

Finance Committee Meeting

September 14, 2011 7:30 PM
Veterans Memorial Building, Room 229
900 Main Street
Millis, MA 02054

In Attendance:

Chris Smith, Chairman
Craig Schultze, Vice Chairman
Jennifer Soule, Clerk
Peter Jurmain
Rick Manburg
Richard Molloy
Jim Smith
Susan Vecchi
Charles Aspinwall, Town Administrator
Andrea Wagner, Board of Selectmen
David Baker, School Committee
Mary Flanders Aicardi
Lisa Hardin, Town Clerk

Chris Smith called the meeting to order at 7:31 PM.

School Committee: FY12 Budget Review:

David Baker:

The School Committee Chairman, Maria Melchionda, has resigned as of September 1, 2011 for personal reasons. Their last meeting was not televised due to the power outages at the schools. David Baker has been reassigned as chairman until a new chairman can be appointed, hopefully by the end of October. Their next meeting is September 20, 2011. Their FY11 Final Budget should be ready for presentation some time soon.

The Town appropriated a total budget to Millis Schools for FY12 of \$11,731,343.00. Interline Transfers can be done within the budget from one line item to another. A form is used to document these transfers. SPED expenses total over 1 million dollars of their budget.

The committee requested explanations and details of the very large items listed on the school's budget to clarify exactly what is covered under that line item.

The School Department has budgeted for the replacement of one SPED van, \$26,000.00, as well as an additional \$10,000.00 in maintenance. They are also requesting a SPED van at the November Town Meeting. The additional SPED van would be used for Pre-K and would have car seats installed. In FY11 \$65,000.00 was spent on SPED vehicle maintenance. The SPED vehicles pick up students from other towns on their way to their destination, the school charges a fee for each pick up. The Town of

Medway outsources all of its SPED transportation. The Millis Transportation Department has not looked into the option of leasing their SPED vehicles. Their maintenance budget would be lower with leased vehicles.

The Clyde Brown Library was painted over the summer by the custodians and the boiler has been replaced. The carpet replacement will be done some time in the future. The roof has been fixed with test patches. The MA School Building Authority will be surveying the Clyde Brown School this Friday, September 16, 2011.

Personnel Plan Review:

Charles Aspinwall:

The Plan consists of four schedules:

- Schedule A: Grades/Positions
- Schedule B: Salary ranges
- Schedule C: Employee Benefits
- Schedule D: Policies and Procedures

The Town Charter assigned the Town Administrator as the Personnel Director. Personnel By-Law requires the plan be reviewed periodically. The Town appropriated \$5,000.00 at Town Meeting for a review of the outdated plan. This was done to meet required laws, inform employees of their benefits and to outline the Town's expectations of their employees. Employees met for an overview of the new personnel plan and were encouraged to make comments, suggestions, etc. According to the Personnel By-Law, the Policies and Procedures section of the plan does not have to be approved at Town Meeting. The Board of Selectmen however can request to include Schedule D at Town Meeting. Schedules A, B & C would be voted on at Town Meeting. A change has been made to the Vacation Accrual Policy which states if an employee resigns from their position before completing six months, they are not entitled to their accrued vacation time. Some of the Policies and Procedures that were added and/or revised are:

Conduct Policy, Conflict of Interest and Financial Disclosure, Political Activity, Use of Town Property, Credit Card Use Policy, Vehicle Use and Reimbursement Policy, Travel and Expense Reimbursement Policy, Anti Fraud Policy, Access and Use of Telecommunication Systems, Social Networking Policy, Sexual Harassment Policy, Workplace Violence Prevention, Discrimination Prevention Policy, Disability Discrimination Prevention Policy, Discrimination Grievance Procedure, Whistleblower Policy, Drug Free Workplace, Alcohol and Drug Use Policy, Workplace Safety, Discipline Policy, Small Necessities Leave Act Policy and Dress Code.

Salary Survey:

Mary Flanders Aicardi:

Working with the Town Administrator a salary survey was complete. The survey results presented compare FY12 Millis salaries to FY11 surrounding town's salaries. A report will be made comparing FY12 to FY12 to give a better picture of where the Town's salaries are compared to comparable towns.

The survey results show the Town's salaries are well below market; the average percentage is 3.5 – 4. Some of the significantly under market positions will be reclassified, specifically the Public Health Director, Council on Aging Director, Recreation Director, Animal Control Officer and the Senior Building Maintenance Worker. Millis is one of the only towns that have three levels of clerical staff; most towns have one or two. The reclassification of positions would have a modest impact on the Operating Budget. An overall salary increase of 4% would impact the budget approximately \$170,000.00.

A list of "Special Employees" is now in place. "Special Employees" are employees who hold more than one position in the Town. In order to avoid any conflict of interest issues, the Board of Selectmen vote these positions as "Special Employees".

In terms of Health Insurance contribution and Longevity, Millis ranges in the middle of comparable towns.

The survey consists of communities geographically close and communities economically close. There have been several voluntary staff turnovers to surrounding towns in the past due to increase salaries offered by that town. To name a few: Asst. Director of the DPW (Franklin), three Treasurer employees (Medway), Library Director (Natick), Police Officer (Wellesley) and the Police Chief (Dover). It especially impacts the Police Department as the Town of Millis has already paid for training and then a surrounding town hires that officer at a higher rate of pay than Millis offers.

The committee has requested a revised survey taking out the highest and lowest towns.

Andrea Wagner:

We are aware we pay our employees at a lower rate than most towns and do not want to lose valuable employees to other towns over salary. Although funding of this increase will be difficult, it should be a priority. The School Department has received recent salary increases.

Town Meeting Articles:

Charles Aspinwall:

The Police Department has requested a "Less Lethal" weapon program. The intent is to outfit the department with tasers and sponge launchers. Right now they have the use of a baton/nightstick or a revolver. Training on the weapons would be approximately \$5,040.00.

Important Dates:

Final Recommendations: October 19, 2011

Warrant to Printer: October 24, 2011

Warrant Delivered to Residents: October 31, 2011

Pre-Town Meeting/Public Hearing: November 2, 2011

Town Meeting: November 7, 2011

Upcoming Meeting Schedule:

September 21, 2011 7:30 PM
Veterans Memorial Building, Room 229

September 28, 2011 7:30 PM
Veterans Memorial Building, Room 229

October 5, 2011 7:30 PM
Veterans Memorial Building, Room 229

October 12, 2011 7:30 PM
Veterans Memorial Building, Room 229

October 19, 2011 7:30 PM
Veterans Memorial Building, Room 229

Minutes Approval:

Peter Jurmain made a motion to accept the June 29, 2011 meeting minutes as written, Susan Vecchi seconded. Vote: 5/0 motion carries.

Susan Vecchi made a motion to accept the September 7, 2011 meeting minutes as written, Craig Schultze seconded. Vote: 6/0 motion carries.

Adjourn:

Jennifer Soule made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 PM; Peter Jurmain seconded, Vote 8/0.

Respectfully submitted,
Deirdre Gilmore