

Finance Committee Minutes

April 10th 2018

A motion to call the meeting to order at 4:07PM, Mr. Carson 1st, Mrs. Walker 2nd passed unanimously.

The minutes of April 5th 2018 were accepted as read, Mr. Klein 1st, Mr. Miller 2nd passed unanimously.

Present were Mr. Mark Carson, Mr. Steven Klein, Mr. Robert Miller, Mrs. Sandy Walker, Mrs. Marilyn Fracasso and Mrs. Prudence Spaulding. Guests included Ms. Tara White and Ms. Michele Shalaby.

Budget Review began:-

Board of Health Software [70510.10] requested {\$1600} (this budget had been put on hold because the Committee did not know why the amount was so high). The software had been operating in part under a grant; the total cost is actually \$2,370 per year. This is the last year the grant will be paying for part of the software. The Board of Health Expenses [70510.01] had been submitted and the Committee had cut \$1000 from its request, which had been \$2,500. Within the Expenses budget there had been a contract item listed for \$600. Once this software budget is passed it will really only add \$600 and put the \$1,000 back in the amount needed to pay for the software. Mr. Klein asked about how many permits the Board of Health made during a year, Ms. White stated that she thought about 100. The software that the Board of Health has should be integrated with the Building Inspector's Software so that the building permits once complete would provide all the information that was needed for the owner. Mr. Klein 1st, Mrs. Walker 2nd passed unanimously.

A request from Wired West [10192.80] was made to transfer \$1000 from the Reserve Fund to pay for their dues. The town was unaware that they would be charging dues for FY 2018, so no money was budgeted. The Committee asked Ms. White to explain this situation. Ms. White stated that the town had been involved with Wired West in 2015, but as yet Wire West does not have a saleable product. They have only an organization that at a later date might administer an internet program. The Town has never signed a contract with Wired West, but they never formally withdrew from them either. Selectman Yohalem had asked that the Finance Committee decide whether the town should pay this \$1000. Since there is no product for the

Town to use a motion was made to deny this request, Mr. Klein 1st, Mrs. Walker 2nd passed unanimously.

Highway Propane [20422.18] this was a request to transfer funds from the Reserve Fund to cover an outstanding bill (\$ 866.01) for propane. This propane had been delivered on March 23, and the remaining amount in that account was \$258.44, the request for transfer was for [\$608.00]. A motion to support the transfer was made Mrs. Walker 1st, Mrs. Fracasso 2nd passed unanimously.

Building Inspector's Salary [60241.04] (\$20,831) with COLA now {\$21,248} , Mrs. Spaulding questioned Ms. White saying that she understood that the present Building Inspector was in the process of terminating his service to the town and she wondered why the salary had been given the COLA. Ms. White stated that there would be a new building inspector coming and would no doubt have to work together with the present one, and the salary might have to be used to pay for that transfer. Since the subject of the departing building inspector had arisen, Mrs. Walker asked why the present building inspector who was only working half time was receiving his full monthly salary. Ms. White stated that she would look into this. A motion was made to pass the building inspector's salary by Mr. Klein with Mrs. Fracasso 2nd passed unanimously.

Building Inspector's Software [60241.15] (\$2,700) now requesting {\$2,845} this was the payment of the license for the E-Permitting program, from Fullcircletec. Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mr. Miller 2nd passed unanimously.

Medicare [90917.00] (\$ 12,700) now requesting {\$ 13,500} with the understanding that this might increase depending upon whether there was an increase in the total of the wages, salaries, and stipends upon the warrant. Mr. Klein 1st, Mrs. Walker 2nd passed unanimously.

Library Salaries [50610.02], the account had been submitted and passed with the only increase being the COLA. This account was being resubmitted with a \$1.00 increase per hour for the library aide. Mr. Klein questioned why the Finance Committee was being asked to decide upon an increase in the salary of a part-time worker whose FY19 salary had been assigned a COLA. Mr. Klein stated that the reason for this added increase needed to be documented. A motion to leave this account with the COLA as had been recommended previously was made, Mrs. Walker 1st, Mr. Klein 2nd passed unanimously.

Selectmen for the Unpachene Bridge account [10122.00] requesting {\$8,000}. During FY 19 the Unpachene Bridge will be replaced, funds may be needed to acquire a "right of way" from some of the abutters. The \$8,000 is an estimate, and based upon the experience the town had when the Hadsell Bridge was under construction. Mr. Klein 1st, Mrs. Miller 2nd passed unanimously.

Prudence Spaulding
April 11th and 12th 2018

Library [50610.01] this was a request for a one time appropriation of \$5,800 to provide the library with an electronic door opener for ADA compliance. Mr. Klein 1st, Mrs. Fracasso 2nd passed unanimously.

Broadband {no account number available} requesting a onetime appropriation to cover legal fees and consultation costs. This is an estimate. Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mr. Miller 2nd passed with Mr. Klein recusing.

The Committee spent some time discussing the **Police Salaries Budget** [60210.04] (\$147,908) The chief had requested adding to the force four evening shifts (Thursday through Sunday), while the Committee appreciated his request it was decided to increase the force with two extra shifts this year and hopefully the other two next year. The Committee approved {\$133,907.40} Mr. Carson 1st, Mr. Klein 2nd passed unanimously.

Police Rental [60210.67] (\$6,000) now requesting {\$9,000}. This budget had been passed on March 22nd thus no vote was needed.

Police Expenses [60210.99] (\$ 22,700) now requesting {\$ 24,600} Mr. Carson 1st, Mrs. Spaulding 2nd passed with Mrs. Walker abstaining.

The total Police budget would now total \$167,320.40.

The subject of the **Stabilization account** was discussed. We generally raise and appropriate \$50,000 for this account and transfer another \$50,000 from Free Cash. However this year the school assessment for the Town of New Marlborough had dropped over \$100,000. Mrs. Shalaby suggested that we use this decrease to increase our stabilization, thus putting \$150, 000 into Stabilization.

The **SBRSD Capital** budget[30001.00] was split on its recommendation on the April 5th meeting, namely the committee recommended the roof and boiler part of the budget. This budget was resubmitted with the roof and boiler as well as the other items making up the capital expenses. The amount requested in total was {\$132,151}. A motion was made to accept this amount Mr. Klein 1st, Mrs. Spaulding 2nd the recommendation did not pass with only two versus 4 votes against the item.

Prior to the closing of the meeting Mrs. Walker stated that she wished to bring to the attention of the Committee the fact that while New Marlborough struggles to "make ends meet" 25% of the land in the town was exempt from taxes with some of that property held in land trusts. She added that the town of Sheffield receives property taxes for town land trust. Mrs. Walker stated that she would like to propose establishing a subcommittee to explore ways to increase

revenue for the town and involve a variety of people from different committees and town residents.

Looking ahead at our schedule the warrant should be finalized sometime before April 20th and the Committee needs to review it. Once this information comes from Ms. Enoch members will be notified. Ms. Walker and Mr. Klein suggested that it be e-mailed to them so that they could review it ahead of the time set for the next Committee Meeting.

Mrs. Walker and Mrs. Shalaby will present the FY19 budget to the town's people on Tuesday May 1st at 6:00PM.

A motion to adjourn at 5:55PM was made by Mr. Klein with Mr. Miller 2nd passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Prudence Spaulding, secretary.