

Selectboard and Finance Committee Joint Budget Meeting
Wednesday, February 9, 2022

1. CALL TO ORDER – S. Bannon opened the meeting at 6:00pm; those present via zoom: Selectboard: Ed Abrahams, Leigh Davis, Eric Gabriel, Garfield Reed. Finance Committee: Tom Blauvelt, Michelle Loubert, Meredith O'Connor, Anne O'Dwyer, Philip Orenstein. Town Manager Mark Pruhenski. Assistant Town Manager Chris Rembold, Finance Director Sue Carmel.

S. Bannon stated the process for the meeting would be to vote on different sections of the budget with the final vote after it is brought to the Finance Committee Public Hearing.

2. Review and discussion

a. Selectboard/Town Manager

M. Pruhenski restated his suggestion that \$10,000 be cut from the HR budget and shifted to the Contracted Services line to cover a subscription to the Granicus software platform would be needed for tracking/data if the Short-Term Rental Bylaw is approved at Town Meeting. M. Loubert stated she was not aware this was necessary. P. Orenstein asked if this would impact HR position funding. E. Abrahams stated concerns about tracking residents' properties. S. Bannon stated the decision will be made at Town Meeting – the Town is just trying to prepare if enacted - if it does not pass, the funds would go to free cash. M. Loubert asked if the Finance Committee reserve could be used to fund the subscription – M. Pruhenski stated the reserve is for unanticipated expenses. E. Gabriel asked if the cost would be part of the bylaw – S. Bannon stated it would be in the budget and could change each year. A. O'Dwyer stated she would support using the reserve fund. It was confirmed the funds are for a consultant.

i. S. Bannon noted that the Selectboard and Finance Committee votes can be different, but the Finance Committee vote rules.

M. Loubert made a motion to approve the Selectboard/Town Manager budget as presented; A. O' Dwyer seconded. P. Orenstein asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, "aye," M. Loubert, "aye," M. O'Connor, "aye," A. O'Dwyer, "aye," P. Orenstein, "aye." All in favor, 5-0. E. Abrahams made the same a motion; E. Gabriel seconded. S. Bannon asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: E. Abrahams, "aye," S. Bannon, "aye," E. Gabriel, "aye," G. Reed, "aye." All in favor, 4-0.

b. Finance Committee/Reserve Fund

S. Bannon asked for any questions/discussion – there were none.

M. Loubert made a motion to approve the Finance Committee/Reserve Fund budget as presented; A. O' Dwyer seconded. P. Orenstein asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, "aye," M. Loubert, "aye," M. O'Connor, "aye," A. O'Dwyer, "aye," P. Orenstein, "aye." All in favor, 5-0. E. Abrahams made the same motion; G. Reed seconded. S. Bannon asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: E. Abrahams, "aye," S. Bannon, "aye," E. Gabriel, "aye," G. Reed, "aye." All in favor, 4-0.

c. Town Accountant

S. Bannon asked for any questions/discussion – there was none.

M. Loubert made a motion to approve the Town Accountant budget as presented; A. O'Dwyer seconded. P. Orenstein asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, "aye," M. Loubert, "aye," M. O'Connor, "aye," A. O'Dwyer, "aye," P. Orenstein, "aye." All in favor, 5-0. E. Abrahams made the same motion; E. Gabriel seconded. S. Bannon asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: E. Abrahams, "aye," S. Bannon, "aye," E. Gabriel, "aye," G. Reed, "aye." All in favor, 4-0.

d. Technology

S. Bannon asked for any questions/discussion – there was none.

M. Loubert made a motion to approve the Technology budget as presented; A. O'Dwyer seconded. P. Orenstein asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, "aye," M. Loubert, "aye," M. O'Connor, "aye," A. O'Dwyer, "aye," P. Orenstein, "aye." All in favor, 5-0.

E. Abrahams made the same motion; E. Gabriel seconded. S. Bannon asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: E. Abrahams, "aye," S. Bannon, "aye," E. Gabriel, "aye," G. Reed, "aye." All in favor, 4-0.

e. Assessor's Office

S. Bannon asked for any questions/discussion – there were none.

M. Loubert made a motion to approve the Assessor's Office budget as presented; seconded. P. Orenstein asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, "aye," M. Loubert, "aye," M. O'Connor, "aye," A. O'Dwyer, "aye," P. Orenstein, "aye." All in favor, 5-0.

E. Abrahams made the same motion; E. Gabriel seconded. S. Bannon asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: E. Abrahams, "aye," S. Bannon, "aye," E. Gabriel, "aye," G. Reed, "aye." All in favor, 4-0.

f. Collector/Treasurer

S. Bannon asked for any questions/discussion – there was none.

A. O'Dwyer made a motion to approve the Collector/Treasurer budget as presented; M. Loubert seconded. P. Orenstein asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, "aye," M. Loubert, "aye," M. O'Connor, "aye," A. O'Dwyer, "aye," P. Orenstein, "aye." All in favor, 5-0.

E. Abrahams made the same motion; E. Gabriel seconded. S. Bannon asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: E. Abrahams, "aye," S. Bannon, "aye," E. Gabriel, "aye," G. Reed, "aye." All in favor, 4-0.

g. Human Resources

S. Bannon asked for any questions/discussion and noted the budget would be reduced by \$10,000 for a new budget of \$19,509.

i. M. Pruhenski noted this could be decreased as grant funding is being extended through FY23, but explained it is a one-time grant. He also clarified that the allocation of the HR person's time would be tracked by each town. He will also provide the boards with the job description.

A. O'Dwyer made a motion to approve the Human Resources budget as revised to \$19,509; T. Blauvelt seconded. P. Orenstein asked if any additional discussion – M. Loubert stated she would abstain pending review of the job description. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, "aye," M. Loubert, "abstain," M. O'Connor, "aye," A. O'Dwyer, "aye," P. Orenstein, "aye." All in favor, 4-0.

E. Abrahams made the same motion; E. Gabriel seconded. S. Bannon asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: E. Abrahams, "aye," S. Bannon, "aye," L. Davis, "aye," E. Gabriel, "aye," G. Reed, "aye." All in favor, 5-0.

h. Town Clerk

S. Bannon asked for any questions/discussion – there was none.

M. Loubert made a motion to approve the Town Clerk budget as presented; T. Blauvelt seconded. P. Orenstein asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, "aye," M. Loubert, "aye," M. O'Connor, "aye," A. O'Dwyer, "aye," P. Orenstein, "aye." All in favor, 5-0.

L. Davis made the same motion; E. Abrahams seconded. S. Bannon asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: E. Abrahams, “aye,” S. Bannon, “aye,” L. Davis, “aye,” E. Gabriel, “aye,” G. Reed, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

i. Conservation Commission

S. Bannon asked for any questions/discussion – there was none.

M. Loubert made a motion to approve the Conservation Commission budget as presented; A. O’Dwyer seconded. P. Orenstein asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, “aye,” M. Loubert, “aye,” M. O’Connor, “aye,” A. O’Dwyer, “aye,” P. Orenstein, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

L. Davis made the same motion; E. Abrahams seconded. S. Bannon asked if any discussion – G. Reed asked if Shep Evans had two salaries for his two roles. S. Bannon stated yes. Roll call vote: E. Abrahams, “aye,” S. Bannon, “aye,” L. Davis, “aye,” E. Gabriel, “aye,” G. Reed, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

j. Planning Board

S. Bannon asked for any questions/discussion – there was none.

M. Loubert made a motion to approve the Planning Board budget as presented; A. O’Dwyer seconded. P. Orenstein asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, “aye,” M. Loubert, “aye,” M. O’Connor, “aye,” A. O’Dwyer, “aye,” P. Orenstein, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

L. Davis made the same motion; E. Abrahams seconded. S. Bannon asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: E. Abrahams, “aye,” S. Bannon, “aye,” L. Davis, “aye,” E. Gabriel, “aye,” G. Reed, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

k. Zoning Board of Appeals

S. Bannon asked for any questions/discussion – there was none.

M. Loubert made a motion to approve the Zoning Board of Appeals budget as presented; A. O’Dwyer seconded. P. Orenstein asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, “aye,” M. Loubert, “aye,” M. O’Connor, “aye,” A. O’Dwyer, “aye,” P. Orenstein, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

L. Davis made the same motion; E. Abrahams seconded. S. Bannon asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: E. Abrahams, “aye,” S. Bannon, “aye,” L. Davis, “aye,” E. Gabriel, “aye,” G. Reed, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

l. Planning/Community Development

S. Bannon asked for any questions/discussion – there was none.

T. Blauvelt made a motion to approve the Planning and Community Development budget as presented; A. O’Dwyer seconded. P. Orenstein asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, “aye,” M. Loubert, “aye,” M. O’Connor, “aye,” A. O’Dwyer, “aye,” P. Orenstein, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

Selectboard: L. Davis made a motion to ; E. Abrahams seconded. S. Bannon asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: E. Abrahams, “aye,” S. Bannon, “aye,” L. Davis, “aye,” E. Gabriel, “aye,” G. Reed, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

m. Buildings and Grounds

S. Bannon asked for any questions/discussion – there was none.

T. Blauvelt made a motion to approve the Buildings and Grounds budget as presented; A. O’Dwyer seconded. P. Orenstein asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, “aye,” M. Loubert, “aye,” M. O’Connor, “aye,” A. O’Dwyer, “aye,” P. Orenstein, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

L. Davis made the same motion; E. Abrahams seconded. S. Bannon asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: E. Abrahams, “aye,” S. Bannon, “aye,” L. Davis, “aye,” E. Gabriel, “aye,” G. Reed, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

n. Police Department

S. Bannon asked for any questions/discussion – there was none.

T. Blauvelt made a motion to approve the Police Department budget as presented; A. O'Dwyer seconded. P. Orenstein asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, "aye," M. Loubert, "aye," M. O'Connor, "aye," A. O'Dwyer, "aye," P. Orenstein, "aye." All in favor, 5-0.

L. Davis made the same motion; E. Abrahams seconded. S. Bannon asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: E. Abrahams, "aye," S. Bannon, "aye," L. Davis, "aye," E. Gabriel, "aye," G. Reed, "aye." All in favor, 5-0.

o. Fire Department

S. Bannon asked for any questions/discussion.

- i. P. Orenstein asked about the increase in hydrant rentals in Housatonic - Chief Burger clarified Housatonic Water Works will be negotiating a new rate, but the DPU establishes the rate. P. Orenstein commented on the optics for the Town re: the rate increase. S. Bannon added the Town can be an intervenor, but the state makes the final decision and noted if there is a substantial rate increase, the Town would come to the Finance Committee for additional unanticipated funds. M. Loubert confirmed hydrants are in working condition in Housatonic and expressed concern about approving the increase. It was also confirmed this is only for Housatonic and the GB Fire District is not asking for an increase

M. Loubert made a motion to approve the Fire Department budget with a reduction to line 53800 from \$115,000 to \$110,000 – with a final budget of \$717,295; A. O'Dwyer seconded. P. Orenstein asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, "aye," M. Loubert, "aye," M. O'Connor, "aye," A. O'Dwyer, "aye," P. Orenstein, "aye." All in favor, 5-0.

L. Davis made the same motion; E. Gabriel seconded. S. Bannon asked if any discussion – L. Davis confirmed the Town would go to the Finance Committee for funds – S. Bannon stated yes, the Finance Committee emergency fund, if not approved there, it would have to come from another non-salary line item. E. Abrahams stated we should be prepared for the expense. Roll call vote: E. Abrahams, "no," S. Bannon, "aye," L. Davis, "no," E. Gabriel, "aye," G. Reed, "no." Motion failed 3-2.

- ii. S. Bannon stated it should be noted this was recommended by the Finance Committee and not recommended by the Selectboard. We will have to explain at Town Meeting that it is not for the entire budget, just this line.
- iii. P. Orenstein stated he would be willing to provide funds through the Finance Committee for this item.

p. Emergency Management

S. Bannon asked for any questions/discussion.

- i. E. Abrahams asked if \$1,000 for equipment could be added back to the budget per Chief Sorti's request. M. Pruhenski stated he had no issue with doing so.

A. O'Dwyer made a motion to adjust equipment line 58500 to \$3,000 for a total of \$19,790; T. Blauvelt seconded. P. Orenstein asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, "aye," M. Loubert, "aye," M. O'Connor, "aye," A. O'Dwyer, "aye," P. Orenstein, "aye." All in favor, 5-0.

L. Davis made the same motion; E. Abrahams seconded. S. Bannon asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: E. Abrahams, "aye," S. Bannon, "aye," L. Davis, "aye," E. Gabriel, "aye," G. Reed, "aye." All in favor, 5-0.

q. Building Inspectors

S. Bannon asked for any questions/discussion.

- i. T. Blauvelt asked if the Building Inspector salary was low vs peers according to the survey – M. Pruhenski replied the salary was recommended for an increase and it has not been ruled out.

A. O'Dwyer made a motion to approve the Building Inspectors budget as presented; T. Blauvelt seconded.

P. Orenstein asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, "aye," M. Loubert, "aye," M. O'Connor, "aye," A. O'Dwyer, "aye," P. Orenstein, "aye." All in favor, 5-0.

L. Davis made the same motion; E. Abrahams seconded. S. Bannon asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: E. Abrahams, "aye," S. Bannon, "aye," L. Davis, "aye," E. Gabriel, "aye," G. Reed, "aye." All in favor, 5-0.

r. Animal Control

S. Bannon asked for any questions/discussion.

- i. E. Abrahams clarified that Shep Evans holds multiple positions in Town adding up to one full-time position.

A. O'Dwyer made a motion to approve the Animal Control budget as presented; T. Blauvelt seconded. P. Orenstein asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, "aye," M. Loubert, "aye," M. O'Connor, "aye," A. O'Dwyer, "aye," P. Orenstein, "aye." All in favor, 5-0.

L. Davis made the same motion; E. Abrahams seconded. S. Bannon asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: E. Abrahams, "aye," S. Bannon, "aye," L. Davis, "aye," E. Gabriel, "aye," G. Reed, "aye." All in favor, 5-0.

s. Highway Department

S. Bannon asked for any questions/discussion – there was none.

M. Loubert made a motion to approve the Highway Department budget as presented; T. Blauvelt seconded.

P. Orenstein asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, "aye," M. Loubert, "aye," M. O'Connor, "aye," A. O'Dwyer, "aye," P. Orenstein, "aye." All in favor, 5-0.

L. Davis made the same motion; E. Abrahams seconded. S. Bannon asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: E. Abrahams, "aye," S. Bannon, "aye," L. Davis, "aye," E. Gabriel, "aye," G. Reed, "aye." All in favor, 5-0.

t. Health Department

S. Bannon asked for any questions/discussion.

- i. M. Loubert asked if the salary increase for the Health Agent was contractual – M. Pruhenski replied no, it was one of five salaries that were recommended for an increase.

A. O'Dwyer made a motion to approve the Health Department budget as presented; T. Blauvelt seconded. P. Orenstein asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, "aye," M. Loubert, "aye," M. O'Connor, "aye," A. O'Dwyer, "aye," P. Orenstein, "aye." All in favor, 5-0.

L. Davis made the same motion; E. Abrahams seconded. S. Bannon asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: E. Abrahams, "aye," S. Bannon, "aye," L. Davis, "aye," E. Gabriel, "aye," G. Reed, "aye." All in favor, 5-0.

u. Community Services

S. Bannon asked for any questions/discussion – there was none.

M. Loubert made a motion to approve the Community Services budget as presented; A. O'Dwyer seconded.

P. Orenstein asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, "aye," M. Loubert, "aye," M. O'Connor, "aye," A. O'Dwyer, "aye," P. Orenstein, "aye." All in favor, 5-0.

L. Davis made the same motion; E. Abrahams seconded. S. Bannon asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: E. Abrahams, “aye,” S. Bannon, “aye,” L. Davis, “aye,” G. Reed, “aye.” All in favor, 4-0.

v. Council on the Aging

S. Bannon asked for any questions/discussion.

- i. A. O’Dwyer asked why the transportation budget was reduced – M. Pruhenski replied there are grant funds available.

A. O’Dwyer made a motion to approve the Council on the Aging budget as presented; M. Loubert seconded. P. Orenstein asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, “aye,” M. Loubert, “aye,” M. O’Connor, “aye,” A. O’Dwyer, “aye,” P. Orenstein, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

L. Davis made the same motion; E. Abrahams seconded. S. Bannon asked if any discussion – G. Reed asked if drivers’ salaries were reduced – M. Pruhenski stated no, grant funded is being used. Roll call vote: E. Abrahams, “aye,” S. Bannon, “aye,” L. Davis, “aye,” E. Gabriel, “aye,” G. Reed, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

w. Veterans Affairs

S. Bannon asked for any questions/discussion.

- i. P. Orenstein asked for clarification on the history of support for rent. S. Bannon stated the funds are also for veterans’ services/veterans in need. S. Carmel confirmed and noted it is paid quarterly.

M. Loubert made a motion to approve the Veterans Affairs budget as presented; A. O’Dwyer seconded. P. Orenstein asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, “aye,” M. Loubert, “aye,” M. O’Connor, “aye,” A. O’Dwyer, “aye,” P. Orenstein, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

L. Davis made the same motion; E. Abrahams seconded. S. Bannon asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: E. Abrahams, “aye,” S. Bannon, “aye,” L. Davis, “aye,” E. Gabriel, “aye,” G. Reed, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

x. Libraries

S. Bannon asked for any questions/discussion.

- i. T. Blauvelt stated he would recuse.

M. Loubert made a motion to approve the Libraries budget as presented; A. O’Dwyer seconded. P. Orenstein asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, “recuse,” M. Loubert, “aye,” M. O’Connor, “aye,” A. O’Dwyer, “aye,” P. Orenstein, “aye.” All in favor, 4-0.

L. Davis made the same motion; E. Abrahams seconded. S. Bannon asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: E. Abrahams, “aye,” S. Bannon, “aye,” L. Davis, “aye,” E. Gabriel, “aye,” G. Reed, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

y. Parks and Recreation

S. Bannon asked for any questions/discussion.

- i. P. Orenstein asked about funding and broad access for Lake Mansfield – S. Bannon replied it is a Town park, but there is federal funding, so it cannot be restricted to GB residents – similar to libraries, senior center, etc.

M. Loubert made a motion to approve the Parks and Recreation budget as presented; T. Blauvelt seconded. P. Orenstein asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, “aye,” M. Loubert, “aye,” M. O’Connor, “aye,” A. O’Dwyer, “aye,” P. Orenstein, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

L. Davis made the same motion; E. Abrahams seconded. S. Bannon asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: E. Abrahams, “aye,” S. Bannon, “aye,” L. Davis, “aye,” E. Gabriel, “aye,” G. Reed, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

z. Boards and Commissions

S. Bannon asked for any questions/discussion – there was none.

M. Loubert made a motion to approve the Boards and Commissions budget as presented; T. Blauvelt seconded. P. Orenstein asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, “aye,” M. Loubert, “aye,” M. O’Connor, “aye,” A. O’Dwyer, “aye,” P. Orenstein, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

L. Davis made the same motion; E. Abrahams seconded. S. Bannon asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: E. Abrahams, “aye,” S. Bannon, “aye,” L. Davis, “aye,” E. Gabriel, “aye,” G. Reed, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

aa. Celebrations and Events

S. Bannon asked for any questions/discussion – there was none.

M. Loubert made a motion to approve the Celebrations and Events budget as presented; T. Blauvelt seconded. P. Orenstein asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, “aye,” M. Loubert, “aye,” M. O’Connor, “aye,” A. O’Dwyer, “aye,” P. Orenstein, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

L. Davis made the same motion; E. Abrahams seconded. S. Bannon asked if any discussion – E. Abrahams stated he would recuse. Roll call vote: E. Abrahams, “recuse,” S. Bannon, “aye,” L. Davis, “aye,” E. Gabriel, “aye,” G. Reed, “aye.” All in favor, 4-0.

bb. Debt Service

S. Bannon asked for any questions/discussion – there was none.

A. O’Dwyer made a motion to approve the Debt Service budget as presented; T. Blauvelt seconded. P. Orenstein asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, “aye,” M. Loubert, “aye,” M. O’Connor, “aye,” A. O’Dwyer, “aye,” P. Orenstein, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

L. Davis made the same motion; E. Abrahams seconded. S. Bannon asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: E. Abrahams, “aye,” S. Bannon, “aye,” L. Davis, “aye,” E. Gabriel, “aye,” G. Reed, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

cc. Retirement

S. Bannon asked for any questions/discussion – there was none.

M. Loubert made a motion to approve the Retirement budget as presented; T. Blauvelt seconded. P. Orenstein asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, “aye,” M. Loubert, “aye,” M. O’Connor, “aye,” A. O’Dwyer, “aye,” P. Orenstein, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

L. Davis made the same motion; E. Abrahams seconded. S. Bannon asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: E. Abrahams, “aye,” S. Bannon, “aye,” L. Davis, “aye,” E. Gabriel, “aye,” G. Reed, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

dd. Insurance

S. Bannon asked for any questions/discussion and noted A. Dulin requested an increase of \$10,000-20,000 for line 51740. Discussion focused on concerns about additional family/new employee health insurance needs and the reserve funds built into this line which has been diminishing over time due as it has not been replenished and costs have increased. For FY23, the increase will cover additional/new employee health benefits and keep the excess at a similar level.

P. Orenstein commented there should be more clarity on this line.

A. O’Dwyer made a motion to increase the Insurance budget line 51740 by \$20,000 to \$17,083 for a revised total budget of \$1.876m; T. Blauvelt seconded. P. Orenstein asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, “aye,” M. Loubert, “aye,” M. O’Connor, “aye,” A. O’Dwyer, “aye,” P. Orenstein, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

L. Davis made the same motion; E. Abrahams seconded. S. Bannon asked if any discussion – E. Abrahams asked S. Carmel to build in a cushion on its own line. Roll call vote: E. Abrahams, “aye,” S. Bannon, “aye,” L. Davis, “aye,” E. Gabriel, “aye,” G. Reed, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

ee. Wastewater

S. Bannon asked for any questions/discussion.

i. P. Orenstein asked why the health and life insurance line increased by one-third – S.

Carmel stated she would look into it.

A. O'Dwyer made a motion to approve the Wastewater budget as presented; T. Blauvelt seconded. P. Orenstein asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, “aye,” M. Loubert, “aye,” M. O'Connor, “aye,” A. O'Dwyer, “aye,” P. Orenstein, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

L. Davis made the same motion; E. Abrahams seconded. S. Bannon asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: E. Abrahams, “aye,” S. Bannon, “aye,” L. Davis, “aye,” E. Gabriel, “aye,” G. Reed, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

ff. Capital

1. Police

S. Bannon asked for any questions/discussion.

i. E. Gabriel asked about funds for the police cruisers – S. Carmel explained the funds are coming out of the operating budget.

T. Blauvelt made a motion to approve the Police Department capital request as presented; A. O'Dwyer seconded. P. Orenstein asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, “aye,” M. Loubert, “aye,” M. O'Connor, “aye,” A. O'Dwyer, “aye,” P. Orenstein, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

L. Davis made the same motion; E. Abrahams seconded. S. Bannon asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: E. Abrahams, “aye,” S. Bannon, “aye,” L. Davis, “aye,” E. Gabriel, “aye,” G. Reed, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

2. Vehicles and Equipment

S. Bannon asked for any questions/discussion and stated this is for a roadside mower and a truck – S. Carmel recommended borrowing the funds. It was confirmed that vehicles last 8-10 years.

A. O'Dwyer made a motion to approve the capital request for Vehicles and Equipment as presented; A. O'Dwyer seconded. P. Orenstein asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, “aye,” M. Loubert, “aye,” M. O'Connor, “aye,” A. O'Dwyer, “aye,” P. Orenstein, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

L. Davis made the same motion; E. Abrahams seconded. S. Bannon asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: E. Abrahams, “aye,” S. Bannon, “aye,” L. Davis, “aye,” E. Gabriel, “aye,” G. Reed, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

3. Buildings and Grounds

S. Bannon asked for any questions/discussion.

i. A. O'Dwyer asked for clarification on the proposed changes to Town Hall front area and parking accessibility – S. VanDeusen stated the plan is to provide more green space and parking would be the same/improved. In response to a question about approvals/funding, C. Rembold stated the plan had been reviewed by the Historic District and Parks and Recreation - and funding would be borrowing and/or pursuing grants.

A. O'Dwyer made a motion to approve the capital request for Buildings and Grounds as presented; T. Blauvelt seconded. P. Orenstein asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, “aye,” M. Loubert, “aye,” M. O'Connor, “aye,” A. O'Dwyer, “aye,” P. Orenstein, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

L. Davis made the same motion; E. Abrahams seconded. S. Bannon asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: E. Abrahams, “aye,” S. Bannon, “aye,” L. Davis, “aye,” E. Gabriel, “aye,” G. Reed, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

4. Street and Bridge Improvements

S. Bannon asked for any questions/discussion.

i. G. Reed asked which streets are being improved - C. Rembold provided details.

A. O’Dwyer made a motion to approve the capital request for Street and Bridge Improvements as presented; T. Blauvelt seconded. P. Orenstein asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, “aye,” M. Loubert, “aye,” M. O’Connor, “aye,” A. O’Dwyer, “aye,” P. Orenstein, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

L. Davis made the same motion; E. Abrahams seconded. S. Bannon asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: E. Abrahams, “aye,” S. Bannon, “aye,” L. Davis, “aye,” E. Gabriel, “aye,” G. Reed, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

5. Parks

S. Bannon asked for any questions/discussion and stated the only change is for Memorial Field improvements where \$500,000 is under borrowing, but paid out of CPA proceeds.

A. O’Dwyer made a motion to approve the capital request for Parks as presented; T. Blauvelt seconded. P. Orenstein asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, “aye,” M. Loubert, “aye,” M. O’Connor, “aye,” A. O’Dwyer, “aye,” P. Orenstein, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

L. Davis made the same motion; E. Abrahams seconded. S. Bannon asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: E. Abrahams, “aye,” S. Bannon, “aye,” L. Davis, “aye,” E. Gabriel, “aye,” G. Reed, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

6. Wastewater

S. Bannon asked for any questions/discussion – there was none.

A. O’Dwyer made a motion to approve the capital request for Wastewater as presented; T. Blauvelt seconded. P. Orenstein asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, “aye,” M. Loubert, “aye,” M. O’Connor, “aye,” A. O’Dwyer, “aye,” P. Orenstein, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

L. Davis made the same motion; E. Abrahams seconded. S. Bannon asked if any discussion – G. Reed asked, and it was clarified that the trucks last 10 years and retained earnings are enterprise funds free cash. S. Bannon added there is a capital replacement plan projected out 8-10 years. Roll call vote: E. Abrahams, “aye,” S. Bannon, “aye,” L. Davis, “aye,” E. Gabriel, “aye,” G. Reed, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

P. Orenstein asked about authorized older capital and recommended a procedure to do “housekeeping” of the list or have an expiration where funding needs to be reapproved. S. Carmel stated the process requires a vote at Town Meeting to rescind. S. Bannon asked if there could be a warrant article each year to stay on top of it – perhaps too late for this year. C. Rembold stated there could be a policy where staff looks at it every year.

gg. Special Articles

1. Community Impact Funding

S. Bannon asked for any questions/discussion.

It was clarified that funds would come from free cash and approved at Town Meeting.

Town Manager handles review/distribution.

A. O’Dwyer made a motion to approve Community Impact Funding as presented; T. Blauvelt seconded. P. Orenstein asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, “aye,” M. Loubert, “aye,” M. O’Connor, “aye,” A. O’Dwyer, “aye,” P. Orenstein, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

L. Davis made the same motion; E. Abrahams seconded. S. Bannon asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: E. Abrahams, “aye,” S. Bannon, “aye,” L. Davis, “aye,” E. Gabriel, “aye,” G. Reed, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

2. BHRSD Vocational Tuition and Transportation

S. Bannon asked for any questions/discussion – there was none.

M. Loubert made a motion to approve BHRSD Vocational Tuition and Transportation as presented; T.

Blauvelt seconded. P. Orenstein asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, “aye,”

M. Loubert, “aye,” M. O’Connor, “aye,” A. O’Dwyer, “aye,” P. Orenstein, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

L. Davis made the same motion; E. Abrahams seconded. S. Bannon asked if any discussion – there was none.

Roll call vote: E. Abrahams, “aye,” S. Bannon, “aye,” L. Davis, “aye,” E. Gabriel, “aye,” G. Reed, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

3. Stabilization

S. Bannon asked for any questions/discussion – there was none.

M. Loubert made a motion to approve Stabilization as presented; T. Blauvelt seconded. P. Orenstein asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, “aye,” M. Loubert, “aye,” M. O’Connor, “aye,”

A. O’Dwyer, “aye,” P. Orenstein, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

L. Davis made the same motion; E. Abrahams seconded. S. Bannon asked if any discussion – there was none.

Roll call vote: E. Abrahams, “aye,” S. Bannon, “aye,” L. Davis, “aye,” E. Gabriel, “aye,” G. Reed, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

4. Capital Stabilization

S. Bannon asked for any questions/discussion – there was none.

M. Loubert made a motion to approve Capital Stabilization as presented; T. Blauvelt seconded. P. Orenstein asked if any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, “aye,” M. Loubert, “aye,” M.

O’Connor, “aye,” A. O’Dwyer, “aye,” P. Orenstein, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

L. Davis made the same motion; E. Abrahams seconded. S. Bannon asked if any discussion – there was none.

Roll call vote: E. Abrahams, “aye,” S. Bannon, “aye,” L. Davis, “aye,” E. Gabriel, “aye,” G. Reed, “aye.” All in favor, 5-0.

- S. Bannon raised the issue of the free cash allocation to offset increases – looking at how much free cash is being used, what is left and projections for next year. Focusing on tab 2, S. Carmel explained the Town is using \$4.1m to reduce the tax levy to offset property tax increases and keep it under a 4% increase for next year. She also stated \$608,000 of free cash is being used for Special Articles/capital equipment – total recommended \$4.708m out of this year’s certified free cash. She also pointed to Tab 5 for historical information on free cash in prior fiscal years. There was additional discussion on state DOR and CCC views on allocation of cannabis revenue. P. Orenstein and M. Loubert asked for further discussion on the topic and S. Bannon agreed to add to the March 1 agenda.
- Regarding a vote on the school assessment, S. Bannon stated the school budget would be presented tomorrow and the Selectboard will vote when a warrant is set, and the Finance Committee votes at a regular meeting. He added the school district increase will likely come in under the requested 5%.
- P. Orenstein offered to work with S. Carmel on a presentation of free cash.

3. Citizen Speak Time

4. Media Time

5. Adjournment – Chairman Bannon adjourned the meeting by unanimous consent at 8:19pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Stacy Ostrow
Recording Clerk