

# WASHINGTON FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES

March 14, 2016

Meeting was called to order at 7:13 pm

In Attendance: Kent Lew, Dick Spencer, Sean Connors, Mike Burke, and David Weissbrod

## OLD BUSINESS

1. Finance committee meeting minutes from February 8, 2016, were approved.

## NEW BUSINESS

1. "Any" New Business

(a.) Cruiser repairs

The Chief said that the cruiser needs four new tires and a new battery. We will transfer \$1,000 from Reserve Account to Police Dept Account.

(b) Re-election concerns

Dave voiced his re-election concerns. Following discussion, he will proceed with nomination signature process.

2. Initial Review of First-draft of FY 17 Budget

(a.) Salary rates: Discussed salary rates, parity, time from last increase, hourly rate, as well as any increases and decreases in hours. Were the selectmen holding fewer selectmen meetings than past? Administrative Assistant expenditures are down slightly from previous year due to fewer hours worked. Poll workers will receive a long-overdue increase of a dollar an hour. Given that most town employees haven't received increases since FY 14, we discussed possible 2.5% increases. Dick agreed to look at effect of a 2.5% increase on total budget.

(b.) Insurance: Agreed to link individual insurance line item to its applicable agency. It will become part of that agency's budget. Kent will check with Dan to ensure that it can be broken out as discussed.

(c.) Highway dept: Discussed highway dept budget and expressed concern that no budget request has been received. Also, noted possible increase in the town's share of employee health insurance costs.

(d.) Voc-ed: Need to talk with Victor and discuss town's arrangement with Becket and perhaps document it. Can we assume one student again this year?

(e.) Tree work: Discussed transferring tree work line item to tree warden line item.

# WASHINGTON FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES

March 14, 2016- Continued

TEMPORARY ADJOURNMENT (8:25pm) - Finance Committee met with Selectboard.

Restarted Finance Committee at 8:37pm.

## 2. Initial Review of First-draft of FY 17 Budget (Continued)

(f.) Police Dept Expenses: Add \$3,120 for police budget for telephone service and delete from town building maintenance account.

(g.) Veteran agent: Town now has agreement for coverage by Pittsfield. It entails a \$500 payment up front; thereafter an hourly rate of \$12.50, with a \$2,250 cap.

(h.) Transfer station: We may need to add replacement cost of bottle bin due to its bottom rusting out. Can we delay this to FY18? Need more information regarding a request for \$1,800 for Facility Maintenance. Is there grant funding available?

(i.) Historical commission: Doubling of budget to \$400 requested. Much needed work for preserving and digitalizing of deteriorating records. Could some of this be performed by Administrator's office with their scanner (with selectmen approval)? Dave will check.

(g.) Stabilization (emergency) fund: Discussed need to start fund --and amount to start with. There is an advantage to having it as a general fund rather than a specific fund. If it's set up for a specific agency, we could not use it for a different agency. Should we consider having two funds?

(h.) Town building maintenance: Kent will talk with Ed Bond about FY 17 plans.

## 3. CBRSD update

Dick is on a special 3-member subcommittee to present transition CBRSD ad hoc committee to negotiate plan with Cummington. Dick said he doubts that Cummington will approve it, given that it would require up-front payment of its share of future liabilities. Cummington's rejection of it would relieve the remaining towns need for a vote, and would perhaps then necessitate a move by Cummington to the legislature and possibly to the courts for settlement. The draft agreement will be presented to the full school committee on March 24.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:08 pm.

Respectfully,

David Weissbrod, Clerk