

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Minutes

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MILLISBURG, MASS.
Time: 6:30 p.m.

Date: March 25, 2019

Present: Noonan, Kupcinskas, Kuphal, Kennedy, Cofske, Cooney, O'Connell

Absent: None

Meeting called to order at 6:32 p.m.

Motioned by Kupcinskas, seconded by Noonan to accept the minutes of March 19, 2019 as written.
Unanimous.

Denise Marlboro, Treasurer/Collector, was in to discuss her budget at 6:32p.m.

Jen O'Connell: Are there any changes in your department for the next year?

Denise Marlboro: There are no staff changes. We added a lockbox.

Jen O'Connell: Is there any difference with all the different options of paying the bills?

Denise Marlboro: I haven't seen a large change in the bills. We have had the lockbox for excise taxes for 17 years. We just added the real estate taxes and the sewer bills. You can go on the website and get a record of what you have paid all year. You weren't able to do that before.

Jen O'Connell: What percentage of people still come in to pay instead of paying on line?

Denise Marlboro: About 60% still come in.

Jen O'Connell: Does your office still do the payroll?

Denise Marlboro: Yes, we do.

Jen O'Connell: I know that there was a problem getting the paperwork from the School Department. Is this still a problem?

Denise Marlboro: Andrew and I have been working on this.

Steve Noonan: Will everything be up and running by July 1?

Andrew Vanni: It should be ready by January 1st.

Dave Marciello: We are building up the payroll line item because in the future we will have to change companies and the software is around \$300,000. Plus we would have to have training and that cost is about \$50,000.

Dave Cofske: The Service Lock Box went up.

Denise Marlboro: All bills are in there now. We only had the excise in the past. Now we have added the real estate taxes and sewer bills.

Chris Kennedy: Do we see an efficiency with the bills going in there?

Denise Marlboro: We still need what staff we have to take care of the office.

Dave Cofske: I know that you are raising salaries to market levels, but you are still giving stipends. If you are giving stipends, then the salaries should not be going up as much. My thought is if you are giving raises to market levels, you should be reducing or eliminating the stipends.

Andrew Vanni: These are educational stipends.

Denise Marlboro: These are in their contract.

Dave Marciello: Denise's stipend has in place many years before I got here. They were in place before Bob Spain. She is still below the average.

Steve Noonan: Why didn't we know about these averages before?

Andrew Vanni: I can get you whatever information you want.

Steve Noonan: This has been asked in past budget seasons and we never received what we asked for. The HR Director should have been here to discuss this with us in the beginning.

Dave Marciello: That is why we have Justine here.

Chris Kennedy: We need to know by position how far out we are from the average salary amount.

Jen O'Connell: The supplies line item is doubling.

Denise Marlboro: We changed people back to weekly payroll. That should be in another line.

Andrew Vanni: I have never seen Denise take a full week off for vacation. She works Saturdays and late on Tuesdays.

Denise Marlboro: Every Department Head does this.

Dave Marciello: We do not have as many employees as we had in 2009. There have been 17 positions cut, some due to technology.

Jayne Davolio: training takes time too. When we hire someone, they still need to be trained.

Denise Marlboro left at 7:00 p.m.

Jen O'Connell: Chris and I had a discussion about comparing where we have been and where we are going. We have spoken for 6 years about a lack of succession plan for department heads.

Dave Marciello: The intent and the request from the COA was for a full time position. I told her that she could do that if she started that person half way through the year. I could guarantee a full time position the following year. She said she may be able to get the money from another source. She may start that person earlier in the year.

Chris Kennedy: There are three people in that department that cannot take on that position. There are multiple positions not being utilized the way they should be.

Kaye Peltier: We have a great staff at the Senior Center. The need is for us to look at having more professional staff. We need an Assistant Director. Some pieces I would like to see strengthened. We are checking on whether we have the right positions filled. We have the right people. All of our positions are part time. There are many volunteers in our facility. Elder Services Staff is in the facility too. If we advertise for an Administrative Assistant, we probably will not get the candidates that we are interested in.

Dave Marciello: I am not concerned about what title they want to use for this position. It would be a non-union position.

Keith Caruso, DPW, was in to discuss his budgets at 7:10 p.m.

Jen O'Connell: Can you give us an overview on your budget?

Keith Caruso: We are trying to get our staffing back up to where it was in the past.

Jen O'Connell: Is your biggest challenge the roads?

Keith Caruso: The roads need to be repaved and the bridges need to be fixed.

Dave Marciello: Before the storm water project can start, we need to do some maintenance. There are manpower demands. This would be part of the project. A lot of testing needs to be done. Then engineering needs to be done the following year, then the maintenance. We need to do two additional street sweepings per year and the catch basins need to be cleaned three to four times a year. This is so that we are within the permitting.

Cemetery

Keith Caruso: We are looking for a couple of new mowers for the cemeteries. One would be a 60 inch mower and the other would be a 48 inch mower. These will be used every day.

Nicole Cooney: Will you be able to use mowers of that size in the cemetery?

Keith Caruso: Yes, we will.

Dave Marciello: There is a warrant article to pay for one of these from their own Perpetual Care account.

Nicole Cooney: Do you trade in your old mowers?

Keith Caruso: They are not worth much and they really don't want them. We recycle them within the Town.

Dave Cofske: There is a new item, fertilizer, in the supplies line. What did you use before?

Keith Caruso: We didn't use anything. We haven't had the personnel to mow the area, so we weren't putting down fertilizer.

Steve Noonan: Do we have the engineering services of \$25,000 on the warrant for FY2020?

Keith Caruso: We are bumping it out one more year.

Steve Noonan: What about the electronic records for \$110,000?

Keith Caruso: We bumped that out too.

Parks and Maintenance

Keith Caruso: We need an infield groomer. We are bumping that up one more year. We need a 60 inch mower, but we are looking for more seasonal help to do the mowing.

Steve Noonan: Are we looking to the future to replace Carl?

Dave Marciello: Carl is going to want to retire soon. His son is probably going to the major league.

Keith Caruso: He has 30 years of service with vacation time.

Nicole Cooney: He definitely needs the seasonal help.

Jen O'Connell: How much of this salary is for seasonal and how much for Carl's replacement?

Keith Caruso: This is all seasonal.

Dave Marciello: We anticipate three seasonal employees at \$12.00 per hour for 40 hours a week for 18 weeks.

Jen O'Connell: So we are looking at \$26,000 for seasonal help and \$20,000 for additional staff.

Chris Kennedy: What is the total for par timers for the season for all the DPW departments?

Keith Caruso: We are asking for a total of nine, which would include one for the Sewer Department.

Snow and Ice

Dave Marciello: If we have no more storms, whether snow plowing or sanding, we should be turning back money.

Street Lights

Keith Caruso: We own the lights. We need to keep them maintained. The lights themselves are LED.

Dave Marciello: The wires are old and need to be replaced. They are not warranted.

Jen O'Connell: Do we have someone in-house to do this?

Dave Marciello: No, we have to contract out the work.

Jen O'Connell: National Grid should be doing more for the Town.

Dave Cofske: Every time we do a capital project, the scope is not correct and it ends up costing the Town more money.

Chris Kennedy: He is asking for \$102,000 and you put in \$110,000.

Dave Marciello: The difference is my hiring a consultant to go over all of the first phase, which is out of warranty.

Jen O'Connell: Have you seen a difference in the bill since we installed the LED's?

Andrew Vanni: I don't have those figures.

Dave Marciello: These have only been out of warranty since January.

Transfer Station

Keith Caruso: I want to add a compactor.

Jen O'Connell: Will this be in an article?

Dave Marciello: Keith has shown me a comparison of having a trailer and having a compactor. We would save more money with a compactor. Casella's contract is coming up. Trash hauling will be going up. We want to have Casella do all of our hauling, not just the recycling. This would save about \$30,000. The ROI would be about 10 years. We would like to compact everything. We get a kick back from Wheelabrator if we don't go over on our tonnage. We did check on using solar, but we are still waiting on the State for this.

Chris Kennedy: Didn't we appropriate money for a trailer?

Dave Marciello: Yes, we did. We never purchased the trailer. Keith would rather purchase the compactor. This would save on hauling costs.

Chris Kennedy: How much more than what we have do we need for the project?

Dave Marciello: We don't know. We want to put an article on the Warrant to move the money. We need to hire an engineer to design it and have an electrical contractor help with the design.

Chris Kennedy: If we have \$180,000, is this what we need?

Keith Caruso: I would like to repurpose \$100,000.

Dave Marciello: I would like the \$80,000 from Ramshorn and \$100,000 from the trailer to be repurposed.

Dave Cofske: Wouldn't the \$80,000 go back to Free Cash?

Dave Marciello: This was for a capital project, so we can use it for another capital project.

Jen O'Connell: Why don't we put the personnel into this budget, so that we have a clear picture on how much this department costs?

Keith Caruso: It is easier to have them all in one budget so we can put them where they are needed. We've all worked well together.

DPW Maintenance and Operations

Dave Marciello: The overall increase to the Municipal side is 1.2%. We reduced the biggest line by 3%. Salaries, benefits and retirement is up about \$300,000 for new hires.

Chris Kennedy: Why start a new hire at Operator 1 and not a lower paying position?

Keith Caruso: We would rather pay our own than give it to an outside contractor.

Chris Kennedy: Where is the savings in the budget between what is spent on an outside contractor and what is spent by hiring a new employee?

Dave Marciello: You see the savings in the Snow and Ice Budget.

Chris Kennedy: We don't see it here. You should be saying that will see a savings in the future.

Dave Cofske: If we add five new employees, where does the \$50,000 come from?

Dave Marciello: I think that may be a typo.

Chris Kennedy: Is this a typo or is it intentional?

Dave Cofske: If we are going to put all the employees in one budget, then that is where they belong. If you say they are all in one budget and we see them in other budgets, then we are not sure what is correct. Looking at these budgets, we see now see that there are more seasonal employees in this particular budget. How many are we really budgeting for?

Keith Caruso: We plan to have 4 seasonal employees for the Highway Department, 4 for the Parks and 3 for the Cemetery. This past year we had to have our full time workers do what the seasonal workers had been doing.

Dave Cofske: If you have 3 additional equipment operators, then I don't feel that you also need 3 seasonal employees.

Dave Marciello: The 3 equipment operators are primarily for the MS4 to clean out the storm drains.

Chris Kennedy: How many idle trucks do we have?

Keith Caruso: We have 2 Class B trucks and 3 additional trucks.

Chris Kennedy: Do they need an Operator 1 license to drive these?

Keith Caruso: Yes, they do.

Chris Kennedy: Do you need an Operator 1 license for the MS4?

Keith Caruso: Yes, we do. They need to have a catch basin license.

Jen O'Connell: If they are being paid \$17-\$18 per hour, why are we budgeting at \$30?

Keith Caruso: It is more beneficial to get them at a Step 3 so they can hit the ground running and not need the training.

Chris Kennedy: I see a problem with bringing in new people who will be making more money than your current employees.

Keith Caruso: That will not happen.

Chris Kennedy: Is it possible to promote within the department?

Keith Caruso: If they have the licenses then they can be promoted.

Chris Kennedy: Then you could hire new people at a lower rate.

Jen O'Connell: I don't think Keith is being paid correctly.

Dave Marciello: This is budgeted in the Public Works Administration account. His rate will be adjusted according to the contract.

DPW Administration

Jen O'Connell: Is the amount in the salary enough to cover Keith?

Dave Marciello: We don't plan to hire a DPW Director soon. This is here for a place holder.

Andrew Vanni: If we do not hire someone, the money will go to Free Cash.

Steve Noonan: The Dues and Fees are going up drastically.

Dave Marciello: Mr. Caruso is going to as many classes for licenses as I can send him to. There could be a future Operations Manager for this department. There is also a requirement in the MS4 that we have a Storm Water Officer.

Dave Cofske: We authorized a slope mower last year.

Dave Marciello: We never bought it. After it was voted on, we found there wasn't enough money to purchase it. We need additional money this year.

Chris Kennedy: Why wouldn't we rent the machine for the two weeks that we need it, at \$1,500 per week instead of buying one?

Dave Cofske: The reason the Town Meeting approved the mower last year was because the argument was that it was too costly to rent the machine. Now you say that you didn't have a quote and you want to ask for more money this year?

Dave Marciello: I went with what Keith Nastasi told me, and then he told me it wasn't enough.

Highway Department

Keith Caruso: Bridges need to be repaired. Round Pond needs work. I also asked for a chipper, which costs \$60,000.

Dave Marciello: I took the chipper out because I needed to balance the budget. I really wanted to give him the chipper, but I don't have the money.

Keith Caruso: Our chipper is a 1983 or 1986 model. We need to have one.

Jen O'Connell: Who is responsible to trim the trees by the power lines?

Keith Caruso: National Grid is responsible for this.

Chris Kennedy: What is the \$225,000 for the MS4?

Dave Marciello: That is next year's amount on the 5 year plan.

Chris Kennedy: Is this for repairs that are detected through our activities?

Dave Marciello: This is for some of the repairs.

Sewer Department

Dave Marciello: I don't put this budget in the book because they are an Enterprise Fund. Their debt is in the budget.

Gary Nelson: Within the next 5 years we will need close to \$7,000,000. Our budget is climbing and will continue to climb. Sewer user fees will be rising. We have pump stations that need to be upgraded. We are putting the projects into our budget so we do not have to take from our Stabilization Fund. The MS4 is very costly. We have about 70% of the Town hooked up to the sewers.

Veterans Services:

Dave Marciello: I added \$5,000 to a new position in this department. We will need to hire a full time agent when Mr. Buso retires.

Chris Kennedy: Can we get a waiver from the State?

Kaye Peltier: I wouldn't count on a waiver from the State.

Dave Marciello: I would like to have things in place. If we could regionalize, it would save us money.

Jen O'Connell: When do the Selectmen finalize the Warrant?

Dave Cofske: Jayne said that we had until April 12 to submit to her.

Next Meeting Dates:

April 1 at 6:30 p.m

April 8 at 6:30 p.m.

Motioned by Kupcinskis, seconded by Noonan to adjourn at 9:10 p.m. Unanimous.

Jim Noonan

Albert P. Kupcinskis

Jim Noonan

[Signature]

Stephen J. Noonan

[Signature]

Nicol L. Looney