

Finance Committee  
North Reading Town Hall, Room 5  
Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Present: Ms. Hurlbut, Mr. Kelliher, Mr. Pulver, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Kirby and Veneziano

Absent: Mr. Wolpin, Mr. Koppelman and Mr. Duffy

Guest: Ms. Pavao

Chair, brought the meeting to order at 7:05 pm

Ms. Hurlbut began discussion of budget discussions.

Town Clerk has requested money for purchasing a program for licensing businesses and dogs which would automate transactions and record keeping. This is a program used by other towns and not part of MUNIS. Ms. Pavao mentioned the separate module for Munis is relatively expensive. Mr. Hurlbut recollected that the Town Clerk's office had a similar unused program years ago which was never implemented.

Community Planning was reviewed. It was commented that the salary for this area seemed high for an area with little activity.

Conservation Commission was reviewed. The budget is currently being paid from their budget line but other years had been paid from their revolving account. With more activity fee income has increased but may not be enough to support the salary. Mr. Kelliher suggested that excess money in the revolving account be moved annually back to the Town.

Code Enforcement was reviewed. Ms. Pavao commented that there have been increased activity in the department with increased fees. There was discussion on the increase in the auto allowance and travel expenses.

Board of Health was reviewed. Mr. Johnson reported that Mr. Fair was now paying nurses for the Flu Clinics through his revolving account. There was some question as to why the professional services budget did not reflect any drop in budget since it now no longer needed to fund nurses for the Clinics. Another area of concern was a budget request for \$2400 for cell phones for the two part time dog officers. This amount seemed high and unnecessary since other departments have employees use their own phones and

then reimburse them. Mr. Johnson said that the reason given for Town cell phones was to provide anonymity when following up on calls. Overall the thought was that \$2400 seemed excessive and that this request should not be recommended.

In reviewing mobile phones Ms. Pavao mentioned that there is no official policy on phones and she is currently gathering information on mobile phones used by departments and their policies. Currently it is determined by each department and use different policies and phone services. A Town policy could allow for coordinated phone services that may have better pricing and control. Currently we do not have a record of how many phones are being paid for.

Ms. Hurlbut said that FinCom would support her efforts toward developing a coordinated policy. Until a policy for all Town cell phones is developed she suggested that new telecommunication devices for all Departments be put on hold for this year.

Youth Services was reviewed. Ms. Hurlbut commented that the program has been good for the town. Ms. Pavao reported that it has had low costs but may need travel money next year.

Information Technology was reviewed. Ms. Pavao reported on some of the increases in their budget. This included \$4700 for maintaining the Town Web site and \$3500 to update and improve the site. There was \$6000 in the budget for Commonwealth Connect which will be removed as a decision has been made to not purchase this product at this time.

The next scheduled meeting is Thursday 3/27.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15pm