

Finance Committee Minutes

March 7th 2019

The meeting was called to order at 7:06PM. Present were Mr. Steven Klein, Mrs. Sandra Walker, Mr. John Pshenishny, Mr. Douglas Newman, Mr. Robert Miller, and Mrs. Prudence Spaulding. Guests included Mr. Robert Twing, Mr. Warren Weldon, Mr. Nathaniel Redmond, Mr. Freddy Friedman, Mrs. Marsha Pshenishny, Ms. Mari Enoch, and Ms. Tara White.

Mr. Redmond, the Tree Warden, came to discuss the Tree Work's budget [60294.01]. Mr. Redmond reminded the Finance Committee that New Marlborough has about 90 miles of roads, with many fallen trees along the roadside. The town has a contract with John Field Tree Service to provide cutting of these trees. For \$360 per day the Field Tree Service will provide men and equipment to do this. They cover approximately one mile in a day. The Tree Work's budget is set for \$20,000 which would cover about five days of work.

In the Highway Budget there is included \$20,000 for tree work. Mr. Klein asked how the tree cutting for the Highway Department and the tree cutting supervised by Mr. Redmond differed. For instance he had noted that prior to town road work on Brewer Hill some trees had been cut. Ms. White responded that for instance on the Mill River-Clayton Road, the repair for which the town had received a grant, trees needed to be cut and were cut by the Highway Department. When trees are in the way of highway repairs the Highway Department will cut them and this comes out of their budget.

Mrs. Walker asked if there was a job description for the Tree Warden. Mr. Newman further suggested that Mr. Redmond 1) explore grants for tree work 2) work with the Highway Department and Utility companies, 3) talk to Larry Davis who served as a tree warden some years ago. New Marlborough needs to establish what trees qualify as "Town Trees" by the size of the roads or the amount of feet from the center line of a road.

Mr. Redmond stated that he will oversee Mr. Field's work and will continue to work with the Highway Department and try to keep up to date records of his work.

Mr. Robert Twing and Mr. Warren Weldon came to discuss the Umpachene Falls Park budget. The banks of the river that serves as a "swimming area" have been worn away and then with Storm Irene completely destroyed making the area unsafe. The suggested repair now must meet the DEP specifications with an engineering plan. The Umpachene Committee has tried to carryover some funds (about \$7000) that were not utilized from past years budgets to pay for

the engineering (which will include both plans and permits) so that the repairs can be made. Neither Mr. Twing nor Mr. Weldon could provide an estimate of the cost of the repairs once the engineering had been completed. It is the hope of the Umpachene Committee to be able to pay for the repairs over a 3 year period. The members of the Finance Committee felt that the BOS need to be made aware of the complexity and details surrounding this situation. Mr. Twing will provide them with a copy of the engineering proposal. In closing the Finance Committee suggested that the Umpachene Committee explore the possibility of getting grant funds to help defray some of these costs.

At the Finance Committee meeting held on February 25th the decision not to replace Mrs. Fracasso (who had submitted her resignation) was made. However Mr. Klein had met with Mr. Long who had asked to be on the Finance Committee two years ago when a vacancy had occurred. Mr. Long indicated that he would be interested in serving on a temporary basis until the coming elections. Mr. Long has served on the Broadband Committee and has a background in business management. Mrs. Spaulding made a motion to convey to the BOS our recommendation to have Mr. Long appointed as a temporary member to fill that vacancy. Mr. Pshenishny 2nd. Mr. Newman proposed an amendment to lengthen the time allowed for this and thus allowing other people who might be interested in serving on the Finance Committee to apply. The amendment did not pass and the original motion passed with Mrs. Walker and Mr. Newman voting against it.

Mr. Klein reported that most of the budget requests have been received, with the exception of Emergency Management and the Cemetery. It is hope that they will come in in the next few days. Mr. Klein also noted that the larger budgets will be reviewed at the next meeting these include Emergency Services, Fire, Highway Department, Police, building Inspector and the Transfer Station.

The Committee then began to review some of the listed budgets items:-

Website [10116.00] (\$2,475) now requesting { \$3,978} this website will now be designed especially for our town and the increase for that service will be paid up over 3 years. Mr. Miller 1st, Mr. Newman 2nd passed unanimously.

Selectmen's Salaries [10122.00] (\$8,500) Level Funded, {\$8,500] Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mr. Miller 2nd passed unanimously.

Selectmen's Expenses [10122.01] (\$ 3,000) Level Funded, [\$3.000] Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mrs. Walker 2nd passed unanimously.

Contingency [10122.02] (\$5,000) Level funded {\$5,000} Mr. Miller 1st, Mr. Klein 2nd passed unanimously.

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Town Counsel [10123.00] (\$10,000) Level funded {\$10,000} Mr. Newman 1st, Mr. Miller 2nd passed unanimously.

Conservation Commission Clerical [99999.99](\$600) now requesting{\$1'200}without documentation to justify this increase this budget was put on HOLD.

Conservation Expense [10124.00] (\$1400) now requesting {\$1900} again without documentation to justify this increase this budget was put on HOLD.

Finance Committee Expenses [10133.00] (\$500) level Funded {\$500} Mr. Klein 1st, Mr. Miller 2nd passed unanimously.

Accounting Officer's Expense [10135.03] (\$4,515)_Level funded {\$4,515} Ms. White stated that she still has not heard from the computer provider. Mr. Newman 1st, Mr. Klein 2nd passed unanimously.

Assessor's General Expenses [10141.01] (\$ 1,800) new requesting {\$1,850} Mr. Klein 1st, Mr. Miller 2nd passed with Mr. Pshenishny recusing.

Assessors Property Cards on Line [10141.35] (\$1,600) now requesting {\$1,640} Mr. Klein 1st, Mrs. Walker 2nd passed with Mr. Pshenishny recusing.

Assessor's Computer Contract [10141.44] (\$4.628) now requesting {\$4,770.34} Mr. Newman 1st, Mr. Klein 2nd passed with Mr. Pshenishny recusing.

Assessor's MAP Updates [10144.55] (\$2,500 level Funded {\$2,500} Mr. Klein 1st, Mr. Miller 2nd passed with Mr. Pshenishny recusing.

Assessor's Consultant [10141.77] (\$2.500) Level Funded {\$2,500} Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mr. Newman 2nd passed with Mr. Pshenishny recusing.

Assessor's Revaluation [10142.00] (\$16,500) Level Funded {\$16.500} Mr. Klein 1st, Mr. Newman 2nd passed with Mr. Pshenishny recusing.

Tax Collector Computer Services [10146.02] (\$6,830) now requesting {\$7,940} Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mr. Miller 2nd passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Expenses [10147.44] (\$ 3,300) now requesting {\$ 9,310.60} documentation needed to justify this increase. Put on HOLD.

Treasurer's Software [10147.88] (\$ 3,975) now requesting {\$4,935} documentation needed to justify the increase. Put on HOLD.

Tax Collector's Expenses [10161.99] (\$6,255) Level Funded {\$6,255} Mr. Newman 1st, Mr. Miller 2nd passed unanimously.

Tax Title (Collector) [10148.00] (\$1,300) now requesting {\$ 800} Put on HOLD.

Tax Title (Treasurer) [10149.00] (\$ 6,000) now requesting {\$5,000} Put on HOLD.

Town Clerk Expenses [101161.01] (\$2,200) Level Funded {\$2,200}. Mr. Newman 1st, Mr. Klein 2nd passed unanimously.

Town Records Preservation [10161.02](\$5,000) Level Funded {\$5,000} Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mr. Miller 2nd passed unanimously.

Street Listing [10163.00] (\$800) Level Funded {\$800} Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mr. Pshenishny 2nd passed unanimously.

Planning Board Salaries [10175.00] (\$1,300) now requesting {\$1,500} Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mr. Klein 2nd passed unanimously.

Planning Board Expenses [10175.01] (\$ 873) now requesting {\$900} Mr. Newman 1st, Mr. Miller 2nd passed unanimously.

Board of Appeals [10176.00] (\$ 300) Level Funded {\$300} Mr. Newman 1st, Mr. Miller 2nd passed unanimously.

Town Clerical [10192.02] (\$8,909) now requesting {\$ 8,986} works ten hours per week, put on HOLD

Town Hall Custodian [10192.50] (\$8,324) put on HOLD

Town Bonds [10193.00] (\$ 800) now requesting {\$1,500 Mr. Miller 1st, Mr. Klein 2nd passed unanimously.

Memorial Day [50692.00] (\$ 700) Level Funded {\$700} Mr. Miller 1st, Mr. Newman 2nd passed unanimously.

Election Expense [10162.00] (\$2,225) now requesting {\$12,925}. This budget includes the new voting machine (\$10,700) as well as the regular cost of the elections (\$2,225). This machine would count the votes so that the results of the election would be available soon after the polls closed (though the paper ballots would be kept). The initial cost of the machine would be \$5,700 (a onetime cost). But the set up and continuing costs of the required ballots would bring the cost this year to \$10,700. The request for the purchase of this machine was made last year. This year's request comes with supporting evidence from surrounding towns which have

purchased and are using this machine. The cost of printing the individual ballots would be incurred each year. At present the town is able to print its own ballots. The use of this machine is not state mandated. Mr. Miller made a motion to approve the Election Expense budget without the cost of the machine. Ms. Enoch suggested that the Committee ask that Ms. Chretien, the Town Clerk, resubmit the budgets broken down into the original ongoing expenses namely \$2,225 and the cost of the voting machine and the cost of its yearly upkeep. Thus the Election Expense request has been put on HOLD.

Historical Preservation Committee [new account no account number] {\$800} requested, broken down into \$300 for clerical and miscellaneous expenses, and \$500 for a single all town mailing. There is some interest in preserving the old buildings in the town so that they will not be destroyed etc. Mr. Miller 1st, Mrs. Spaulding 2nd passed with Mrs. Walker and Mr. Newman voting against the motion.

Care of the Village Green [50650.50](\$3,093) Level funded {\$3,093} Mr. Newman reported that he had reached out to Mr. Ben Harms, Chairman of the Village Association, and received a detailed message on his answering machine. In brief 47% of the land requiring care (mowing, trimming etc.) in the center of the Town of New Marlborough belongs to the town. The Village Association splits the bill for its care (approximately \$9,000 yearly). Mr. Newman asked if the cost of the care of this property had been put out to bid or if the Highway Department could take care of the land. Ms. White who happens to serve the Village Green Association stated that the Association had selected the lowest bidder. Mrs. Spaulding stated that she had had to pay for just mowing of her property and felt that the cost of mowing and care for the property in question was not out of line. Mr. Miller 1st, Mrs. Spaulding 2nd passed unanimously.

Prior to the adjournment of the meeting Mr. Klein asked that the members of the Committee study the following budgets to be discussed at the next meeting, namely the EMS, Fire, Highways Department, Police, Building Inspector and Transfer station so that when the department heads came in on March 21st, the material covered would be organized.

A motion to adjourn at 9:25PM Mr. Klein 1st, Mr. Miller 2nd passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Prudence Spaulding Secretary.

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