

Finance Committee Minutes

February 1st 2018

The minutes for January 25th were distributed at 4:08PM. Present were Mrs. Walker, Mr. Miller, Mrs. Fracasso, Mr. Klein, Mr. Carson and Mrs. Spaulding. Guests were Ms. Mari Enoch, Town Administrator, Ms. Tara White, Mr. Nathaniel Yohalem, and Ms. Michele Shalaby.

The minutes were accepted as read. Mrs. Walker 1st, Mr. Klein 2nd passed unanimously.

Ms. Enoch stayed late to answer some of the questions about accounts from some members. She brought some handouts that she thought might be helpful.

She brought the FY 2019 Budget Proposition 2 ½ work sheet which explains the 2018 Levy Limit and the Levy Limit for 2019. The possible growth needs to be under \$165,982 in order not to have to seek an override. She reminded the members of the Committee that the assessment will be going down this year!

She brought a draft of the accounts that were likely to increase. Some of these accounts represent discretionary requests, some not. Hopefully some accounts will decrease.

When considering the budgets there are many budgets that are not in as yet. Some of these are late every year, such as Medicare because those figures depend upon the workers COLA's. Mr. Klein suggested that she assume that the COLA for the workers would be 2% and give us the figures for Medicare etc. based upon this. This figure if incorrect can be changed at a later date.

Ms. Enoch presented a sheet which included the various salaries of the Town's employees. The salary for each individual for 2018 was listed following the increases should the COLA be 1%, 1.5%, 2%, and 2.5%. Some worker's salaries are included in larger budgets, i.e. Roads and Bridges, Cemetery, Library, Police and Transfer Station.

Mr. Klein asked if Ms. Enoch could provide the committee with the total amount of all submitted budgets. He suggested this would help guide us as we reviewed specific budgets. He also asked if once an account had been passed by the committee was there anyway way to adjust the figure. Mr. Carson stated that this had been done before and can be done again if the need arises.

Mrs. Walker questioned why the staff on contracts was not given 3 year contracts. Ms. Enoch stated that different situations existed for different staff members. She also added that she
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hoped that many of the remaining budgets will be in by the Committee's next meeting which had been set for Thursday February 8th at 4:00PM.

The committee began to review budgets:-

Board of Health [70510.01] the budget had been put on HOLD last week because there was some question about the requested sum for mileage. Ms. Enoch brought in a list of expenses, but the each mileage was not listed separately. There were other charges that appeared appropriate; however Mrs. Walker stated that she would like to see the mileage log. Mr. Klein added that he would like to understand how the miles were spent, although other members stated that the Health Agent had to do inspections and attended many meetings. Mrs. Walker would like to see the mileage log prior to approving the budget.

Cemetery Expenses [20491.02] (\$2,700) now requesting {\$2,800} Ms. White was able to explain that these expenses were paid out of the "perpetual care" account. Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mr. Miller 2nd passed unanimously.

District Department of Veterans Service (6025) Mrs. Walker had done some research on this account and learned that this department had been set up by the state and served 54 veterans. The cost to each town is a proportioned by the size of the population the town. An example is that New Marlborough pays 7% of the total cost whereas Great Barrington pays 34%. Our town (\$6,558) now requesting {\$6670}. Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mrs. Walker 2nd passed unanimously.

Veteran's Benefits [90918.00] (\$10,000) now requesting {\$12,000} this budget pays for the cost of one veteran living in New Marlborough. Ms. Enoch stated that the amount assessed for last year proved to be too little and thus this explains the raise. The state does reimburse the town for 75% of the cost. Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mr. Klein 2nd passed unanimously.

Library Expenses [50610.01] (\$45,048) now requesting {\$45,915} While some of the members of the Committee explained that some of the raises such as book purchases etc. allowed the library to remain in good standing with the state and benefits from this, Mr. Klein questioned why the building and grounds budget was so high and did the Library purchase supplies bundled with the town purchases? He requested that one of the trustees come and answer his queries.

Mrs. Spaulding will follow up on this request.

Library Trustees [50610.03] (\$350) level funded {\$350} Mrs. Fracasso 1st, Mrs. Spaulding 2nd passed unanimously.

Umpachene Falls Park [50650.00] (\$4,300) now requesting {\$4,000} Mr. Klein asked who was in charge of this account, to which Mr. Carson stated Mr. Robert Twing. Mr. Carson also added Prudence Spaulding
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that that river bank needed remediation and he understood that Mt. Everett was doing the work. However the park will be soon facing making it ADA compliant. Mr. Carson 1st, Mrs. Spaulding 2nd passed unanimously.

Emergency Management Expenses [60291.00] still on HOLD waiting for detailed itemization of expenses.

Conservation Commission Expenses [10123.00] (\$2,000) level funded {\$2,000} there was some questions about the amount set aside for "Meeting/Conventions". It was noted that there was a new member on this board and Mrs. Spaulding stated that she had heard that there were quite a few meetings that new members needed to attend to be trained! Ms. White also added that this account had spent \$1,342.83 by January 31st. Mr. Klein 1st, Mrs. Fracasso 2nd passed unanimously.

Longevity Stipend [90925.00] (\$ 2,500) level funded. {\$2,500}. New Marlborough's Personnel Policy (Section IV-B) benefitted employees who have been employed for 10 years or more and receive a longevity stipend payable on June 30th. Mrs. Walker asked how this stipend had come about and how long it had been in effect and was told that it started last year after a committee made the recommendation to the Board of Selectmen who added the policy. Mrs. Walker stated that long-term employees benefit by staying at their jobs by receiving a pension and reduced healthcare rates after they retire and she didn't see the need for an additional stipend.

Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mr. Miller 2nd passed with Mrs. Walker voting against it.

Berkshire Group Regional Purchasing [70524.00] (\$600) level funded {\$600} this group gets the lowest bids for supplies for a group of towns. The Highway Department uses their services. Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mrs. Fracasso 2nd passed unanimously.

Police Office Rental [60210.67] (\$ 6000) Mrs. Enoch asked that this budget be put on HOLD.

Fire Protection [60220.00] (\$58,900) level funded {\$58,900} Mr. Klein asked who prepared the budget? Ms. White stated that Rob Scott had done the budget and would be able to answer the questions of how much does a "turnout gear" cost! Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mr. Klein 2nd passed unanimously.

Fire Department Clerical [60220.88] (\$1700) level funded {\$1700} Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mr. Carson 2nd passed unanimously.

New Marlborough Rescue Clerical [60291.78] (\$4992) level funded {\$4992} paid as a straight salary for the worker to handle the ambulance fees etc. Mr. Carson 1st, Mrs. Fracasso 2nd passed with Mr. Miller recusing and Mr. Klein opposing.

New Marlborough Rescue Expenses [60291.77] (\$ 26,100) level funded {\$26,100} this money will be paid by a transfer from COMSTAR. Mr. Carson 1st, Mr. Klein 2nd passed unanimously.

New Marlborough Rescue Stipend [60291.80] (\$ 20,250) level funded {\$20,250} again this will be paid by a transfer from COMSTAR.

Board of Health Stipends [70510.00] (\$1,250) level funded {\$1,250} Mrs. Walker 1st, Mr. Klein 2nd passed unanimously.

Board of Health Clerical [70510.02] (\$ 5,000) level funded {\$5,000} Mrs. Walker 1st, Mr. Miller 2nd passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 5:40PM with the next meeting scheduled for Thursday February 8th at 4:00PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Prudence Spaulding, Secretary.