

**TOWN OF STOCKBRIDGE, MA.
50 MAIN STREET
FINANCE COMMITTEE VIRTUAL AND IN-PERSON MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY APRIL 20, 2023 AT 6 PM**

- 1. CHAIR BIKOFSKY CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER AT 6 PM.**
- 2. COMMITTEE ATTENDEES: JAY BIKOFSKY, JIM BALFANZ, PAM BOUDREAU, ED LANE, JORJA MARSDEN, DIANE REUSS AND WILLIAM VOGT. STEVE SHATZ DID NOT ATTEND AS HE WAS ON VACATION.**

TOWN ATTENDEES: MICHAEL CANALES AND ON ZOOM, JAMIE MINACCI

- 3. THE FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES FROM MARCH 30, 2023 WERE PRESENTED FOR APPROVAL. A MOTION TO APPROVE WAS MADE BY JIM BALFANZ AND SECONDED BY PAM BOUDREAU. A VOTE WAS CALLED AND THE MINUTES WERE APPROVED 6-0. BILL VOGT ABSTAINED, AS HE DID NOT ATTEND THIS MEETING AND STEVE SHATZ WAS NOT IN ATTENDANCE.**

THE FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES FROM APRIL 13, 2023 WERE PRESENTED FOR APPROVAL. A MOTION TO APPROVE WAS MADE BY JIM BALFANZ AND SECONDED BY ED LANE. A VOTE WAS CALLED AND THE MINUTES WERE APPROVED 6-0. BILL VOGT ABSTAINED, AS HE DID NOT ATTEND THIS MEETING AND STEVE SHATZ WAS NOT IN ATTENDANCE.

- 4. CHAIR BIKOFSKY THEN WELCOMED EVERYONE TO THIS FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING AND EMPHASIZED THAT THE PRIME FOCUS OF THE MEETING WAS A REVIEW OF THE FINAL OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGET/WARRANT ARTICLES WITH FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (APPROPRIATION, BORROWING, CREATION OF DEBT AND PROPERTY DISPOSAL) TO STOCKBRIDGE.**

HE EXTENDED THE COMMITTEE'S PARTICULAR THANKS TO MICHAEL CANALES AND THE TOWN'S DEPARTMENT HEADS FOR THEIR EFFORTS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THESE DOCUMENTS, TO THE SELECT BOARD FOR THEIR INPUT AND SUPPORT OF THE PROCESS AND TO THE FINANCE COMMITTEE FOR THEIR CONTINUED INTEREST, INPUT AND PARTICIPATION IN THIS EFFORT.

- 5. REVIEW OF THE FY 24 OPERATING BUDGET, ARTICLE 4:**

AS A GENERAL OVERVIEW, IT WAS NOTED THAT THE FY 24 PROPOSED OPERATING BUDGET WAS \$11,622,949.00 INCLUDING EDUCATION. THIS REPRESENTED A 1.3% INCREASE OVER FY 23 OF \$73,638.00. A 2.5% COST OF LIVING INCREASE WAS PROPOSED FOR THE MAJORITY OF NON-UNION EMPLOYEES, 2% COST OF LIVING

INCREASE PROPOSED FOR UNION EMPLOYEES, PLUS SALARY INCREASES FOR THOSE EMPLOYEES WHO WILL BE ASSUMING ADDITIONAL DUTIES.

- **GENERAL GOVERNMENT:**
PROPOSED DECREASES IN THIS CATEGORY INCLUDE A REDUCTION IN SELECTMEN'S EXPENSES, TOWN ADMINISTRATOR EXPENSES, TOWN FACILITIES SALARIES AND GLENDALE SOLAR MAINTENANCE. AN OVERALL REDUCTION OF \$15,263.00 FROM FY 23 TO \$1,339,058.00 WAS PROPOSED FOR FY 24.
- **PUBLIC SAFETY:**
PROPOSED INCREASES IN THIS CATEGORY INCLUDE POLICE DEPARTMENT SALARIES AND EXPENSES, FIRE DEPARTMENT SALARIES AND EXPENSES, AS WELL AS BUILDING INSPECTOR SALARIES. AN INCREASE OF \$149,931.00 OVER FY 23 TO \$1,893,762.00 WAS PROPOSED FOR FY24.
- **PUBLIC WORKS AND FACILITIES:**
PROPOSED SALARY AND EXPENSE INCREASES WERE PROPOSED FOR THE HIGHWAY, SEWER AND WATER DEPARTMENTS AMOUNTING TO \$31,623.00 OVER FY 23 TOTALING \$1,628,440.00 FOR FY 24.
- **HUMAN SERVICES:**
PROPOSED SALARY INCREASES WERE PROPOSED FOR FOREST AND AGRICULTURE (FARMER'S MARKET) AND THE COUNCIL ON AGING AMOUNTING TO \$27, 322.00 OVER FY 23 TOTALING \$221,852.00 FOR FY 24.
- **CULTURE AND RECREATION:**
PROPOSED INCREASES OF \$37,144.00 OVER FY 23 FOR THE LIBRARY AND TOURISM COMMITTEE WERE PRESENTED FOR FY 24 AMOUNTING TO A TOTAL OF \$354,151.00.
- **DEBT SERVICE:**
THIS OPERATING BUDGET CATEGORY NOTED A PROPOSED REDUCTION OF \$410,933.00 FROM FY 23 TO A TOTAL OF \$1,055,588.00 FOR FY 24. STABILIZATION FUNDS WERE PROPOSED TO BE ALLOCATED TO THIS CATEGORY TO PAY OFF THE PRINCIPAL AND INTEREST IN THE TOWN OFFICES AND WATER TREATMENT PLANT PRINCIPAL AND INTEREST LOANS FROM 2013.
- **EMPLOYEE BENEFITS:**
AN INCREASE OF \$19,153.00 OVER FY 23 WAS PROPOSED, TOTALING \$1,117,468.00 FOR FY 24 TO BE DIRECTED TO EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT BENEFITS.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY JIM Balfanz AND SECONDED BY ED LANE TO APPROVE THE PROPOSED OPERATING BUDGET INCLUDING EDUCATION OF \$11,622,949.00 FOR PRESENTATION AT THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING. A VOTE WAS CALLED AND THE MOTION WAS APPROVED 7-0.

ARTICLE 5: THIS PROPOSED ARTICLE REPRESENTS THE BHRSD OPERATING BUDGET ASSESSMENT TO THE TOWN OF STOCKBRIDGE. \$3,654,693 WAS PROPOSED FOR FY 24, AN INCREASE OF \$153,607.00 OVER FY 23. THIS ARTICLE WAS DISCUSSED UNDER ARTICLE 4, THE TOWN'S OPERATING BUDGET BY THE FINANCE COMMITTEE AND APPROVED 7-0.

ARTICLE 6: THIS PROPOSED ARTICLE REPRESENTS THE BHRSD CAPITAL BUDGET ASSESSMENT TO THE TOWN OF STOCKBRIDGE. \$78,450.00 WAS PROPOSED FOR FY 24, A DECREASE OF \$11,997.00 FROM FY 23. THIS ARTICLE, AGAIN, WAS DISCUSSED UNDER ARTICLE 4, THE TOWN'S OPERATING BUDGET BY THE FINANCE COMMITTEE AND APPROVED 7-0.

ARTICLE 7: THIS PROPOSED ARTICLE FOR BHRSD OUT OF DISTRICT TUITION ASSESSMENT OF \$80,000.00 WAS PRESENTED FOR STUDENTS ATTENDING THE TACONIC HIGH SCHOOL VOCATIONAL PROGRAM. THIS ARTICLE WAS ALSO DISCUSSED UNDER ARTICLE 4, THE TOWN'S OPERATING BUDGET BY THE FINANCE COMMITTEE AND APPROVED 7-0.

NOTE; ARTICLES 5, 6 AND 7 WERE INCLUDED IN FINANCE COMMITTEE'S DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF ARTICLE 4. THE PROPOSED TOWN'S FY 24 OPERATING BUDGET INCLUDED A TOTAL BHRSD STOCKBRIDGE EDUCATIONAL CAPITAL AND OPERATING ASSESSMENT OF \$3,813,143.00, AN INCREASE OF \$221,610.00 OVER FY 23.

6. REVIEW OF FY 24 PROPOSED CAPITAL BUDGET AND WARRANT ARTICLES:

ARTICLE 12: THIS ARTICLE, FUNDED BY AVAILABLE CERTIFIED FREE CASH, PROPOSES:

- APPROPRIATION OF \$100,000.00 TO PAY THE INTEREST ON TOWN INFRASTRUCTURE ISSUES PROJECT APPROVED MAY 16, 2022
- APPROPRIATION OF \$50,000.00 TO FUND TOWN ENGINEERING PROJECTS.
- APPROPRIATION OF \$90,000.00 TO FUND FIRE DEPARTMENT TURNOUT GEAR.
- APPROPRIATION OF \$1,200,000.00 TO FUND ROAD CONSTRUCTION AND REPAVING.
- APPROPRIATION OF \$25,000.00 FOR REST OF THE RIVER PROJECT NEGOTIATIONS.
- APPROPRIATION OF \$15,000.00 TO FUND SHORT TERM RENTAL TRACKING SOFTWARE SERVICES.
- APPROPRIATE \$73,400.00 TO FUND A NEW HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT CHIPPER.

A MOTION WAS MADE AND SECONDED TO APPROVE THE ABOVE REFERRED APPROPRIATIONS. A VOTE WAS CALLED AND THE MOTION WAS APPROVED 7-0.

ARTICLE 13: THIS ARTICLE, FUNDED BY SEWER AVAILABLE SURPLUS, PROPOSES:

- APPROPRIATION OF \$259,800.00 TO FUND THE COLLECTION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.
- APPROPRIATION OF \$49,900.00 TO FUND THE LAKE ANALYSIS SEWER NEEDS PROJECT.
- APPROPRIATION OF \$36,500.00 TO FUND REPLACEMENT OF THE WASTEWATER SLUDGE PUMP.
- APPROPRIATION OF \$12,300.00 TO FUND THE OVERHAUL OF THREE (3) RAW WASTEWATER TREATMENT PUMPS.

A MOTION WAS MADE AND SECONDED TO APPROVE THE AFOREMENTIONED APPROPRIATIONS. A VOTE WAS CALLED AND THE MOTION WAS APPROVED 7-0.

ARTICLE 14: THIS ARTICLE, FUNDED BY THE AVAILABLE WATER OPERATIONS RESERVE FUND, PROPOSES:

- APPROPRIATION OF \$30,000.00 TO FUND INSTALLATION OF NEW GATE VALVES.
- APPROPRIATION OF \$25,000.00 TO FUND REPLACEMENT OF THE ELM AND MAPLE STREETS WATER MAIN.
- APPROPRIATION OF \$23,000.00 TO FUND THREE (3) NEW ON-LINE ANALYZERS FOR THE WATER TREATMENT PLANT.
- APPROPRIATION OF \$48,000.00 TO FUND THE PAINTING OF THE INTERIOR OF THE WATER TREATMENT PLANT.

A MOTION WAS MADE AND SECONDED TO APPROVE THE AFOREMENTIONED APPROPRIATIONS. A VOTE WAS CALLED AND THE MOTION WAS APPROVED 7-0.

ARTICLE 15: THIS ARTICLE, FUNDED BY THE FY 24 COMMUNITY PRESERVATION UNDESIGNATED FUND BUDGET, PROPOSES:

- APPROPRIATION OF \$50,000.00 FOR A RIVERBROOK REPLACEMENT FIRE ESCAPE.
- APPROPRIATION OF \$15,000.00 FOR HEATON COURT WALKWAY LIGHTING.
- APPROPRIATION OF \$125,000.00 FOR THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE PINE WOODS DRIVEWAY.
- APPROPRIATION OF \$20,000.00 FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF HEATON COURT SIDING BOARD.
- APPROPRIATION OF \$42,000.00 FOR THE RESTORATION OF THE SERGEANT TOMB CEMETARY SLABS.
- APPROPRIATION OF \$185,617.00 FOR THE PRESERVATION OF THE OLD TOWN HALL.
- APPROPRIATION OF \$20,000.00 FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO THE MARY FLYNN TRAIL.

- APPROPRIATION OF \$11,500.00 FOR WORK AT BULLARD WOODS TO REMOVE INVASIVE SPECIES.
 - APPROPRIATION OF \$300,000.00 FOR THE ACQUISITION OF THE FENN FARM (SWAN) PROPERTY SUBJECT TO TOWN APPROVAL.
 - APPROPRIATION OF \$11,917.00 TO REMOVE INVASIVE SPECIES, IMPROVE WALKWAYS AND TREE AND GARDEN WORK AT GOULD MEADOWS.
 - APPROPRIATION OF \$5,200.00 TO CONSERVE THE FOOT BIRD SANCTUARY.
 - APPROPRIATION OF \$3,875.00 FOR PRESERVATION OF 19TH CENTUARY DAGUERREOTYPE ANSON CLARK PHOTOS BY THE STOCKBRIDGE LIBRARY.
 - APPROPRIATION OF \$10,000.00 FOR THE FY 24 CPC ADMINISTRATIVE BUDGET.
 - RESERVING TO THE HISTORIC RESOURCES, COMMUNITY HOUSING AND OPEN SPACE RESERVE FUNDS \$44,310.00 FOR EACH CATEGORY AS REQUIRED BY M.G.L.
- A MOTION WAS MADE AND SECONDED TO APPROVE THE AFOREMENTIONED APPROPRIATIONS. A VOTE WAS CALLED AND THE MOTION WAS APPROVED 7-0.

ARTICLE 20: CITIZENS PETITION TO ELECT THE FINANCE COMMITTEE:
THE FINANCE COMMITTEE DISCUSSED THIS PROPOSED PETITION AND THERE WAS GENERAL CONSENSUS THAT THE TOWN BYLAW SHOULD NOT BE CHANGED WITH THE MODERATOR CONTINUING TO APPOINT MEMBERS OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE. NO VOTE WAS CALLED AS THIS PETITION DOES NOT DEAL WITH SPECIFIC BUDGETARY FINANCIAL MATTERS.

7. THE CHAIR ADVISED THE FINANCE COMMITTEE THAT THE "BABY TOWN" MEETING WOULD BE SCHEDULED AT 6 PM ON MONDAY MAY 8, 2023 FOLLOWED BY THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING ON MONDAY MAY 15, 2023.
8. THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 7:05 PM.