as presented; Ms. Hoffman seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 7-0-0.

Article 7 – Ambulance Enterprise Fund: Ms. Hoffman moved that the Finance Committee recommend Article 7, as presented; Mr. Alessandri seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 7-0-0.

Article 8 – Free Cash: Mr. Hoffman moved that the Finance Committee recommend Article 8, as presented; Mr. Ashok seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 7-0-0.

Article 9 -- Borrowing: Capital Projects: Ms. Hoffman moved that the Finance Committee recommend Article 9, as presented; Mr. Ashok seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 7-0-0.

Article 10 -- Repurpose Monetary Articles: Water Enterprise: Ms. Hoffman moved that the Finance Committee recommend Article 10, as presented; Mr. Alessandri seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 7-0-0.

Article 11 -- Borrowing: Water Enterprise – Brentwood: Ms. Hoffman moved that the Finance Committee recommend Article 11, as presented; Mr. Alessandri seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 7-0-0.

Article 12-- Repurpose Monetary Articles: Sewer Enterprise: Ms. Hoffman moved that the Finance Committee recommend Article 12, as presented; Mr. Alessandri seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 7-0-0.

Article 13 -- Borrowing: Sewer Enterprise – Inflow & Infiltration: Mr. O’Neill moved that the Finance Committee recommend Article 13, as presented; Mr. Lagan seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 7-0-0.

Article 14 -- Appropriation: Medway Family Day: Mr. O’Neill moved that the Finance Committee recommend Article 14, as presented; Ms. Hoffman seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 7-0-0.

Article 16-- Borrowing: Design and Project Management Services for New DPS Facility: Ms. Hoffman moved that the Finance Committee recommend Article 16, as presented; Mr. Todd Alessandri seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 7-0-0

Article 17 -- Borrowing: Non-Participatory Items Associated with Route 109 Project: Ms. Hoffman moved that the Finance Committee recommend Article 17, as presented; Mr. Todd Alessandri seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 7-0-0.

Article 18 -- Appropriation: Thayer Property Operations: Ms. Hoffman moved that the Finance Committee recommend Article 18, as presented; Mr. Ashok seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 7-0-0.

Article 19 Revolving Accounts: Annual Authorization – Ms. Hoffman moved that the Finance Committee recommend Article 19, as presented; Mr. Ashok seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 7-0-0.

The Finance Committee took no action on the following zoning articles:

- Article 23 -- Acceptance of Sidewalk Easement
- Article 24 -- Zoning Bylaw Recodification
- Article 25 -- Amend Zoning Bylaw: New Sub-Section for Multifamily Housing

The Finance Committee is awaiting additional information on these articles (TBD):

- Article 15 -- Capital Project: Construct and Improve Playgrounds – CPC Funds. While this was proposed for the Idylbrook Field Playground, this article has been expanded to include other playgrounds in town. Ms. Hillery reported that, at an initial discussion at a CPC meeting, the feeling was that the CPC was not opposed to the concept, though the article was limited at Idylbrook Field at that time.
- Article 20 Appropriation: Community Preservation Committee
- Article 21 Acceptance of MGL chapter 64L, § 2 Local Option Meals Tax
- Article 22 OPEB Trust Funding from Meals Tax -- Brief discussion followed on whether this was the way to fund the OPEB contribution that is mandated by the Commonwealth, noting that this is a start and shows the DOR the Town is trying. It is also important to the auditors. Mr. Lagan theorized that the proposed revenue is unknown, and he believes it unlikely that those restaurant revenues can generate \$140,000 in meals tax. He suggested this tax not be tied to OPEB contributions, and offered to serve on a board that would consider other options.

Selectman Foresto stated the Board of Selectmen has looked at numbers from several communities for a number of years. The Board is confident that the number is fairly close.

The Board of Selectmen has to ratify the collective bargaining agreements referenced in Articles 27, 28, and 29.

Brief discussion followed on next week's meeting. Chairman Rossi reminded members that their submissions for Town Report are due next week.

Approval of Meeting Minutes:

The Committee reviewed draft minutes from November 10, 2014 and January 14, 2015.

Ms. Hoffman moved that the Finance Committee approve the minutes of November 10, 2014, as presented; Mr. Ashok seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 7-0-0.

Mr. Ashok moved that the Finance Committee approve the minutes of January 14, 2015, as amended; Ms. Hoffman seconded. No further discussion. VOTE: 6-0-1.

At 9:20 PM Ms. Hoffman moved to adjourn; Mr. O'Neill seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 7-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeanette Galliardt
Night Board Secretary