

**TOWN OF STOCKBRIDGE, MA.
50 MAIN STREET
FINANCE COMMITTEE IN PERSON AND VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20, 2024 AT 6 PM**

1. CHAIR BIKOFSKY CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER AT 6 PM.
2. COMMITTEE ATTENDEES: JAY BIKOFSKY, JIM BALFANZ, ED LANE, JORJA MARSDEN, DIANE REUSS, STEVE SHATZ AND WILLIAM VOGT. PAM BOUDREAU WAS UNABLE TO ATTEND.

TOWN ATTENDEES: JAMIE MINACCI , REMOTELY AND MICHAEL CANALES, IN PERSON

3. THE FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 22, 2024 WERE PRESENTED FOR REVIEW, DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL. A MOTION TO APPROVE WAS MADE BY STEVE SHATZ AND SECONDED BY BILL VOGT. A VOTE WAS CALLED AND THE MINUTES WERE UNANIMOUSLY APPRROVED BY THE COMMITTEE.
4. CHAIR BIKOFSKY CALLED UPON MICHAEL CANALES TO REVIEW THE MOST CURRENT UPDATES TO THE FY 25 OPERATING BUDGET.
 - GENERAL GOVERNMENT: MICHAEL ADVISED THE COMMITTEE THAT AS OF THIS MEETING, THERE WERE NO CHANGES PROPOSED IN THIS CATEGORY FROM THE INITIAL FIRST BUDGET DRAFT.
 - PUBLIC SAFETY: MICHAEL REPORTED A CHANGE IN THIS CATEGORY AS RESPECTS AN INCREASE IN THE WIRE INSPECTOR SALARY DUE TO REQUESTS FOR ADDITIONAL ELECTRICAL INSPECTIONS TOWN WIDE.
 - EDUCATION: NO CHANGES WERE REPORTED IN THIS CATEGORY FROM THE INITIAL DRAFT BUDGET.
 - PUBLIC WORKS AND FACILITIES: MICHAEL REPORTED THAT THIS CATEGORY WOULD INCLUDE A PROPOSED REDUCTION IN LIFE-GUARDS FOR THE TOWN BEACH BUT OFFSET BY INCREASES IN WATER AND SEWER SALARIES AND EXPENSES NECESSARY TO MAINTAIN THE BEACH.
 - HUMAN SERVICES: THE COMMITTEE WAS THEN ADVISED OF A PROPOSED TRI-TOWN HEALTH INCREASED SALARY ALLOCATION OF \$25,513.00 AS STOCKBRIDGE'S CONTRIBUTION TO THIS MULTI-TOWN SERVICE.

- **CULTURE AND RECREATION, DEBT SERVICE, EMPLOYEE BENEFITS AND UNCLASSIFIED EXPENSES:** NO ADDITIONAL CHANGES WERE REPORTED TO THE COMMITTEE, AT THIS TIME, REGARDING THESE CATEGORIES FROM THE INITIAL FIRST BUDGET DRAFT.
- **FY 25 OPERATING BUDGET SUMMATION:** AS OF THIS MEETING, MICHAEL CONCLUDED HIS COMMENTS ON THE FY 25 OPERATING BUDGET BY NOTING A PROPOSED TOTAL OF \$ 12,311,437.00, A \$624,877.00 INCREASE, INCLUDING EDUCATION OVER F Y 24. THIS WAS SLIGHTLY LESS THAN PROJECTED IN THE INITIAL F Y 25 FIRST BUDGET DRAFT. MICHAEL ADDED THAT A REVISED AND UPDATED DOCUMENT WOULD BE PREPARED AND CIRCULATED TO THE COMMITTEE BEFORE THE NEXT MEETING.

STEVE SHATZ ASKED IF ANY CONSIDERATION WAS BEING GIVEN TO INCORPORATING ELECTED TOWN POSITIONS INTO SALARIED DEPARTMENTS. MICHAEL RESPONDED THAT CONSIDERATION WAS BEING GIVEN TO APPOINTMENTS FOR TOWN CLERK AND TREE WARDEN, ULTIMATELY TO BE PRESENTED FOR TOWN MEETING APPROVAL.

DIANE REUSS INQUIRED ABOUT INCREASED BENEFITS AND SERVICES FOR VETERANS. MICHAEL REVIEWED THE CURRENT PROGRAMS AVAILABLE FOR VETERANS.

STEVE SHATZ INQUIRED ABOUT INCREASED INTERACTION BETWEEN TOWN DEPARTMENTS TO WHICH MICHAEL RESPONDED THAT WITH A REDUCTION IN BEACH LIFE- GUARDS, POLICE WILL LOCK THE BATHROOMS AT THE END OF THE DAY, HOUSEKEEPING WILL BE CLEANING THE BATHROOMS, AND WATER AND SEWER WILL ASSUME ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITY IN BEACH MAINTENANCE.

5. **FY 25 CAPITAL BUDGETING:** MICHAEL CANALES ADVISED THE COMMITTEE THAT THE CAPITAL BUDGET WAS CURRENTLY UNDER DEVELOPMENT AND WOULD BE UPDATED FOR CIRCULATION AND PRESENTATION TO THE COMMITTEE AT A FUTURE MEETING.

ED LANE, AT A PREVIOUS MEETING, INQUIRED ABOUT LONGER TERM BORROWING FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF HIGHWAY VEHICLES. MICHAEL MENTIONED THAT HE HAD EXPLORED FUNDING HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT VEHICLE REPLACEMENTS. MICHAEL ADDED THAT, IN THE CASE OF THE PRESENT HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT VEHICLE REPLACEMENT REQUESTS, \$95,000.00 IN INTEREST (5.5%) OVER FIVE YEARS COULD BE ANTICIPATED IN ADDITION TO THE PRINCIPAL CAPITAL COSTS OF THE EQUIPMENT.

IN RESPONSE TO THE COMMITTEE'S INQUIRY ON A MULTI-YEAR CAPITAL BUDGET, MICHAEL MENTIONED THAT THE IDEA WAS CURRENTLY BEING CONSIDERED INCLUDING DEVELOPMENT OF AN ANNUALIZED CAPITAL EQUIPMENT STABILIZATION FUND. ONCE FINALIZED, THE CONCEPT WOULD BE PRESENTED TO THE SELECT BOARD AND FINANCE COMMITTEES. THIS WOULD INCLUDE:

- ON AND OFF ROAD HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT EQUIPMENT**
- WATER AND SEWER SYSTEM REPLACEMENTS**
- POLICE AND FIRE VEHICLE REPLACEMENTS**

6. THE COMMITTEE INQUIRED AS TO THE SCHEDULING OF FUTURE MEETINGS:

- TUESDAY MARCH 26TH AT 5 PM WAS PROPOSED AS A FUTURE MEETING DATE WITH THE TOWN'S AUDITORS, ADELSON & COMPANY.**
- WEDNESDAY MARCH 27TH AT 6 PM WAS PROPOSED AS A JOINT SELECT BOARD FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING TO DISCUSS FIRE, HIGHWAY AND POLICE FY 25 CAPITAL REQUESTS AS WELL AS OPEB FUNDING AND DISBURSEMENTS.**

THESE DATES WILL BE EXPLORED AND THE COMMITTEE APPROPRIATELY NOTIFIED OF SCHEDULING THE SESSIONS.

7. THERE BEING NO ADDITIONAL BUSINESS, THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 7:09 PM