

**TOWN OF STOCKBRIDGE, MA.
50 MAIN STREET
JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE-SELECT BOARD
VIRTUAL BUDGET MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, APRIL 7, 2022 AT 6:30 PM**

1. FINANCE COMMITTEE CHAIR, JAY BIKOFSKY, MODERATOR FOR THIS SESSION, CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER AT 6:30 PM.
2. SELECT BOARD ATTENDEES: ROXANNE MCCAFFREY, CHUCK CARDILLO AND PATRICK WHITE

FINANCE COMMITTEE ATTENDEES: JAY BIKOFSKY, JIM BALFANZ (REMOTELY BY ZOOM), PAM BOUDREAU, NEIL HOLDEN, DIANE REUSS, STEVE SHATZ AND WILLIAM VOGT

TOWN GOVERNMENT ATTENDEES: MICHAEL CANALES, VINCENT GARAFOLI (FIRE) AND HUGH PAGE (HIGHWAY)

BERKSHIRE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT: PETER DILLON, SUPERINTENDENT

OTHER ATTENDEES: CLARENCE FANTO (BERKSHIRE EAGLE) AND STEVE BORNIS (CTSBT) BOTH REMOTELY

3. SELECT BOARD CHAIR, ROXANNE MCCAFFREY MENTIONED THAT CONSIDERATION OF A FAIR SHARE AMMENDMENT WAS REVIEWED BY THE SELECT-BOARD WITH A RECOMMENDATION 3-0 THAT NO ACTION BE TAKEN ON IT.
4. THE JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE-SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES OF MARCH 17, 2022 WERE PRESENTED AND A MOTION WAS MADE BY BILL VOGT AND SECONDED BY STEVE SHATZ. A VOTE WAS CALLED AND THE MINUTES WERE APPROVED 5-0 (NEIL HOLDEN AND DIANE REUSS ABSTAINED AS THEY WERE NOT IN ATTENDENCE AT THAT MEETING).

THE FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES OF MARCH 23, 2022 WERE PRESENTED AND A MOTION WAS MADE BY BILL VOGT AND SECONDED BY STEVE SHATZ. A VOTE WAS CALLED AND THE MINUTES WERE APPROVED 6-0 (PAM BOUDREAU ABSTAINED AS SHE COULD NOT ATTEND THIS MEETING).

5. CHAIR BIKOFSKY THEN CALLED UPON PETER DILLON, BRSD SUPERINTENDENT, TO PRESENT THE FY 23 SCHOOL OPERATING BUDGET:
 - PETER DILLON INDICATED TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE THAT STOCKBRIDGE EXPERIENCED AN INCREASED STUDENT ENROLLMENT FROM 111 TO 118.

- HE ADDED THAT THE OPERATING BUDGET ASSESSMENT TO STOCKBRIDGE WOULD INCREASE 13.72% DUE TO THE INCREASED ENROLLMENT AND INCREASED MINIMUM LOCAL CONTRIBUTION TO A TOTAL OF \$3,501,086.00 FOR FY 2023.
- HE MENTIONED, WHEN ASKED, THAT THERE WERE 271 CHOICE STUDENTS SYSTEM WIDE. THE STATE, HE ADDED, CONTRIBUTES \$5,000.00 PER CHOICE STUDENT TO THE BHRSD SYSTEM, A PER CAPITA AMOUNT WHICH HAS NOT CHANGED SINCE 1993.
- JIM BALFANZ ASKED ABOUT A NEW BUDGET REQUEST OF \$50,000.00 FOR A PUBLIC RELATIONS/COMMUNICATIONS POSITION. PETER RESPONDED THAT THIS POSITION WOULD BE FUNDED BY FREE CASH. HE ALSO MENTIONED THAT TWO (2) POSITIONS WERE ELIMINATED ONE ARTS RELATED AND THE OTHER SOCIAL STUDIES/BUSINESS EDUCATION.
- PETER DILLON FURTHER INDICATED THAT THE FY 23 OPERATING BUDGET INCLUDED THE FOLLOWING NEW POSITIONS: A PSYCHOLOGIST, TWO SOCIAL WORKERS, A BEHAVIORAL ANALYST AND TWO "ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE" FACULTY.

SUPERINTENDENT DILLON ADVISED THE JOINT COMMITTEE THAT THE FY 23 BHRSD CAPITAL BUDGET ASSESSMENT TO STOCKBRIDGE WOULD INCREASE 13.72% TO A TOTAL OF \$90,447.00.

PETER CONCLUDED BY ADVISING THE COMMITTEE THAT A WARRANT ARTICLE WAS BEING PRESENTED TO GREAT BARRINGTON, STOCKBRIDGE AND WEST STOCKBRIDGE PROPOSING \$1,500,000.00 BE BORROWED FOR THE PURPOSE OF CONDUCTING A FEASIBILITY STUDY AND SCHEMATIC DESIGN OF A NEW HIGH SCHOOL. STOCKBRIDGE WOULD BE REQUIRED FOR BEAR \$450,000.00 OF THIS EXPENSE. THIS WOULD HAVE TO BE VOTED UPON AT TOWN MEETING.

CHAIR BIKOFSKY SUGGESTED TO SUPERINTENDENT DILLION THAT COMMUNICATIONS COULD BE IMPROVED TO THE BHRSD PARTICIPATING TOWNS BY EACH OF THE RESPECTIVE SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVES BETTER COMMUNICATING WITH SELECT BOARDS AND FINANCE COMMITTEES. PETER AGREED AND ADDED THIS SHOULD ALSO INCLUDE WEB-SITE ON GOING UPGRADES.

6. CHAIR BIKOFSKY THEN CALLED UPON VINCENT GARAFOLI, FIRE CHIEF, TO REVIEW THE DEPARTMENT'S CAPITAL BUDGET REQUESTS:
 - THE CHIEF WAS ASKED BY STEVE SHATZ TO REVIEW THE CURRENT NUMBER OF PERSONNEL IN THE DEPARTMENT. HE RESPONDED THAT PRESENTLY, THERE WERE SEVEN (7) OFFICERS, SEVEN (7) EMT'S AND A CHIEF TOTTALLING FIFTEEN (15).

- HE WENT ON TO EXPLAIN THAT WITHIN THE NEXT FIVE (5) YEARS, FOUR MEMBERS WOULD REACH MANDATORY RETIREMENT LEAVING NINE (9) REMAINING. ALSO, THE DEPARTMENT COULD ANTICIPATE THE POSSIBILITY OF THREE (3) ADDITIONAL POSSIBLY MOVING FROM THE AREA WITHIN THAT TIME FRAME.
- CHIEF GARAFOLI THEN REVIEWED THE FIRE APPARATUS INVENTORY. ENGINE # 1, HE MENTIONED, WAS NEARING THE END OF IT'S SERVICE LIFE AND IN 2021 REQUIRED \$50,000.00 IN REPAIRS. ENGINE # 2 HE ADDED WAS ALSO CLOSE TO THE END OF IT'S SERVICE LIFE NOW REQUIRING VEHICLE REFURBISHMENT DUE TO EXCESSIVE CORROSION. ENGINE # 5, A 2018 VEHICLE, WAS THE NEWEST OF ALL WITH 16 YEARS LEFT IN IT'S SERVICE LIFE. THIS VEHICLE WAS A TANKER/PUMPER AND DID REQUIRE SOME APPARATUS UPGRADES. THE CHIEF CONCLUDED THE APPARATUS REVIEW BY INDICATING THAT, WITH TWO (2) ENGINES AT OR NEAR THE END OF THEIR SERVICE LIFE, BOTH REQUIRED REPLACEMENT WITH A SINGLE NEW PIECE OF EQUIPMENT.
- HE THEN EXPLAINED THAT A REPLACEMENT ENGINE WAS ESTIMATED TO COST \$958,464.00 AND THAT THE DEPARTMENT HAD APPLIED FOR AN \$820,000.00 AFG GRANT WITH RECIPIENT NOTIFICATION DUE IN DECEMBER, 2022.
- CHIEF GARAFOLI PRESENTED THREE (3) REPLACEMENT OPTIONS:
 - + OPTION # 1 BUDGET FOR A NEW ENGINE IN FY 23 AND AWAIT NOTIFICATION OF THE GRANT RECIPIENTS IN DECEMBER 2022. THE ENGINE WOULD THEN BE PURCHASED WITH OR WITHOUT GRANT FUNDING AT THAT TIME AND \$1,000,000.00 COULD BE BORROWED FOR THIS PURPOSE.
 - + THE NEXT OPTION PRESENTED WAS PLACING \$250,000.00 IN A DEDICATED FIRE STABILIZATION ACCOUNT, REAPPLYING FOR AN AFG GRANT, UPGRADING ENGINES # 2 AND # 5 AT A COST OF \$100,000.00 AND AFTER TWO (2) YEARS PURCHASING THE NEW APPARATUS IN 2025.
 - + THE FINAL OPTION PRESENTED WAS REPLACEMENT OF ENGINE # 2 IN 2027, REAPPLY FOR THE AFG GRANT, REFURBISH ENGINES #2 AND # 5 AT A COST OF \$100,000.00 AND PLACE \$250,000.00 IN A FIRE STABILIZATION FUND AND PURCHASE THE EQUIPMENT AT THAT TIME WITHOUT CREATING DEBT.
- DISCUSSION:
 - + THE JOINT COMMITTEE DISCUSSED WITH CHIEF GARAFOLI THE IMMEDIATE NEED FOR PURCHASING THE APPARATUS , THE EQUIPMENT STAFFING, THE NUMBERS AND TYPES OF CALLS FOR SERVICE, CURRENT EQUIPMENT INVENTORY AND TIMING OF REPLACEMENT EQUIPMENT.

- + STEVE SHATZ INQUIRED IF THE SELECT BOARD HAD REACHED A DECISION ON THIS MATTER. THE RESPONSE WAS NOT AS YET.
- + MICHAEL CANALES EMPHASIZED THE NEED FOR TWO (2) OPERATIONAL PIECES OF EQUIPMENT.
- + CHAIR MCCAFFREY INQUIRED AS TO THE NUMBER OF REPAIR HOURS FOR ENGINES # 1 AND # 2 AND WAS ADVISED APPROXIMATELY 200 HOURS FOR BOTH.
- + PATRICK WHITE INQUIRED AS TO THE LIKELYHOOD OF RECEIVING A GRANT AND WAS ADVISED 20%.
- + JIM BALFANZ INQUIRED AS TO THE AVAILABILITY OF HISTORICAL DEPARTMENTAL RESPONSE DATA.
- + JAY RHIND INTERJECTED THAT THE TOWN HAD HISTORICALLY BUDGETED CAPITAL FUNDS FOR THIS PURPOSE.
- + STEVE SHATZ SUGGESTED THE DEVELOPMENT OF A FIVE YEAR FIRE DEPARTMENT CAPITAL PLAN
- + JAY BIKOFSKY CONCLUDED WITH A STATEMENT AS TO THE NECESSITY FOR ACQUIRING THIS EQUIPMENT AND SUGGESTED SERIOUS CONSIDERATION OF OPTION TWO PRESENTED BY THE CHIEF. HE ADVISED THE JOINT COMMITTEE THAT FURTHER DISCUSSION ON THIS SUBJECT COULD BE EXPECTED.

7. CHAIR BIKOFSKY CALLED UPON HUGH PAGE, HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT, TO PRESENT HIS DEPARTMENT'S CAPITAL REQUESTS TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE. HUGH ADVISED THE JOINT COMMITTEE THAT THE LACKN OF A FORMAL FLEET REPLACEMENT CAPITAL PROGRAM HAS LEAD TO EQUIPMENT OPERATING BEYOND THE INTENDED LIFE CYCLE CAUSING EXTENSIVE REPAIRS AND INOPERABILITY DURING INCLEMENT WEATHER. HE PROPOSED THE FOLLOWING FY 23 ACQUISITIONS:

- REPLACEMENT OF ONE PRIMARY SNOW PLOW.....\$170,000.00
 - REPLACEMENT OF A MULTI-FUNCTION SWEEPER.....\$50,000.00
 - PURCHASE OF A NEW F-150 PICKUP.....\$35,000.00
 - PURCHASE OF A BACKHOE.....\$100,000.00
 - REPLACEMENT OF ANOTHER PRIMARY SNOW PLOW...\$170.000.00
 - PURCHASE OF A NEW F-350 PLOW AND PICKUP.....\$55,000.00
- THE TOTAL ESTIMATED COST IS \$607,000 WHICH INCLUDES TOOLS AND A TRAILER.
- DISCUSSION:
 - + MICHAEL CANALES INDICATED THAT IF THESE CAPITAL REQUESTS ARE APPROVED, CONSIDERATION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO THE USE OF AVAILABLE FREE CASH AS CONTRASTED TO BORROWING.

- + CHUCK CARDILLO ASKED IF THE REPLACEMENT COULD BE PHASED IN OVER A PERIOD OF YEARS. THE RESPONSE WAS NOT LIKELY DUE TO THE CURRENT CONDITIONS OF THE FLEET.**
 - + BILL VOGT SUGGESTED THAT THIS WAS AN ISSUE OF CAPITAL BUDGETING AND DEFERRED EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE TO BE ADDRESSED AS AN ONGOING OPERATIONAL MATTER.**
 - + JIM BALFANZ SUGGESTED THAT THE CURRENT CONDITION OF THE DEPARTMENTAL FLEET SUGGESTS NECESSARY ON GOING REPLACEMENT.**
 - + JAY BIKOFSKY INDICATED THAT DISCUSSION OF THIS MATTER WOULD CONTINUE AT A FUTURE MEETING.**
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- 8. PARKS AND RECREATION CHAIR STEVEN KNOPF PROPOSED A NEW POSITION TO ASSIST WITH BEACH AND BUILDING MAINTENANCE TO ASSIST THE HIGHWAY STAFF. THE POINT WAS MADE THAT THE FULLY STAFFED HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT IS ABLE TO ACCOMMODATE TO THESE FUTURE REQUESTS.**

 - 9. THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, CHAIR BIKOFSKY CALLED FOR ADJOURNMENT AT 9:06 PM WITH THE NEXT MEETING TO BE SCHEDULED ON APRIL 14TH AT 6:30 PM.**