

**TOWN OF STOCKBRIDGE, MA.
50 MAIN STREET
FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2020 AT 6 PM**

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

TOWN ATTENDEES: MARK WEBBER, TONY CAMPETTI, VINCENT GAROFOLI AND LEN TISDALE

OTHER ATTENDEES: CHUCK CARDILLO AND CHRISTINE RASMUSSEN

3. **THE FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES OF JANUARY 8, 2020 WERE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE COMMITTEE, 6-0.**
4. **PRESENTATION, REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF FY 2021 BUDGETS:**

WATER AND SEWER:

TONY CAMPETTI PRESENTED A LEVEL FUNDED WATER AND SEWER OPERATING BUDGET WHICH WAS MISSING SALARY INFORMATION. MARK WEBBER INDICATED THAT HE WOULD BE SPEAKING WITH THE SELECT BOARD REGARDING ANY INCREASES RELATED TO COST OF LIVING OR AS A RESULT OF CURRENT MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEE UNION NEGOTIATIONS AND BE BACK IN TOUCH WITH THE FINANCE COMMITTEE. IT WAS ALSO MENTIONED THAT RATE STUDIES WERE REQUIRED FOR BOTH WATER AND SEWER DEPARTMENTS AMOUNTING TO INCREASES OF \$4,256 IN EACH DEPARTMENT'S BUDGET.

TONY THEN REVIEWED THE WATER AND SEWER CAPITAL BUDGET REMINDING THE COMMITTEE THAT PAINTING THE WASTE WATER PLANT ROOF, SAND BLASTING AND PAINTING CLARIFIERS 1 & 2, REPLACEMENT OF A 2008 SEWER DEPARTMENT PICK-UP TRUCK AND SEWER LINE IMPROVEMENTS IN BEACHWOOD HAD BEEN COMPLETED IN PRIOR YEARS. HE DID, HOWEVER, MENTION THE NEED TO REPLACE THE PARK STREET PUMP STATION, ESTIMATED AT A COST OF \$728,000. THE PROJECT WILL BE PRESENTED FOR APPROVAL AT THE 2022 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING TO BE FUNDED BY A PROPOSED BOND ISSUE WITH PAYMENTS OF \$30,000 PER YEAR ESTIMATED TO RETIRE THIS DEBT.

ACTION ON THIS BUDGET WAS DEFERRED BY THE FINANCE COMMITTEE UNTIL RECEIPT OF SALARY INFORMATION.

POLICE:

ALTHOUGH CHIEF FENNELLY WAS UNABLE TO ATTEND THIS MEETING, THE FINANCE COMMITTEE REVIEWED THE DEPARTMENT'S BUDGET FOR FY 2021. LONGEVITY AND OTHER SALARY INFORMATION WAS NOT INCLUDED AND AN INCREASE IN THIS EXPENSE LINE WOULD BE PROVIDED BY MARK WEBBER AS A RESULT OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AND SELECT BOARD DISCUSSIONS. ALSO NOTED WERE INCREASES IN VEHICLE REPAIRS WHICH WERE OFFSET BY REDUCTIONS IN FUEL/GAS AND SUPPLIES. COMMUNICATIONS EXPENSES WERE INCREASED 3% DUE TO INCREASED BERKSHIRE COUNTY SHERIFF'S FEES. LASTLY, AN INCREASE WAS BUDGETED FOR POLICE VEHICLES FOR THE ADDITION OF NEW EMERGENCY LIGHTS.

ACTION ON THIS BUDGET WAS DEFERRED BY THE FINANCE COMMITTEE UNTIL COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AND LONGEVITY SALARY INFORMATION IS RECEIVED.

HIGHWAY:

LEN TISDALE REVIEWED THE OPERATING BUDGET FOR THE COMMITTEE. SALARY INFORMATION FOR HIGHWAY, COMPACTOR AND CEMETERY WERE MISSING. THIS INFORMATION WILL BE PROVIDED BY MARK WEBBER AFTER SELECT BOARD CONSULTATION REGARDING COST OF LIVING AND COLLECTIVE BARGAINING NEGOTIATIONS.

LEN DISCUSSED THE REPLACEMENT OF A 2008 F-550 TRUCK WITH PLOW CAPABILITIES AT A COST OF \$145,000 TO BE PRESENTED AS AN ARTICLE FOR ANNUAL MEETING APPROVAL, ALSO, PRESENTED WAS THE PROSPECT OF SEPARATELY FUNDING THE WEED HARVESTING OF STOCKBRIDGE BOWL BY SPECIAL ARTICLE AND REMOVING THE EXPENSE FROM THE OPERATING BUDGET. THIS EXPENSE DETAIL HAS YET TO BE PROVIDED.

A NUMBER OF INFRASTRUCTURE CAPITAL PROJECTS WERE PRESENTED INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO THE AVERIC BRIDGE REPLACEMENT, THE BERKSHIRE COUNTRY DAY BRIDGE REPLACEMENT, LARRYWAUG BRIDGE REPLACEMENT AND THE CURTISVILLE BRIDGE WING WALL AND ARCH REHABILITATION WITH PRELIMINARY FUNDING FOR ALL ESTIMATED AT \$5.2 MILLION.

THE FINANCE COMMITTEE EXPRESSED CONCERN AS TO THE VALIDITY OF THESE INFRASTRUCTURE CAPITAL COST ESTIMATES, FACTORING OF APPROPRIATE CONTINGENCY ESTIMATES FOR CHANGE ORDERS AND COST OVER-RUNS, SEPARATE ACCOUNTING FOR EACH OF THESE PROJECTS AS WELL AS AN APPROVAL PROCESS FOR CHANGES. THE WILLARD HILL DRAINAGE PROJECT WAS CITED AS ONE LACKING DEFINED APPROVALS FOR PROJECT CHANGES AS WELL AS DETAILS OF HOW THE FUNDING RE-ALLOCATION FROM OTHER PROJECTS WAS APPROVED.

THE FINANCE COMMITTEE DEFERRED ACTION UNTIL THE AFOREMENTIONED ADDITIONAL INFORMATION COULD BE PROVIDED.

FIRE:

VIN GAROFOLI PRESENTED THE FIRE DEPARTMENT OPERATING BUDGET TO THE FINANCE COMMITTEE. THE COMMITTEE NOTED THAT THE BUDGET SHEET FORMAT WAS NOT UTILIZED AND SUGGESTED A REVISION RATHER THAN THE NARRATIVE FORMAT BE PRESENTED AT A FUTURE MEETING. AS RESPECTS THE PRESENTATION, THE FINANCE COMMITTEE ASKED FOR UPDATED SALARY INFORMATION AS WELL AS JUSTIFICATION OF AN INCREASE IN VOLUNTEER STIPENDS. A REQUEST WAS MADE AS TO HOW OUR MUTUAL AID PARTNERS AND OTHER TOWNS DEAL WITH STIPENDS. MARK WEBBER ALSO MENTIONED HE WOULD DISCUSS THE SALARY EXPENSE LINE WITH THE SELECT BOARD AND COMPARABILITY WITH OUR OTHER TOWN DEPARTMENTS AND ADVISE THE COMMITTEE ACCORDINGLY. THE COMMITTEE ASKED FOR EXPLANATIONS OF VEHICLE REPAIR INCREASES, BUILDING MAINTENANCE INCREASES, INCREASES IN UNIFORM EXPENSES, JANITORIAL EXPENSE INCREASES, DETAIL ON EQUIPMENT REPLACEMENT, SCBA INCREASES AS WELL AS INCREASED INSPECTION EXPENSES. THE COMMITTEE THEN SUGGESTED A MULTI YEAR CAPITAL EQUIPMENT BUDGET DETAILING NEEDS AND COST ESTIMATES FOR ENGINE 2 REPAIR/RUST REMEDIATION, JUSTIFICATION (USE) AND COSTS FOR GLENDALE AND INTERLAKEN STATION UPGRADES, MAIN STATION FURNISHINGS, RESCUE DUMMIES AND MAIN STATION FLOOR REPLACEMENT TO MENTION A FEW.

THE FINANCE COMMITTEE DEFERRED ACTION ON THIS BUDGET SUBJECT TO A SUBSEQUENT MEETING ON THE ITEMS PREVIOUSLY MENTIONED.

5. PROPOSED SPECIAL TOWN MEETING ARTICLES:

THE SELECT BOARD PROPOSED THAT A SPECIAL TOWN MEETING BE SCHEDULED TO ADDRESS THE RESTORATION OF SEVERAL HISTORIC MONUMENTS, ENGAGE A HUMAN RESOURCE CONSULTANT AND APPROVE A HOME RULE PETITION. IT WAS ULTIMATELY DECIDED THAT ADDITIONAL INFORMATION WAS REQUIRED AND THAT THE MATERS WOULD BE ADDRESSED AT THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING. NO FINANCE COMMITTEE ACTION WAS REQUIRED.

6. PROPOSED AUDITORS EXIT INTERVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS OF JANUARY 23, 2020

CHAIRMAN BIKOFSKY REVIEWED THESE ITEMS WITH THE COMMITTEE:

* THE AUDITORS RECOMMENDED THAT OPEB FUNDING FOR FY 2021 BE REDUCED FROM \$345,000 TO \$150,000. THE COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY AGREED AND THE RECOMMENDATION IS BEING IMPLEMENTED BY THE TREASURER AND TOWN ACCOUNTANT.

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- * THE AUDITORS RECOMMEND THAT A FULL OPEB ACTUARIAL VALUATION STUDY BE SCHEDULED. KAREN WILLIAMS, TREASURER, IS SCHEDULING THIS STUDY WITH THE TOWN'S ACTUARY, ODYSSEY ADVISORS.**
- * THE AUDITORS, ADELSON & CO., ARE PREPARING A "DISCLOSURE NOTE" FOR INCLUSION ON THE TOWN'S FINANCIALS RELATED TO THE BHRSD UNFUNDED OPEB LIABILITY FOR THE TOWN'S REVIEW.**
- * THE AUDITORS WILL PROVIDE THE TOWN WITH RESTRICTED FUND ADVISOR SUGGESTIONS.**
- * ADELSON & CO. HAS RECOMMENDED DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A FORMAL PROCUREMENT POLICY. MARK WEBBER WILL BE ADDRESSING THIS ISSUE.**
- * THE AUDITORS HAVE RECOMMENDED DOCUMENTATION OF LESSOR AND LESSEE CONTRACTS, CURRENTLY BEING PREPARED BY THE TOWN ACCOUNTANT.**
- * LASTLY, THE AUDITORS HAVE RECOMMENDED THAT THE TOWN DEVELOP BACK-UP AND INSERVICE TRAINING FOR A DATA BREACH. MARK WEBBER IS REVIEWING THIS MATTER.**

7. COMMUNITY HOUSING TRUST:

CHAIRMAN BIKOFSKY ADVISED THE COMMITTEE THAT IN HIS CAPACITY AS A MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE, HE RAISED THE MATTER OF ESTABLISHING A TOWN COMMUNITY HOUSING TRUST WHICH AT A RECENT CPC MEETING WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED 8-0. HE ADDED THAT HE HAD BEEN IN TOUCH WITH TOWN COUNSEL WHO IS WORKING UP A CONCEPTUAL PLAN NOTING THE SUCCESSES OF GREAT BARRINGTON, LENOX AND WILLIAMSTOWN. A DRAFT IS EXPECTED BY THE END OF FEBRUARY. FINANCE COMMITTEE MEMBER BILL VOGT WHO ALSO SERVES ON THE CPC COMMITTEE HAS OFFERED TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS EFFORT. THE PLAN ONCE FINALIZED WILL PROPOSE TO OFFER SUPPORT TO FIRST TIME HOME BUYERS AND WILL BE PRESENTED TO THE SELECT BOARD FOR THEIR APPROVAL.

8. OTHER BUSINESS:

THE COMMITTEE WAS REMINDED OF BHRSD BUDGET MEETINGS AT 7 PM ON FEBRUARY 13TH AT MONUMENT VALLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL AND FEBRUARY 25TH AT 6 PM IN THE BHRSD STOCKBRIDGE OFFICES.

THE COMMITTEE WAS ALSO ADVISED OF THE FEBRUARY 21ST 2019 TOWN REPORT DUE DATE.

9. THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 7:25PM.

