

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Minutes

18 MAR 28 PM 12:26

Time: 8:30 a.m.

Date: March 24, 2018

Present: Noonan, O'Connell, Kupcinkas, Kennedy, Kuphal, Cofske, Khalife

Absent: None

Meeting called to order at 8:35 a.m.

The following people were in at 8:30 a.m.

Andrew Vanni, Finance Director, Dave Marciello, Town Manager, Rich Hamilton, Fire Chief, Scott Despres, BOS, John Adams, BOS, Kay Peltier, COA, Fran King, BOS

Motioned by Khalife, seconded by Kupcinkas to accept the minutes of March 19, 2018 as written. Unanimous.

Fire Department Budget

Rich Hamilton: The budget is basically level funded. There is a 1.5% increase in salaries.

Jen O'Connell: When was the last increase?

Rich Hamilton: We have put in whatever everyone else has put in for over the years. We hadn't been doing that all along. Our guys never ask for a raise. They do a lot without getting paid.

Rich Hamilton: We have been catching up on our inspections. There were several violations found and were corrected. We have 7 certified inspectors. I had two of them that went above and beyond and got additional certification on their own time. They took vacation time from their jobs and took the courses needed. This was all with no cost to the Town. I put in a \$200 stipend for those that were certified. I also put in a stipend of \$428 for a Fire Prevention Coordinator.

Jen O'Connell: Do you have a Revolving Fund?

Rich Hamilton: No, we do not. I don't think we have a need for this. We increased our fees from \$15 to \$40. The Inspectors received an increase because of this. We put in a stipend of \$428 for a Public Educator. This is for Public Relations events. Dues were increased by \$500.

Jen O'Connell: What is the \$5,000 for the meals?

Dave Marciello: I put that in to try to get the firefighters hang out more at the station. This could be for a barbecue or just a socialization event. If a call comes in, they are available at the station.

Chris Kennedy: I wouldn't call it meals. I would rather see the money used to pay people that are using their own time for additional certification. Is our fee schedule across the board?

Rich Hamilton: The Building Department increased their fees last year.

Dave Marciello: If I were to increase the fee for the Transfer Station, I would need to cover \$300,000. I am getting \$80,000. I could probably raise the sticker fee to \$75 or \$100 and I don't think it will have any pushback. I am asking the Board of Selectmen to raise it to \$75. I would like it to go to \$150, but I don't think they will allow that. I sell 3700 stickers a year.

Chris Kennedy: Is the commercial rate different than the residential rate?

Dave Marciello: Commercial stickers go through the Board of Health. It used to be charged by the fleet. Now it is by the truck.

Capital Items

Rich Hamilton: The Fire Hoses Project is in its final year. The \$6,200 will complete the project. We were fortunate that the city of Springfield gave us about \$30,000 worth of hose and valves. This helped us complete our upgrade. I put in for some small pumps that we use to pump out cellars. This cost is \$1,200. We will now have one for each engine.

Jen O'Connell: Why are these items not on the Warrant?

Dave Marciello: I only have so much money in Free Cash and so much to Raise and Appropriate.

Jen O'Connell: Past practice has been that whatever the Fire Department puts on the Warrant for supplies passes. I would rather that some of these be on the Warrant and take something else out of the budgets.

Rich Hamilton: We have always been told that if it was under \$10,000 then it came out of the budget. Any amounts over \$10,000 go on the Warrant. The only big item is the gear washer and dryer. The goal is to get one for each station. This is for 1 additional washer and 2 dryers. We cannot use the commercial dryers.

Hydrant Service

Rich Hamilton: We work closely with Aquarian on this account. There is a minor adjustment for a couple of new hydrants that we acquired. There are some road acceptances coming up, but it shouldn't affect us for the upcoming year. We calculate the amount of water used at each fire. The fire on Upton Street used ½ million gallons.

Albert Kupcinkas: What is the distance between hydrants?

Rich Hamilton: The code is that a home needs to be within 5 miles from a Fire Station or 1000 feet from a hydrant.

Rich Hamilton left at 9:10 a.m.

Dr. Fitzpatrick, Blackstone Valley Tech, was in at 9:15 a.m.

Dr. Fitzpatrick: I am coming to you asking for \$21,759 in new dollars for next year. We had originally submitted a \$34,000 increase.

Dave Marciello: The original increase was for \$68,000, which was the total between the loan and operational costs.

Dr. Fitzpatrick: Our budget is prepared internally. It is also on our web page. The Governor's Budget is leaner than what I had hoped for. They are allotting an additional \$20.00 per student in Chapter 70 Funds. The Legislature is revisiting the budget. The amount may go up to \$100 per student. The budget for FY2019 is up the highest at 4.74% since I started 25 years ago. There is a 2.25% increase in salaries. They are in the 2nd year of their contract. There is no new bonding or debt. We are in the 14th year of our

current bond. Our Excess in Deficiency Funds (END) is certified at \$657,000. We are allowed \$1.2Million. We are paying for our own roof project. We did the athletic field on our own. The State recognized Valley Tech for completing the roof on their own without asking the Towns for money. We do multiple projects in the community. They possess safety, learning potential and the students feel comfortable doing this. We want to be clear that we are not displacing any local companies when we do our projects. Revenue is pretty flat. In our student base, 14% represents our Special Needs students.

Dave Cofske: What is entailed in Fee Revenue?

Dr. Fitzpatrick: Our money is generated through the students. There is a \$50.00 fee for activities. We do charge parking fees. Everyone works at this school.

Jen O'Connell: Do you charge for bussing?

Dr. Fitzpatrick: No, we do not. This would reduce our Transportation reimbursement.

Chet Hanratty was in at 9:45 a.m.

Dr. Fitzpatrick: We only come to you one time. We do not come back for more money. We work within our budget. The combined assessment for FY2019 is \$814,431. Millbury is 5.5% of our budget. You are sending 3 less students than last year.

Dave Marciello: You originally asked for \$885,000.

Dr. Fitzpatrick: We reduced the amount since then. We have three new positions. We have a new Art Teacher, an Instructional Aide (1 to 1), and an additional Secretarial position. This was reduced a couple of years ago and we found that we need it back.

Chris Kennedy: It looks like a 4% increase in salaries in the Administrative and Business Offices.

Chet Hanratty: They are given raises based on a scale. Their raises are performance based raises. Not everyone gets the same percentage increase.

Chris Kennedy: We need to look at the gap between Blackstone Valley Tech and our public school. Our increases are limited.

Dr. Fitzpatrick: Do you have a lot of senior staff?

Jen O'Connell: About 73% of our teachers are at the top step.

Chris Kennedy: As we are being tough on our own school, we need to be equal at your school.

Tony Khalife: Your budget of \$814,431 is \$21,759 over last year?

Dr. Fitzpatrick: Yes, it is.

Chris Kennedy: Do we have a fund in our school budget that is similar to their END?

Dave Marciello: No, we do not.

Jen O'Connell: That would be our Stabilization Fund. What happens to your numbers if you take on more Special Education students?

Dr. Fitzpatrick: We would experience an increased cost. All 13 Towns share the cost of an additional staff member. The per-pupil cost for Millbury is \$11,417.

Steve Noonan: What percentage of your graduates go to college?

Dr. Fitzpatrick: About 75%. We also give out about \$4million in scholarships. That number was \$25,000 when I first started.

Dr. Fitzpatrick and Chet Hanratty left at 10:30 a.m.

Chris Kennedy left at 10:35 a.m.

Jen O'Connell: I don't think we are going to vote the budget today. When will we get the Warrant?

Dave Marciello: The Warrant will be voted on by the BOS on April 2.

Tony Khalife: So, we either approve or disapprove the Town Manager's budget?

Jen O'Connell: That's right. We normally approve what the Town Manager recommends.

Dave Marciello: Whatever you change, if you change anything, affects all the budgets. We are at the levy capacity.

Jen O'Connell: The proforma does not match our budget books. You list an amount under Ambulance Service. I thought we had an agreement with Sutton.

Dave Marciello: I do. That is just a place holder in the event that the agreement ends, the person doing the budgets will know that we will need to budget this.

Tony Khalife: How long is our agreement with Sutton?

Dave Marciello: It is up at the end of 2020. Right now Sutton is happy with paying our \$60,000. I don't know what they will say in 2 years.

Jen O'Connell: The budget numbers for FY18 do not match the proforma.

Dave Marciello: We had a problem with the software. We will take another look. The numbers for 2019 are correct.

Jen O'Connell: I asked everyone to look at the School Budget. I found 18 accounts totaling \$108,000 that have been active since 2015, yet they are still being budgeted for. Our letter to the School Department will include these accounts and the fact that they have not been active for several years.

Tony Khalife: The Head Clerk salary went down in the Planning & Development Budget.

Dave Marciello: There has been some movement of people within the building. We are also taking \$10,000 from the Conservation Revolving Fund to pay for the person that does work for Conservation.

Tony Khalife: What is the \$12,500 for Elected Officials?

Dave Marciello: That's the stipend for the Planning Board.

Tony Khalife: Is the \$10,000 for Computers in the Town Hall Budget for Clear Gov?

Dave Marciello: Yes. This should be up and running this week.

Tony Khalife: Is there annual software for this?

Dave Marciello: There are several up charges. Once it is up and running there will be an annual renewal.

Tony Khalife: The elections seem high.

Dave Marciello: We have 3 elections in that number.

Jen O'Connell: How many elections do we have next year?

Dave Marciello: We have 3 in the budget.

Tony Khalife: There is a lot of debt coming off. Is this one project or several small ones?

Andrew Vanni: The Ramshorn project and the Fire Department Breathing Apparatus are coming off.

Jen O'Connell: Why don't we see a savings in your budget since you moved the HR person?

Dave Marciello: I carried \$18,000 for his secretary last year, which was never filled. We are using that money internally to handle other items. We are budgeting \$21,000 for a confidential administrator for the HR Department. This position will be 17-18 hours a week. I also have \$15,000 in the budget for

interns to help out in a couple of departments. These would be people that are master's level college students. We will be using them in the Finance Director's office and the Planning office. In the Planning office it will be to help with the Master Plan.

Kaye Peltier: This is for work that is already being done?

Dave Marciello: There are 2 different levels of analytics. The first one was visioning. After 18 months we will have the Master Plan.

Dave Cofske: Why do we see stipends instead of adding the amount to the salaries?

Dave Marciello: If we add it to the salaries, it is added to the retirement. This would cost the Town more than if it were a stipend.

Dave Cofske: Under the Elections and Registrars, the numbers didn't change but the total is different.

Dave Marciello: I dropped her bottom line number but didn't change the explanation sheet.

Jen O'Connell: Are you looking for more help in the Treasurer's office due to payroll?

Dave Marciello: Yes, it is. There is an increase in hours due to the school payroll.

Jen O'Connell: Why is the Town Counsel budget going up? Isn't that what the HR person was supposed to handle?

Dave Marciello: They are handling litigations. Several years ago, the Town paid for a survey to be done on property that they needed an easement for during a sewer project. When the project was done, the easement taken was on the other side of the property.

Albert Kupcinkas: Why are we using an address in No Reading if we send out our excise tax?

Andrew Vanni: It goes to a lockbox. We upload the payments once they are processed.

Jen O'Connell: Are you putting an override on the Warrant for the Schools?

Dave Marciello: Yes, I am. This is contingent on the election results. I am also looking for a \$1Million BAN. If people vote to approve the override, then I am okay with that. The election will be in September, so the override question will be on that ballot. This would bring the School to 3.5%. The budget will be its own entity. If the budget passes, they will get 2.5%.

Dave Marciello: I have no reason to believe that they don't need what they want.

Jen O'Connell: Does the School Department know that you are not giving them the Medicaid at Town Meeting?

Dave Marciello: They have the slides from my presentation, so they cannot say that they didn't know that it wasn't added.

Jen O'Connell: I don't want to go to Town Meeting without a balanced budget.

Jen O'Connell: Why can't we use some of the Revolving Fund money to purchase the roll-off trailer at the Transfer Station?

Dave Marciello: They are running the operation in a deficit this year. We need to reauthorize the purpose of the revolving fund.

Dave Marciello went over the rest of the Capital Items on the Warrant.

Kaye Peltier: I would like to have some kind of guidance as to how to get something for the Senior Center. We are looking for help for carpeting and a new parking lot. I have been coming to your meetings for 2 years now and I am just looking at any suggestions as to how to get the Town to help. These are Millbury seniors that we are servicing. Do I have to get up at Town Meeting and put a hold on all the budgets in order for the Center to get some money?

Scott Despres: I didn't see anything about Capital Requests from the Senior Center.

Dave Marciello: I am limited on what goes under Capital Items. I am not present at the meeting that determines what gets in the article. The way this was done in the past was completely wrong. They had raised and appropriated for all the Capital Items then transferred from Free Cash. Now, we list the funding source for each Capital Item.

John Adams: How do we get the carpeting for the Senior Center?

Dave Marciello: We could reduce the amount to Woolie World.

Jen O'Connell: You wanted an Administrative Assistant. How much of that would be paid by SNAP?

Kaye Peltier: SNAP is for the outreach person, plus the money from the EOEI Formula Grant.

Dave Marciello: Judy is not going to be there forever. We would like to mold a new person for that position.

Tony Khalife: Couldn't you increase the BAN and give them the parking lot under "Roads"?

Dave Marciello: I can do that.

Next meeting scheduled for Monday, March 26 at 7:00 p.m.

Motioned by Khalife, seconded by Noonan to adjourn at 1:30 p.m. Unanimous.

Albert P. Nepeian

Stephen Noonan

Anthony Khalife