

**TOWN OF STOCKBRIDGE, MA.
50 MAIN STREET
FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 26, 2020 AT 6 PM**

1. THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER BY CHAIR BIKOFSKY AT 6 PM.
2. COMMITTEE ATTENDEES: JAY BIKOFSKY, JIM BALFANZ, NEIL HOLDEN
DIANE REUSS, STEPHEN SHATZ AND WILLIAM VOGT

TOWN ATTENDEES: MARK WEBBER

3. THE FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES OF MONDAY FEBRUARY 3,
2020 WERE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE COMMITTEE, 6-0.
4. REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF THE FY 2021 OPERATING BUDGET:

IT WAS NOTED THAT THIS BUDGET INCLUDED AN AVERAGE 2% SALARY
INCREASE FOR TOWN EMPLOYEES.

* GENERAL GOVERNMENT:

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S SALARY: THE PROPOSED INCREASE TO THE
SALARY LINE OF THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR, \$20,508, WAS NOTED AND
DISCUSSED. MARK WEBBER MENTIONED THAT THE SEARCH COMMITTEE
PROPOSED THIS INCREASE TO ATTRACT QUALIFIED CANDIDATES.

TOWN ACCOUNTANT, PRINCIPAL ASSESSOR, TREASURER/COLLECTOR
AND TOWN CLERK CERTIFICATION STIPENDS: THE COMMITTEE WAS
REMINDED THAT THESE CERTIFICATIONS WERE REQUIRED UNDER M.G.L.

CONSERVATION COMMISSION: THE COMMITTEE INQUIRED ABOUT THE
FUND CARRY-OVERS AND RECEIPTS FROM THE PREVIOUS FY. MARK
WEBBER MENTIONED HE WOULD LOOK INTO THE MATTER AND
PROVIDE THE INFORMATION.

ACTION: A MOTION WAS MADE BY STEVE SHATZ AND SECONDED BY NEIL
HOLDEN TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE FY 2021 GENERAL GOVERNMENT
PROPOSED OPERATING BUDGET SUBJECT TO SELECT BOARD APPROVAL AND
THE COMMITTEE VOTED 6-0 IN FAVOR.

* PUBLIC SAFETY:

EMERGENCY MEDICAL RESPONSE: THE INCREASE OF \$3,870 WAS REVIEWED
WITH THE COMMITTEE BY MARK WEBBER. IT WAS NOTED THAT THIS INCREASE
WAS NECESSARY TO TRAIN THE TOWN'S VOLUNTEERS IN CPR AND OTHER
REQUIRED EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNIQUES.

AMBULANCE SERVICE: CHAIR BIKOFSKY REVIEWED THE \$38,528 REQUESTED INCREASE FOR THE COMMITTEE. HE MENTIONED THAT AN AMBULANCE AD-HOC COMMITTEE APPOINTED BY THE SELECT BOARD, COMPRISED OF DR. CHARLES KENNY, STEVE SHATZ, VIN GAROFOLI AND HIMSELF, HAD RECENTLY CONCLUDED IT'S STUDY AND SUBMITTED A REPORT TO THE SELECT BOARD. IN SUMMARY, THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDED THAT THE TOWN CONTINUE WITH IT'S CURRENT PROGRAM SUPPORTED BY MUTUAL AID PARTNERS LENOX AND LEE AS WELL AS SUPPORT FROM THE SOUTHERN BERKSHIRE VOLUNTEER AMBULANCE SERVICE. THE COMMITTEE ALSO RECOMMENDED THAT THE SELECT BOARD DEVELOP A THREE (3) YEAR AGREEMENT, TO BE REVIEWED ANNUALLY, FOR SERVICES PROVIDED AND THAT RESPONSE TIMES, TYPES OF CALLS, EXTENT AND DETAILS OF TRANSPORTATION REQUESTS, TYPES OF RESPONDING PERSONNEL AND EQUIPMENT AT A MINIMUM ALSO BE PERIODICALLY REPORTED TO THE TOWN. IN ADDITION, A NEED TO INCLUDE AGREEMENT LANGUAGE THAT WOULD URGE ALL PARTICIPANTS TO EMBRACE REGIONALIZATION OF THIS SERVICE WAS PROPOSED.

ACTION: A MOTION WAS MADE BY JIM BALFANZ AND SECONDED BY NEIL HOLDEN TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE FY 2021 PUBLIC SAFETY PROPOSED OPERATING BUDGET SUBJECT TO SELECT BOARD APPROVAL AND THE COMMITTEE VOTED 6-0 IN FAVOR.

* **EDUCATION:**

THE BHRSD STOCKBRIDGE OPERATING BUDGET ASSESSMENT INCREASE OF 3.1% AND STOCKBRIDGE CAPITAL BUDGET ASSESSMENT DECREASE OF 19.5% WITH A COMBINED NET INCREASE OF 2.3% WERE REVIEWED BY THE COMMITTEE.

ACTION: A MOTION WAS MADE BY STEVE SHATZ AND SECONDED BY BILL VOGT TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE FY 2021 EDUCATION PROPOSED OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGET ASSESSMENTS SUBJECT TO SELECT BOARD APPROVAL AND THE COMMITTEE VOTED 6-0 IN FAVOR.

* **PUBLIC WORKS AND FACILITIES:**

THE COMMITTEE REVIEWED THE PUBLIC WORKS AND FACILITIES PROPOSED OPERATING BUDGET. IT WAS EMPHASIZED THAT THE MANAGEMENT OF THE COMPACTOR AND CEMETERY WERE IN TRANSITION AND ADDITIONAL DETAILS WOULD BE FORTHCOMING AS THEY DEVELOP. A VIRTUALLY LEVEL FUNDED BUDGET, .7%, WAS NOTED.

ACTION: A MOTION WAS MADE BY STEVE SHATZ AND SECONDED BY BILL VOGT TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE FY 2021 PUBLIC WORKS AND FACILITIES PROPOSED OPERATING BUDGET SUBJECT TO SELECT BOARD APPROVAL AND THE COMMITTEE VOTED 6-0 IN FAVOR.

*** HUMAN SERVICES:**

THE INCREASE OF ZEBRA MUSSLE MONITORING WAS PRESENTED AND DISCUSSED. THE COMMITTEE WAS ADVISED BY MARK WEBBER THAT THIS \$16,000 INCREASE WOULD BE OFFSET BY A GRANT.

ACTION: A MOTION WAS MADE BY JIM BALFANZ AND SECONDED BY BILL VOGT TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE FY 2021 HUMAN SERVICES PROPOSED OPERATING BUDGET SUBJECT TO SELECT BOARD APPROVAL AND THE COMMITTEE VOTED 6-0 IN FAVOR.

*** CULTURE AND RECREATION:**

THE COMMITTEE REVIEWED A \$7,500 PARKS AND RECREATION SALARY INCREASE REQUIRED TO RECRUIT LIFE GUARDS AS WELL AS AN \$8,650 PROPOSED EXPENSE INCREASE REQUIRED TO UPGRADE TOWN BEACH AND PARK FACILITIES.

ACTION: A MOTION WAS MADE BY STEVE SHATZ AND SECONDED BY NEIL HOLDEN TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE FY 2021 CULTURE AND RECREATION PROPOSED OPERATING BUDGET SUBJECT TO SELECT BOARD APPROVAL AND THE COMMITTEE VOTED 6-0 IN FAVOR.

*** DEBT SERVICE:**

THE FINANCE COMMITTEE REVIEWED THE REDUCTION IN THE TOWN'S DEBT AND MADE PARTICULAR NOTE OF THE SEWER DEPARTMENT'S 2023 PROJECTED DEBT SERVICE RETIREMENT.

ACTION: A MOTION WAS MADE BY JAY BIKOFSKY AND SECONDED BY JIM BALFANZ TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE FY 2021 DEBT SERVICE OPERATING BUDGET SUBJECT TO SELECT BOARD APPROVAL AND THE COMMITTEE VOTED 6-0 IN FAVOR.

*** EMPLOYEE BENEFITS:**

OPEB: CHAIR BIKOFSKY REMINDED THE COMMITTEE OF THE AUDITOR'S RECOMMENDATION TO REDUCE FUNDING FROM \$350,000 TO \$150,000 IN THIS FY 2021 BUDGET. THE REDUCTION WAS DISCUSSED AND THE COMMITTEE WAS ADVISED THAT AN ACTUARIAL STUDY WOULD BE PERFORMED SOMETIME THIS YEAR TO CONFIRM FUNDING LEVELS WITH PROJECTED LIABILITIES.

UNDESIGNATED COMPENSATION: THE COMMITTEE QUESTIONED THE NEED FOR THIS LINE ITEM AND WAS ADVISED THAT IT WAS CONTINGENCY FUNDING FOR EARLY, UNANTICIPATED RETIREMENTS.

ACTION: A MOTION WAS MADE BY JAY BIKOFSKY AND SECONDED BY JIM BALFANZ TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE FY 2021 EMPLOYEE BENEFITS PROPOSED OPERATING BUDGET SUBJECT TO SELECT BOARD APPROVAL AND THE COMMITTEE VOTES 6-0 IN FAVOR.

*** TOWN INSURANCE:**

A LEVEL FUNDED PROPOSED BUDGET WAS PRESENTED TO THE FINANCE COMMITTEE.

ACTION: A MOTION WAS MADE BY JIM BALFANZ AND SECONDED BY BILL VOGT TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE 2021 TOWN INSURANCE PROPOSED OPERATING BUDGET SUBJECT TO SELECT BOARD APPROVAL AND THE COMMITTEE VOTED 6-0 IN FAVOR.

5. OTHER BUSINESS:

*** THE COMMITTEE WAS ADVISED OF THE NEXT MEETING ON THURSDAY MARCH 5TH TO REVIEW THE PROPOSED ARTICLES FOR THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING.**

*** THE COMMITTEE WAS REMINDED TO REGISTER FOR THE OPEN MEETING SEMINAR ON APRIL 15TH IF INTERESTED.**

*** CHAIR BIKOFSKY CONFIRMED THAT ALL COMMITTEE MEMBERS RECEIVED A COPY OF THE 2020 FINANCE COMMITTEE TOWN REPORT TO BE PRINTED FOR DISTRIBUTION IN THE ANNUAL REPORT.**

*** THE COMMITTEE WAS INFORMED THAT AN ARTICLE WAS PROPOSED FOR APPROVAL BY THE SELECT BOARD, FOR PRESENTATION AT THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING IN MAY, TO ESTABLISH AN AD-HOC COMMITTEE TO STUDY THE CREATION OF A STOCKBRIDGE HOUSING TRUST FOR FIRST TIME HOME BUYERS. PROPOSED MEMBERS WOULD BE FINANCE COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES, CPC REPRESENTATIVES AND THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR. MORE TO FOLLOW ON THIS.**

6. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

CHAIR BIKOFSKY CALLED FOR A MOTION, SECOND AND ROLL CALL VOTE TO ENTER EXECUTIVE SESSION PER M.G.L. CH.30A SECT. 21 (a) (3) TO VOTE ON THE EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES FROM THE JANUARY 8, 2020 FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING. THE MOTION WAS MADE AND SECONDED AND A ROLL CALL VOTE OF 6-0 NOTED TO DIRECT THE OPENING OF AN EXECUTIVE SESSION.

AFTER ADDRESSING THIS MATTER, A MOTION WAS CALLED, SECONDED, AND A VOTE OF 6-0 TAKEN TO RESUME THE OPEN MEETING.

7. THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 7:10 PM.