

Finance Committee Meeting

November 2, 2016 7:30 PM EST
Veterans Memorial Building, Room 229
900 Main Street
Millis, MA 02054

In Attendance:

Peter Jurmain, Chairman
Susan Vecchi, Vice Chairman
Craig Schultze, Clerk
Tayana Antin
Peter Berube
Jodie Garzon
Rich Molloy
Jerry Nunnaley
Doug Riley
Suzanne Kennedy, Town Administrator
Kathy LaPlant, Finance Director
Paul Jacobson, Moderator
James Neville, Board of Selectmen

Peter Jurmain called the meeting to order at 7:34 PM

Free Cash Update:

Kathy LaPlant: The difference between FY15 and FY16 Free Cash is \$283,228.00. There are two contributing factors to this:

- (1) Total Turnbacks: Actual Operating Costs vs Budgeted Operating Costs from the Fiscal Year, Encumbrance Balances and Article Balances:
- (2) Increases in Local Estimated Receipts: The town collected more than anticipated in Excise Tax: \$212,804.06, Licenses & Fees: \$164,657.58 and Miscellaneous Non- Recurring: \$96,144.73 – FEMA reimbursement.

Warrant Article Review/ Recommendations/Funding:

Susan Vecchi made a motion to reconsider Article #13, DPW – 1 Ton Dump Truck; Jodie Garzon seconded. Vote: 9/0 motion carries unanimously.

Susan Vecchi made a motion to recommend approval of Article #13, DPW – 1 Ton Dump Truck, in the amount of \$40,100.53 of which \$13,366.85 is funded by Taxation, \$13,366.84 is funded by Water Surplus and \$13,366.84 is funded by Sewer Surplus; Rich Molloy seconded. Vote: 9/0 motion carries unanimously.

Article #1 Unpaid Bills: The publication of this article did not include (1) unpaid bill in the amount of \$780.00 from Water Surplus for consulting fees from June 2016. It is at the moderator's discretion if that item can be included in the Unpaid Bills amount. Paul Jacobson said he has no problem adding the item and the committee should discuss it at Town Meeting. Recommendation will be at Town Meeting.

James Neville: The Board of Selectmen had not made any recommendations on the articles involving funding due to the delay in Free Cash. The BOS met this evening and voted in favor of all monetary articles with the exception of Article #9 OPEB, Article #17

Replenish Stabilization Fund, Article #15 School Roof Repair and Article #16 School Intercom Upgrade. Article #3 Police Union Contract has been settled and the BOS has recommended approval of both Article #3 Police Union Contract and Article #4 Police – Removal of Civil Service.

Article #2 SEIU Contract has been recommended for approval and will be funded by Taxation.

Craig Schultze made a motion to recommend approval of Article #3 Police Union Contract in the amount of \$40,842.51 funded by Taxation; Tayana Antin seconded. Vote: 9/0 motion carries unanimously.

Craig Schultze made a motion to recommend approval of Article #4 Police – Removal of Civil Service; Rich Molloy seconded. Vote: 9/0 motion carries unanimously.

Craig Schultze made a motion to recommend approval of Article #14 DPW – Deputy Director Vehicle in the amount of \$30,482.00 funded by Taxation; Susan Vecchi seconded. Vote: 9/0 motion carries unanimously.

Article #17 Replenish Stabilization Fund:

Craig Schultze suggested using the balance of additional Taxation of \$23,796.33 and \$250,000.00 from Free Cash to replenish the fund by \$273,796.33. The balance of the fund will be approximately \$150,000.00 above the goal of 5% of the town's Operating Budget. Jodie Garzon pointed out that the town's Stabilization Fund Policy states that if the 5% goal is met then a minimum of \$50,000.00 shall be appropriated to the OPEB Fund. The committee agreed the OPEB Fund is typically funded at the Annual Spring Town Meeting.

Craig Schultze made a motion to recommend approval of Article #17 Replenish Stabilization Fund in the amount of \$273,796.33, of which \$23,796.33 will be funded by Taxation and \$250,000.00 by Free Cash; Jerry Nunnaley seconded. Vote: 9/0 motion carries unanimously.

Susan Vecchi made a motion to reconsider Article #12 Dean Street Water Main; Rich Molloy seconded. Vote: 9/0 motion carries unanimously.

Susan Vecchi made a motion to recommend approval of Article #12 Dean Street Water Main in the amount of \$48,945.00 funded through Water Surplus; Rich Molloy seconded. Vote: 9/0 motion carries unanimously.

Craig Schultze made a motion to reconsider Article #11 Area BIII and Area F Sewer Project; Susan Vecchi seconded. Vote: 9/0 motion carries unanimously.

Craig Schultze made a motion to recommend approval of Article #11 Area BIII and Area F Sewer Project in the amount of \$7,061,979.00 from borrowing; Tayana Antin seconded. Vote: 8/1 motion carries.

Pre-Town Meeting/Public Hearing:

Peter Jurmain made a motion to open the meeting at 8:12 PM; Craig Schultze seconded. Vote: 9/0 motion carries unanimously.

Article #1 Unpaid Bills:

Susan Vecchi read all the prior year's unpaid bills including the departments, vendor names and amounts. A total of \$2,343.05 will be paid from Taxation and \$780.00 from Water Surplus.

Article #2 SEIU Contract:

Peter Jurmain: The contract is for three years and the compensation is:

Year 1: 1% Increase

Year 2: 2.5% Increase

Year 3: 2.5% Increase

The article total is for FY16 & FY17 in the amount of \$49,227.76.

Article #3 Police Union Contract:

Peter Jurmain: At this time there are no specific details available on the settlement terms other than retroactive compensation of \$40,842.51.

Article #4 Police – Removal of Civil Service:

The article would remove the Civil Service requirement for the Millis Police Department upon approval from state legislature.

Article #5 Land Swap:

Craig Schultze: The town has been developing a plan to replace the Clyde Brown Elementary School. The state requires the school to have control/ownership of the land the school is built on. The new school would be built adjacent to the existing school which will not cause any disruption to the students. The site of the proposed new school is currently designated as "park" land and is protected under Article 97 of the Massachusetts Constitution which preserves land for conservation and recreation purposes. The town must propose alternative land to replace the land being voted out of "park" land and into school control. The Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs requires the replicated land be of equal size. The areas moving to "park" status include the Sisto Little League Field, Flag Football Field, Softball Field and wetlands adjacent to the HS Football Field (10.5) acres. Six acres will be put under school control. The Bandstand will remain and the playground will be dismantled and reinstalled when the new school is built.

Article #6 Assessors – Change Minimum/Maximum Income Amounts Chapter 41C:

Rich Molloy: Chapter 41C sets the definition of low income senior citizens. The town has not increased the amounts since 1999. The maximum number of citizens who can utilize this is twenty one.

Article #7 Assessors – Adopt 41D Clause:

Rich Molloy: Adopting the 41D Clause would allow annual increases to Chapter 41C amounts by the Consumer Price Index.

Article #8: Establish Commission on Disability:

Jerry Nunnaley: The commission would consist of 5 – 9 members and would work to advise officials of the town as an advocate for residents with disabilities.

Article #9: OPEB (Other Post-Employment Benefits):

Susan Vecchi: Funding of this article is typically done at the Annual Spring Town Meeting, the committee has recommended dismissal of this article.

Article #10 CPC – Etchings Restoration:

This article will be funded by CPC Historical Funds. The Currier and Ives etchings are from 1854 – 1866. Copies will be displayed in the Fire Station and the originals will be housed in the Library's Archive Room which is climate controlled. The Finance Committee recommends approval of this Article.

Article #11 Area BIII & Area F Sewer Project:

Doug Riley: Area BIII will affect approximately 90 homes with an estimated cost of \$3 million dollars. Area F will affect approximately 184 homes with an estimated cost of \$4 million dollars. This article will be funded by borrowing and the borrowing will be offset with 80% from betterments and 20% from sewer user fees.

There was discussion surrounding the lack of communication the residents affected by the project were given by the town. Specifically, the timing of the project, the range of scope and the options to finance the betterment fee. Selectmen Neville explained the process in which a project of this magnitude comes to fruition. Betterments are based on the number of buildable lots not amount of frontage. The betterment fee on this project is the lowest it has been in quite some time. Betterments are billed at project completion and the can be financed through the town at an interest rate of 3 – 4 % over twenty years. The article has to pass by a 2/3 vote of Town Meeting participants. Since the publication of the town's Warrant there has been a number of residents in the Upper Middlesex Street portion that have strongly objected to the project. Many feel the project is too large and could have been broken up into (4) smaller projects. The town's Sewer Committee, Engineers and the Board of Selectmen work together to determine the project size, etc. The Finance Committee recommended approval of this article so that the residents impacted have the opportunity to cast their vote at Town Meeting.

Article # 12 Dean Street Water Main:

Doug Riley: This article seeks to fund the replacement of an aging water main on Dean Street improving water service to (2) residential homes in need of improved water pressure/service.

Article #13 DPW – 1 Ton Dump Truck:

Peter Berube: This article funds the replacement of a DPW vehicle that is in need of repair. The vehicle is used daily for cemetery work and during the winter for plowing.

Article #14 DPW – Deputy Director Vehicle:

Peter Berube: This article will reallocate the Deputy Director's current vehicle to the town's mechanic enabling the mechanic to pick up parts for town vehicles, etc.

Article #15 School Roof Repairs:

Tayana Antin: The School Committee has sufficient funds in the school's budget to fund this article without appropriation at Town Meeting. The Finance Committee recommended dismissal of this article.

Article #16 School MS/HS Intercom Upgrade:

Tayana Antin: This article funds the upgrade to the system to better serve the school's communication.

Article #17 Replenish Stabilization Fund:

Jodie Garzon: This article aims to bring the town's fund to its goal of 5% of the town's Operating Budget.

Article #18 Repurchase Cemetery Lots:

Jodi Garzon: The Board of Selectmen has received requests for reimbursement of lots no longer desired by former residents.

Article #19 Door Improvements at VMB:

Jodie Garzon: A resident petitioned the Board of Selectmen asking for (3) doors to be replaced with automatic doors providing residents better access to the Council on Aging and Town Hall. A motion at Town Meeting will address the wording of this article.

Peter Jurmain made a motion to close Pre-Town Meeting/Public Hearing at 9:02 PM; Craig Schultze seconded. Vote: 9/0 motion carries unanimously.

Old Business/New Business:

Susan Vecchi made a motion to approve payment of \$2,873.00 for printing of the Town Meeting Handout and Finance Committee Report, of which \$98.00 is payable to Ad Print and \$2,775.00 is payable to Our Town Publishing Impressions; Jodie Garzon seconded. Vote: 9/0 motion carries unanimously.

Minutes Approval:

Craig Schultze made a motion to recommend approval of the October 26, 2016 Meeting Minutes as written; Doug Riley seconded. Vote: 7/0 motion carries.

Upcoming Meetings:

November 7, 2016 Middle/High School Room #102 6:30 PM
Town Meeting: Monday November 7, 2016 7:30 PM

Adjourn:

Susan Vecchi made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 PM; Jodie Garzon seconded. Vote 9/0 motion carries unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Deirdre Gilmore