

Minutes

Finance Committee

March 16, 2023

Meeting called to order at 7:00 PM by Jim Sullivan

Present by ZOOM Meeting: Jim Sullivan, Dan Sherman, Bill Boodry, Aimee Forsythe, Tarae Howell, David Mastroianni, Ellie Zuccaro, Edward Bean, Don Ravenelle, Doug Butler, Dennis Hogan, Stefan Chase, Joseph Bertrand and Evan Kenney.

Absent: Brian Cusack and Joe Bertrand

Also, in Attendance: Town Administrator Stephen P. Maio, Town Accountant Kevin Gill, DPW Director Joseph Conway, DPW Business Manager Ann Waitt, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Lyons, School Committee Members Amy Leeman, Mike Boudreau, Kevin Fontanella, Tom Markham and Stephen Ingalls

- 1) Public Participation: None
- 2) Motion to approve the March 2, 2023 regular Finance Committee meeting minutes by Don Ravenelle seconded by Tarae Howell and so voted.
- 3) Motion to approve March 9, 2023 Finance Committee DPW Subcommittee meeting minutes by Dennis Hogan seconded by Stefan Chase and so voted.

4) Budget Presentations

I) DPW Budget

Director Conway and Business Manager Waitt, presented the FY2024 Budget, in the amount of \$6,970,569 with \$6,871,999 coming from tax levy and \$98,570 coming from available fund transfers. This budget represents an increase of \$236,439 over FY 2023 or 3.51% and includes all contractual obligations. The FY2024 Snow and Ice Budget is level funded at \$850,000. The Sewer Enterprise Budget was presented at \$9,344,098 and increase of \$196,289 over FY2023 or 1.86%. The Water Enterprise Budget was presented at \$7,025,221 an increase of \$1,025,221 or 17.32%. The bulk of the increase is the MWRA water assessment which increased by \$718,773 over FY2023. The DPW Subcommittee related that the budget was very straightforward and prudent.

II) DPW Articles

DPW Business Manager Waitt presented the Refuse Article \$2,370,747

Director Conway presented the Eminent Domain Article \$1.00

Director Conway presented the Inflow and Infiltration Phase 14 Borrowing \$1,310,000 (75% grant and 25% loan MWRA)

III) School Department

Superintendent Lyons presented the proposed School FY2024 budget in the amount of \$50,090,191 (including a potential \$200,000 of ARPA). This budget represents a 5.22% increase over FY2023. The Committee expressed concern over the overall increase and paid particular attention to the many revolving accounts under the School Department's purview. The committee requested that the School Department review their budget and utilize revolving funds to lessen the burden on the tax levy.

IV) Town Council

Town Administrator Maio presented the Town Council Budget in the amount of \$581,425 with \$497,320 from Tax Levy and \$84,105 from available funds. The budget represents a small decrease of \$20,032 from the Tax Levy and an overall decrease of \$15,272. The budget does include a new strategic planning position of \$100,000 which will be funded through the use of ARPA funds. The Finance committee expressed grave concern over adding any new positions and many expressed that ARPA funds was an inappropriate funding mechanism.

5) Committee Comments:

Dan Sherman shared an updated forecast. The Finance Committee expressed concern over the viability of the Town's Finances if budgets were not reduced.

Ed Bean would like a policy review of revolving accounts as to what balance amount is prudent.

Dennis Hogan reminded all that departments should return unspent budget items to the general fund yearly including School Department unspent Special Ed funds.

6) Motion to adjourn at 9:15 P.M by Bill Boodry seconded by Dennis Hogan and so voted.