

## SELECTBOARD & FINANCE COMMITTEE DRAFT MINUTES – Mar 02, 2021 06:30pm

Selectboard Members Present: Leigh Davis, Steve Bannon, Ed Abrahams, Bill Cooke, Kate Burke (at 6:35pm)

Finance Committee Members Present: Anne O'Dwyer, Meredith O'Connor, Michelle Loubert, Will Curletti (at 6:55pm), Tom Blauvelt

1. Called to Order at 6:30pm by Steve Bannon.
2. FY 22 Discussion and Vote
  - a. Chris noted that the Rte 7 Greenway Path grant came in. A Regional Application for a community development block grant was just awarded – over \$1,000,000. Additional updates were discussed. Board members congratulated Chris on his successful applications.
  - b. Selectboard/Town Manager Budget: Ed moved to approve the budget, Bill seconded. Selectboard unanimously approved. Tom moved to approve the budget, with Anne seconding. Unanimous.
  - c. Finance Committee: Motion to approve by Ed. Bill seconded. Kate noted that the contingency in the Finance Committee budget incorporated raises, which we had talked about holding off until the Salary Study. Anne agreed with Kate. Mark pointed out that these administrative/not-management positions Kate and Anne are referring to (Firefighters & Administrative Assistant). Discussion ensued regarding whether these positions should be included in the study. Roll call vote; unanimous. Finance committee motion by Tom; seconded by Michelle. Anne asked to clarify that Mark would be coming to the committees before making the recommended raises. Mark agreed. Unanimous vote.
  - d. Finance Director & Accountant: Motion by Ed to approve; seconded by Bill. Unanimous. Finance Committee motion by Tom, seconded by Michelle. Unanimous.
  - e. Technology: Reduction to \$20,000. Motion by Ed to approve as amended; seconded by Bill. Unanimous. Finance Committee motion by Tom; seconded by Michelle. Unanimous.
  - f. Assessor: Motion to approve by Ed. Seconded by Bill. Unanimous (all votes by roll call). Finance Committee motion by Tom; seconded by Meredith. Unanimous.
  - g. Collector/Treasurer: Karen Fink noted that she made a small error which results in a reduction by \$200. Motion to approve as amended by Ed; seconded by Bill. Finance Committee motion by Tom; seconded by Will. Unanimous.
  - h. Town Clerk: Motion to approve by Ed; second by Bill. Unanimous by roll call. Finance Committee motion by Tom; seconded by Michelle. Unanimous.
  - i. Conservation: Motion to approve by Ed; second by Bill. Unanimous. Finance Committee motion by Tom; seconded by Meredith. Unanimous.
  - j. Planning Board: Motion to approve by Ed; second by Bill. Unanimous. Finance Committee motion by Will; seconded by Tom. Unanimous.

- k. Zoning Board of Appeals: Motion to approve by Ed; second by Bill. Unanimous. Finance Committee motion by Tom; seconded by Meredith. Unanimous.
- l. Planning/Community Development: Motion to approve by Ed; second by Bill. Unanimous. Finance Committee motion by Meredith; seconded by Tom. Unanimous.
- m. Buildings & Grounds: Motion to approve by Ed; second by Bill. Unanimous. Finance Committee motion by Tom; seconded by Will. Unanimous.
- n. Police Department: Motion to approve by Ed; second by Bill. Unanimous. Finance Committee motion by Will; seconded by Tom. Anne asked for clarification as to what they are voting for: new Police Chief salary, \$10,000 toward new Community Outreach officer, minor increase in Overtime, increase in Holiday Pay, increase for Administrative Assistant. Unanimous.
- o. Fire Department: Kate noted that we should look at salaries for everyone. Michelle noted we should be mindful that salary increases are affecting tax increases. Additional discussion ensued. Motion to approve by Ed; second by Bill. Unanimous. Finance Committee motion by Tom; seconded by Will. Tom noted that he shared Michelle & Kate's sentiment. Chief Burger noted that an entry level custodian makes \$24.50/hr, whereas firefighters make \$23.50/hr – hence the increase to \$29.00/hr. Steve noted that it may be useful for Mark to give the boards an executive summary of salaries for non-union personnel. Michelle strongly agreed. Additional discussion. Approved 4-1, with Michelle dissenting.
- p. Emergency Management: Motion by Ed, second by Bill. Unanimous. Finance Committee motion by Tom, second by Will. Unanimous.
- q. Building Inspector: Motion by Ed, second by Bill. Unanimous. Finance Committee motion by Will, second by Tom. Unanimous.
- r. Animal Control Officer: Motion by Ed, second by Bill. Unanimous. Finance Committee motion by Will, second by Tom. Unanimous.
- s. DPW Highway: Motion by Ed, second by Bill. Unanimous. Finance Committee motion by Tom, second by Michelle. Unanimous.
- t. Health Department: Motion by Ed, second by Bill. Unanimous. Finance Committee motion by Tom, second by Will. Unanimous.
- u. Community Services: Motion by Ed, second by Bill. Unanimous. Finance Committee motion by Tom, second by Michelle. Unanimous.
- v. Council on Aging: Motion by Ed, second by Bill. Unanimous. Finance Committee motion by Will, second by Tom. Unanimous.
- w. Veteran's Affairs: Motion to approve at \$18,000 by Ed. Second by Bill. Unanimous. Finance Committee motion to recommend budget as amended by Tom, second by Will. Michelle thanked Steve for the recommendation of increasing the Veteran's Affairs line item. Unanimous
- x. Libraries: Motion to approve by Ed, second by Bill. Unanimous. Finance Committee motion by Michelle, seconded by Will. Unanimous, with Tom recused.
- y. Parks & Recreation: Motion to approve by Ed, second by Bill. Finance Committee motion by Tom, second by Will. Unanimous.

- z. Boards & Commissions: Motion by Ed, second by Bill. Unanimous. Finance Committee motion by Tom, second by Michelle. Anne asked to clarify that the increase is due to scheduled cleaning of the winged liberty statue. Mark confirmed. Unanimous.
- aa. Celebrations & Events: Motion by Ed, second by Bill. Unanimous. Finance Committee motion by Will, second by Tom. Unanimous.
- bb. Debt Service: Motion to approve by Ed, second by Bill. Unanimous. Finance Committee motion by Tom, second by Will. Unanimous.
- cc. Retirement: Motion to approve by Ed, second by Bill. Unanimous. Finance Committee motion by Will, second by Michelle. Unanimous.
- dd. Insurance: Motion to approve by Ed, second by Bill. Unanimous. Finance Committee motion by Tom, second by Will. Unanimous
- ee. Wastewater: Motion to approve by Ed, second by Bill. Unanimous. Finance Committee motion by Will, second by Tom. Unanimous.
- ff. (Begin Capital Requests) – Police: Sue noted that the speed trailer was not able to be funded by the applied-for grant. Kate suggested that the portable radios, new laptops, speed trailer, and parks improvements which comes out to \$160,000 should come out of free cash instead of accruing debt. Kate moved to approve the capital requests for the police and to use free cash as the funding source. Second by Ed. Unanimous. Finance Committee motion to approve the police capital requests as amended by Tom, second by Will. Unanimous.
- gg. DPW Capital Requests: Motion to approve by Ed, second by Bill. Unanimous. Motion by Ed to add \$100,000 (borrowing) for a new police station generator. Second by Bill. Unanimous. Finance Committee motion to approve the DPW capital requests as amended by Tom, second by Will. Tom brought up the parking lot... motion withdrawn. Motion to endorse DPW Vehicles & Equipment capital request funding budget as amended by Tom, second by Will. Michelle asked about the ticket kiosk (\$53,000). Sean clarified that the purchasing of dumps sticker will be done through the ticket kiosk instead of the Town Clerk's office. Michelle stated that she was not comfortable with this expenditure, but she trusts Sean's expertise. Unanimous by roll call vote. Motion to approve building & grounds DPW budget by Tom, second by Will. Unanimous by roll call vote. Motion to approve DPW street & bridge improvements request at \$420,000 funding level by Tom, seconded by Michelle. Anne amended the motion – to \$720,000. Seconded by Michelle. Ed interjected that we should allow the general public decide, not the board. Michelle responded that this is what the public hearing is for. Leigh added that she supports Ed's view. Anne asked why we are asked to recommend things if there is no point. Steve asked that the Selectboard move this to Special Articles, so it will progress to Town Meeting regardless. Roll call vote on Finance Committee's motion: unanimous. Motion by Selectboard to move the parking lot capital request to special articles by Bill, second by Kate. Unanimous. Motion by Selectboard on parks as free cash by Ed, second by Bill. Unanimous. Motion by Finance Committee to approve as amended by Tom, second by Will.

- hh. Wastewater Capital: Motion by Ed, second by Bill. Unanimous. Finance Committee motion by Will, second by Tom. Unanimous.
- ii. (Special Articles) Community Impact Funding: Motion by Ed, second by Bill. Unanimous. Finance Committee motion by Will, second by Tom. Unanimous.
- jj. Emergency Medical Services: Sue thanked Bill Hathaway for sending the financials. She asked him a few questions about the financials. Further discussion ensued. Steve and Leigh noted they had a lack of confidence in the ambulance squad. Michelle asked for clarification about the foundation which seems to have \$820,000. Dennis Hogan responded that the foundation is independent and take request for emergency services. Michelle asked why the ambulance squad did not ask the foundation for the amount we are being asked for? Dennis responded that they have not gone to the board. Ed asked if we are prepared to provide the service ourselves. Discussion continued. Steve clarified our choices: turn down the request, approve it, or table the request and ask Sue & Mark to come back to us with recommendations. Ed added that we should pull in the Fire Chief & Fairview. Michelle asked why we are not asking the other towns to contribute to the feasibility study. Steve noted that Ed is discussing short term, whereas Michelle is talking about long term solutions. Kate added that she has full confidence in the Town after the success of the senior transit. Motion by Leigh that the Selectboard does not recommend funding to Southern Berkshire Ambulance Squad. Seconded by Kate. Chief Burger noted that there is a lot to discuss going forward, but there is no way the Town can put in a medic unit tomorrow. Steve stated that he would like to table a funding decision until the Town Manager comes back with a recommendation. Anne agreed, and asked for a breakdown of what would happen based on various funding levels. Leigh asked for a timeline—Steve suggested by the public hearing. Leigh rescinded her motion. New motion: Selectboard table the decision until the Town Manager come back with a recommendation. Moved by Leigh, seconded by Bill. Unanimous. Finance committee motion to table by Tom, seconded by Will. Michelle added that this is a complex issue and she is not sure that March 30 is enough time for a recommendation. Mark responded that he would be able to at least initiate a conversation with Chief Burger and Sue by this March 30 meeting. Steve commented that this recommendation is the best alternative even though we do not have as much time as desired. Anne asked for a multi-town meeting to be scheduled prior to the March 30 public hearing. It was decided to hold off on this meeting. Roll call vote taken on the Finance Committee motion. Passed 4-1, Michelle dissenting.
- kk. School Consolidation Feasibility Study: Steve let the board know that the group received maximum grant funding. Motion to table by Ed, second by Bill. Unanimous. Finance Committee motion to table by Will, second by Tom. Unanimous.
- ll. Berkshire Hills Reg. Vocational Transport & Tuition: Motion by Ed, second by Bill. Unanimous. Finance Committee motion by Tom, second by Will. Unanimous.

- mm. Stabilization: Motion to approve by Ed, second by Bill. Unanimous.  
Finance Committee motion by Tom, second by Will. Unanimous.
- nn. Capital Stabilization: Motion to approve by Ed, second by Bill. Unanimous.  
Finance Committee motion by Will, second by Tom. Unanimous.
- 3. Board Time
  - a. None
- 4. Citizen Speak
  - a. None

Meeting adjourned at 9:31pm

Respectfully submitted by Tate Coleman, Board Clerk.