

The Finance Committee convened a joint meeting by telephone with the Board of Selectman at 6:02PM on Monday, July 27, 2020. Present were Finance Committee members, Chair Steve Klein, John Pshenishny, Barbara Marchione, Vice Chair Michele Shalaby, Doug Newman, Robert Miller and Sandra Fusco-Walker. Also present were Selectmen Tara White, Richard Long and Mark Carson along with Town Administrator Mari Enoch, Administrative Secretary Sharon Fleck, Chief Graham Frank, Officer John Mullen, Tom Stalker, Peter Schuyten, Marsha Pshenishny and Michele Dawson Harvey.

Mr. Klein reiterated the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the differences between the Finance Committee's approved budget and the Board of Selectmen's recommendation however, first he said he wanted to make a statement and have it included in the record. He said it had come to his attention in a news article the Select Board was quoted saying the Finance Committee was "not doing it's job, that it was sticking it's head in the sand and that the Finance Committee had decided they were not going to work on the budget". Mr. Klein said it was troubling to hear this from the Select Board and he takes offense on behalf of his colleagues on the Finance Committee to those kinds of characterizations which do not lend themselves to the working environment we would all like to have. Mr. Klein stated he would entertain an apology, if one was offered, and is registering his comments regarding the statements made by the Board of Selectman. The Board of Selectman offered no response and without further discussion, the meeting continued.

Mr. Klein stated there were some variances between the amounts presented by the Board of Selectmen and Mr. Klein asked if these numbers were voted by the Board of Selectmen or still a recommendation. Ms. White stated the Board had not voted on the budget but had submitted their recommendations to the Finance Committee. Mr. Klein clarified that the Finance Committee had approved their budget at the last meeting and Mr. Klein offered that if there were corrections to be made, they can be reconsidered, but the Committee had presented a voted budget. Mr. Long stated the Board will vote on their numbers when they approve their budget.

#### **TOWN COUNSEL**

Beginning with the budget for Town Counsel, the Selectman recommended \$15,000.00 as it represents two retainers, one in the amount of \$12,000.00 for the present Town Counsel, Attorney Pollard, who had requested an increase of \$2000.00 over last year's fee of \$10,000.00 and a second retainer in the amount of \$3000.00 for a labor attorney recommended by Mr. Pollard to negotiate with the highway department employees who are seeking to form a union. Selectman Long responded that the town counsel was requesting an increase because he has not had one in several years and that former Selectman Yohalem had advised the retainer fee for labor counsel was attractive and a no brainer. Mr. Klein questioned whether there was a proposal from Mr. Pollard to support an increase of \$2000.00 as lawyers keep meticulous records of the time they spend on issues. Mr. Klein offered that the Finance Committee had agreed to a \$1000.00 increase and documentation to support more would be needed in his opinion and he requested any action from the Finance Committee.

Ms. Marchione motioned to increase Town Counsel fee from the originally approved amount of \$14,000.00 to \$15,000.00 and John Pshenishny seconded it.

#### **Motion passed 6-1.**

Steve Klein - Yes

Barbara Marchione -Yes

Robert Miller - Yes

Doug Newman - Yes

John Pshenishny - Yes

Michele Shalaby - Yes

Sandra Walker - No

### **TOWN RECORDS PRESERVATION**

The next item, Town Records Preservation, was a difference of \$2500.00, the amount recommended by the Board of Selectman and zero dollars approved by the Finance Committee. Ms. Walker had submitted to the Finance Committee email correspondence (attached) with the Town Clerk requesting an inventory or invoices showing which town records have been preserved to date and a list of records still needed to be preserved. Ms. Walker stated she personally could not support spending \$4000.00 to \$5000.00 every year preserving records until there was an inventory and a plan with some idea what the Town was paying for but this was a vote for the committee.

Ms. Marchione made a motion to increase the Finance Committee's recommendation from zero dollars to \$2500.00, the amount recommended by the Board of Selectmen. Nobody seconded the motion.

**The motion failed.**

Mr. Klein suggested we hold Roads and Bridges to later in the meeting and with no objection moved onto the Police budget. Ms. White then asked if an exception could be made to move onto the Police Salaries as Michele Dawson and Chief Frank were waiting to speak. Mr. Klein invited Chief Frank to speak.

Officer Frank stated he tries to do make budget for exactly what he needs and does not go over what he needs. He stated the Board of Selectman had cut his request for clerical work to half of what he originally asked recommending 2.5 hours per week instead of the 5 hours he had requested. Chief Frank also stated that our other full time officer, John Mullen, paid to attend the police academy himself and had taken a salary cut accepting part time pay rates for salary while he attended the academy. Officer Frank stated that was at the same time when the Human Resources Study was being done to determine comparable pay scales but he didn't realize it would put a cap on what people will make. He continued that the low end for a full time officer is when they are in the academy. The Chief stated he was pleased with the increase in salary recommended in the study for part time officers. He also stated there has been an opening for a part time officer since last July and he hadn't received any applications until January and then Covid-19 hit. He said that the department is incredibly understaffed. Mr. Klein asked the Chief what he was proposing and the Chief answered he would like his original proposed budget as that would be beneficial to the Town.

Mr. Klein stated that there was a Human Resource study based on 2020 data which didn't come to the same conclusion that Chief Frank was proposing. Mr. Klein invited the Board of Selectmen to respond.

Selectman Long joined the discussion stating the Town has gone through a process to provide a formal structure and the level of responsibility of those positions and comparisons were made to other towns which resulted in this formal structure. The initial step was to make sure everyone in town was at least within their pay range after the Board approved a 1.6% increase. Those changes added up to about a \$30,000.00 increase to bring employees, particularly those working in the Town Hall office, up to the recommended amounts. Mr. Long said the Board is trying to treat all employees in the same fashion and to make an exception for one employee is difficult to do unless there is an unusual justification. He stated his own view is there is still a long way to go to get some employees into the mid range and over time, positions will adjust for inflation and meet those pay ranges. Mr. Long stated that right now most of the Town's employees fall in the bottom 5% of the pay range. He asked where should they be? He

stated we need input from the Finance Committee and the voters where our employees should fit in the recommended pay range. He stated most likely the 25% percentile but not the 50% as we are a smaller town than others, but do still need to compete. Mr. Long ended his thoughts by stating it's difficult to justify a jump for just one person rather than the general employee population.

Mr. Newman then said to the Chief that he may or may not have heard this, but since Covid-19, we discussed we need to tighten our belts as we don't know what the costs will be to the town and the schools nor do we know what state aid will be available on the revenue side. Mr. Newman continued that the committee had agreed to not add any new positions to departments this year. He stated he assumed the clerical position the Chief had requested was a new position and asked how much of his proposed \$179,752.00 salary budget was the cost for that clerical position.

Mr. Newman then asked the Chief if the Town is reimbursed for detail work the officers perform. Chief Graham responded that the Town receives a 10% administration fee for details from companies like National Grid, Verizon and Charter, except for Mass DOT or town details. Mr. Klein added that the Town pays the Medicare contribution on the police detail work and there is a cost to the Town as it's the Town's obligation to pay the Medicare match.

Ms. Enoch stated the Police Dept. Salary's original budget included a clerical position of 5 hours per week at the rate of \$17.50 per hour, part time officers at \$18.36 per hour and a full time police officer at \$26.34 per hour which is an increase over the present full time officer salary of \$22.00 per hour. Chief Frank said good officers have left our Town to get better pay in other towns.

Mr. Newman asked again was the clerical position new and the annual cost. Ms. Enoch responded it is a newly formed position for 5 hours a week at the rate of \$17.50 an hour for a total of \$4500.00 and change per year.

Ms. Marchione commented that if Officer Mullen paid his own money to go academy and was told he would be paid on a certain scale, we should honor that. Mr. Klein asked if that was true and asked the Board of Selectman as two of them were on the Board at the time. Mr. Long said he cannot find anything in the minutes to corroborate that.

Mr. Newman made a motion to make Police Dept. Salaries in the amount of \$175,000.00. Nobody seconded.

**Motion failed.**

Ms. Marchione made a motion to increase Police Salaries to mirror the Selectmen's recommendation of \$171,159.00 with the caveat that Chief Graham could postpone the hiring of a clerical position and talk with the Board of Selectmen about using funds to raise the full time officer's salary instead and Mr. Newman seconded it.

Mr. Klein stated that by undoing the Board of Selectmen's recommendation on salaries pursuant to the HR study, this motion would open a can of worms because other employees in Town will ask why the study is applying to them and not to the officer.

Ms. Enoch interjected that she had recently reviewed the minutes regarding the officer attending the academy and they did reference the officer would be paid a lower rate while he attended the academy

and that the rate would be bumped up when he finished academy and returned to his full time position. She confirmed that rate increase did happen and stated the Chief was discussing a different raise.

Ms. Shalaby stated she was on the Board at the time this was discussed. She said it was the intention of the Board at that time to develop another full time officer in Town though as a Board they budget per year, not for the future. She stated it was not promised but it was the intention and we also asked him to take a step towards that, which he did. She added she would like to see that promise honored in some way. She then reminded everyone we are approving higher amounts for smaller budgets and we are losing sight of the bigger picture and limits we want to set.

Last, Mr. Newman stated Officer Mullen's case is unlike other employees'. He is a full senior officer now and Mr. Newman considers him in a different category than other employees

Mr. Klein called for a vote on Ms. Marchione's motion.

**Motion passed 5-2.**

Steve Klein - No

Barbara Marchione - Yes

Robert Miller - Yes

Doug Newman - Yes

John Pshenishny - Yes

Michele Shalaby - Yes

Sandra Walker – No

**POLICE DEPT. EXPENSES**

Mr. Klein asked if there was a motion to revisit the Police Dept. Expenses to address the Selectmen's recommendation of \$30,000.00 and the Finance Committee's approved amount of \$29,000.00. Nobody made a motion so no action was taken.

Mr. Klein then invited Ms. Dawson to speak. Ms. Dawson had submitted a letter to the Board of Selectman and the Finance Committee. Ms. Dawson is a first responder in the New Marlborough and shared experiences where she needed help from the police. She supports increases to the police department for salaries and more officers. Recently her daughter's car was stolen from their driveway and she stated though she wouldn't defend her daughter leaving the key fob in her car that's not an invitation for someone to steal the car. She stated the wait time for the police in our town is too long. The morning the car was stolen she called the police at 6:39AM and waited an hour and a half for the State Trooper. She stated criminals come here to this small town, small budget and small department. Ms. Dawson stated she knows we can't have 24 hour policing because we can't afford it, but we have to start cutting in other areas of the budget and give officers enough time and benefits to stay.

Mr. Klein thanked Ms. Dawson for her comments and offered his condolences on behalf of himself and the Committee for the misfortune Ms. Dawson and her family experienced.

**POLICE DEPT. EXPENSES**

Mr. Newman then asked to go back and review the police department expenses and asked the Select Board how they came to the amount of \$30,000.00 versus the Finance Committee's \$29,000.00. Mr. Klein stated he asked for a motion earlier and received none. Mr. Newman stated he didn't want to interrupt Ms. Dawson. Ms. White responded to Mr. Newman stating that Chief Frank asked for \$7500.00 and the Selectmen cut his request in half and are recommending that. Mr. Klein stated that

originally we did have \$30,000.00 but in trying to cut the budget had eliminated another \$1000.00. Ms. Marchione made a motion to increase the Police Dept. Expenses to \$30,000.00 and Mr. Newman seconded it.

**Motion passed 5-2.**

Steve Klein - No

Barbara Marchione - Yes

Robert Miller - Yes

Doug Newman - Yes

John Pshenishny - Yes

Michele Shalaby - Yes

Sandra Walker – No

**PROPANE & DIESEL FUEL**

Mr. Klein offered these budgets came in significantly under budget this year because fuel has dropped precipitously. He stated the approved amounts are still a conservative budget and \$9,500.00 for Propane and \$36,400.00 for Diesel Fuel would still provide enough funds for the fuel needs for the department. Mr. Klein asked the Board of Selectmen if they might reconsider their recommendations. Mr. Long said he would like to propose two increases to the budget, one for the Animal Inspector Salary, whose work load has increased substantially and she hadn't been increased to her requested \$2000.00. Mr. Klein interrupted Mr. Long and said he wasn't horse trading and these proposals weren't linked. Mr. Long stated it was the Board's meeting, too and the Selectman needed to be aware of these two expenses before making budget decisions. Mr. Long continued that the second expense is due to the HR study reclassification for exempt and non-exempt employees. With employees some weeks working 17 hours one week and 19 the following, their hours might level off, but he feels there should be a new line item for a contingency of \$1000.00 to cover an employee who might exceed hours and must be paid in wages, not compensatory time as they used to be. He said there is a possibility there might be some hours the Town needs to pay employees for but if it is not used, it will go back into the general fund. Ms. White interrupted saying we don't have to vote tonight, but can do it Wednesday.

Mr. Long then agreed with the Finance Committee's approved amount for the Propane in the amount of \$9,500.00 and Diesel Fuel in the amount \$49,500.00. The Board of Selectman agreed with the amounts approved by the Finance Committee and no further action was taken.

**LIBRARY SALARIES**

Ms. Marchione then made a motion to approve the amount of \$127.00 in Library Salaries to meet the Board of Selectmen's recommendation and Mr. Miller seconded.

**Motion passed unanimously.**

Steve Klein- Yes

Barbara Marchione - Yes

Robert Miller - Yes

Doug Newman -Yes

John Pshenishny - Yes

Michele Shalaby - Yes

Sandra Walker - Yes

**FIRE PROTECTION**

Mr. Klein asked if there was a motion to reconsider and Mr. Newman asked the Selectmen how they arrived at their number. Ms. White stated she cut \$2500.00 because she felt the department already had replacement hoses planned in their budget and they had also requested \$7,000.00 as a capital purchase from free cash. Ms. White was asked where she saw the amount of \$2500.00 for hose replacement in the budget and responded the department had requested a \$5000.00 increase over last year so the Board cut the amount in half and was recommending \$2500.00. Mr. Klein asked if the Board was willing to reconsider and recommend \$64,000.00, a \$2000.00 increase over FY2020 instead of \$2500.0 to which the Board of Selectmen and no further action was taken.

#### **NM RESCUE CLERICAL**

Rescue Clerical amount of \$6656.00 approved by the Finance Committee included the extra hours due to increased work load required this year by keeping specific records for a Medicare study the Town was chosen to participate in. The amount approved differed \$416.00 from the budget request recommended by the Board which included an additional raise of \$1.00 per hour. Mr. Klein entertained a motion from the committee to raise the amount approved by the Finance Committee to meet the Board's recommendation. Nobody made a motion so no further action was taken.

#### **TREE WORK**

Board of Selectmen recommended \$25,000.00 for tree work and the Finance Committee approved \$20,000.00. Mr. Klein stated the Committee understands this is a need but would rather stick to the amount spent last year and we are trying to stay within a budget.

Selectman Carson stated he felt strongly that with all the work on fiber cables being done, the Town should budget \$25,000.00 to take care of the trees across the street from the poles because we need to protect it as much as we can.

Mr. Klein stated Mr. Carson had a good point and as a Cable Advisory committee member, he could comment first that the fiber wire will be the bottom wire on the poles and second, if any wires are hit by trees, it would be the National Grid's or Verizon's wires. He added that fiber cable is stronger than the power or telephone line and can withstand quite a bit more stress than those lines will and third, if fiber goes out, Charter has the responsibility to repair, not the town. He continued that everything on the pole side of the road has been trimmed up for make ready and Mr. Klein did not see a compelling case for an increase over \$20,000.00 this year that the Finance Committee approved. Mr. Carson said he was out of power a lot this year and one time 24 hours and it was trees on the opposite side of the road. Mr. Long stated that tree work is very important, but he understands the position the Finance Committee is taking and he'd be willing to compromise. Ms. White asked Mr. Carson, stating he has been the most adamant about this issue and she will take her lead from him, if there was anything he would be willing to change and he responded no. Mr. Klein entertained a motion from the Finance Committee to reconsider the approved number. Nobody offered a motion and no action was taken. The Board of Selectman and the Finance Committee agreed to disagree with the Board recommending \$25,000.00 for Tree Work and the Finance Committee's approved amount of \$20,000.00.

#### **BOARD OF HEALTH CLERICAL**

Ms. White stated they took the Board of Health request for 100 more hours at a cost of \$3000.00 and gave them half of what they requested as the Inspector doesn't have a backup if he is out for some reason or on vacation. Ms. White continued they felt it was necessary to give him something to cover backup and pay for this new person who has expertise in parts of the health code Mr. McFarland doesn't have such as inspecting restaurants. Mr. Klein responded that inspections can usually be scheduled so

they are not happening during vacations and that he believes there are four restaurants in town. Mr. Klein asked for a motion from the Finance Committee to reconsider changing the Board of Health Clerical approved amount of \$5,000.00 to the Board's recommended amount of \$6500.00. There was no motion made and no further action was taken.

### **TRANSFER STATION SALARIES**

The Board of Selectman recommended \$28,776.00 for Transfer Station Salaries, \$807.00 more than the amount approved by the Finance Committee. Ms. Enoch stated the difference was for one additional hour per week contingency fund so the transfer employees could complete some jobs before the station opened and/or after it was closed. She also stated if the hours weren't used, the funds would go back into the general fund. Mr. Klein asked if there was a motion to adjust the Finance Committee's approved amount and hearing none, no further action was taken.

### **MEDICARE**

Ms. Enoch explained that the Medicare match increased 16% from the estimated \$15,000.00 to \$16,700.00 as a result of detail hours worked by our officers. Mr. Klein pointed out that while other third parties pay for police details, the Town pays the Medicare match and he encourages the Selectmen to review the number of hours being worked by our officers on detail work.

Ms. Walker asked Ms. Enoch to explain detail work done by our officers as the Medicare match jumped so much. Ms. Enoch responded that typically you add up all your salaries and calculate the Medicare match so you know in advance what the match is because you know the salaries being paid. She said Winter Roads salaries may not always be exact depending on the weather and the other area that is unknown is when our officers do work details.

Ms. Enoch explained to the committee that when police work details such as directing traffic for construction, tree removal or pole work are done, the policemen are paid by the contractor which could be Verizon or Charter Communications who was doing make ready work in New Marlborough installing broadband. These companies pay the wages for these details to the town in which the work took place and that town is also paid a 10% administration fee to cover its costs to manage the invoicing, bookkeeping and payments to the officers. The Medicare match for officers who are employed in that town are also paid from the 10% administration fee. However when our officers do detail work in other towns, just the wages are paid to New Marlborough which we in turn pay to the officers. This wage payment does not include the Medicare match and therefore the match must be paid by the Town in which the officer is employed. The town ends up paying the cost out of their own budget and this was an unexpected expense to the Town this year. She continued that last year New Marlborough police earned an extra \$135,000.00 in detail wages in addition to their salaries and the Medicare match could not have been predicted. Mr. Klein asked Ms. Enoch if she knew how much of the \$135,000.00 in wages to our officers was derived from detail work outside of New Marlborough so the committee could know exactly what the expense is for the the Town to cover these officers when they work out of Town. Ms. Enoch did not have that figure available. Ms. Walker asked if this detail work is done while they are on duty for New Marlborough and Ms. Enoch answered they are on their own time when they do detail work, for instance if an officer works for New Marlborough on the 4PM to midnight shift, they might work during the days doing detail work. Mr. Klein asked for a motion to increase our Medicare budget.

Mr. Newman made a motion to increase the Medicare budget to \$17,572.00 and Ms. Marchione seconded it.

**Motion passed unanimously.**

Steve Klein -Yes  
Barbara Marchione - Yes  
Robert Miller - Yes  
Doug Newman - Yes  
John Pshenishny -Yes  
Michele Shalaby - Yes  
Sandra Walker Yes

### **ROADS & BRIDGES AND STABILIZATION**

Discussion turned to two accounts where the Board and the Finance Committee differ considerably. The original request for Roads and Bridges was \$253,000.00 an increase of \$70,000.00 over FY2020. The Board of Selectmen recommended \$233,000.00 while the Finance Committee approved \$203,000.00.

The Selectmen recommended the Stabilization Fund be budgeted for \$75,000.00 while the Finance Committee approved \$112,500.00.

Ms. Shalaby stated the difference in these two budgets is not about the relationship between Stabilization Fund and Roads and Bridges but the Stabilization Fund and the Town's operating budget. She said we operate within 2.5% and she appealed to everyone to pay attention to the proportions of how we spend those dollars. She continued that we've agreed to control tax growth by agreeing to control the amount of spending on our operating budget verses the school budget which is approximately 50% of the Town's budget. We have had slow growth of our school assessment over the last couple of years and not let our operating budget grow and bleed into the school budget side avoiding getting into trouble the years the school budget does grow. Ms. Shalaby said she wasn't sure we are really keeping an eye on that now and that excess capacity needs to be maintained from year to year. Last year, because the half of excess capacity dedicated to school budget was not expended, we decided to use that excess capacity, approximately \$85,000.00, for one time expenses. We need to remember this year we need to maintain our excess capacity for this year plus the \$85,000.00 of school capacity we used last year. I'm not sure we are doing that, but certainly Roads & Bridges could make a difference.

Ms. Shalaby stated its important how much are we spending on operating expenses verses capital this year. She said the Capital Committee 7 or 8 years recommended a policy of appropriating a set amount for capital. If we say 10% of the Town's annual budget should go towards Stabilization for capital which this year totals about \$550,000.00 and take the funds that count towards that i.e., we average about \$150,000.00 in operating efficiencies each year that go back into free cash, this year's \$113,000.00 no longer needed for debt and add the school capital payment of about \$60,000.00, we still are left with about a \$227,000.00 gap from that 10%. Ms. Shalaby reminded everyone our goal is to try to control tax growth.

Ms. Shalaby said if do not save for capital expenditures, we will have to use debt which is taxed outside of 2.5% and increases people's tax bills. She argued she was not saying to never using some debt but we should also plan and use funds we've saved to control our tax rate.

She said historically we put \$150,000.00 into the Stabilization Fund and are taking a reduction this year by approving \$112,500.00. Ms. Shalaby said to meet our financial goals we should be putting in over \$200,000.00 to the Stabilization Fund and anything less than \$112,500.00 is doing a disservice to the Town.



Mr. Long stated he understood Ms. Shalaby's argument but there is a different perspective. Stabilization Fund as well as Operating Expenses both impact the tax rate. He stated one way to look at capital spending is that it is just a future expense and we are prefunding a project whose value comes when it's actually depreciated over time. Mr. Long stated he had a difficult time looking at money in the Stabilization Fund as anything other than capital that is an operating expense on a different timeline.

Mr. Long said that if you compare the total of the increase and operating costs less the transfers and less the debt, the total increase on the Board of Selectmen's side is about 2% compared to the previous fiscal year. Finance Committee's side is about 1.6% or 2% with the changes tonight. He continued the Board is calculating excess capacity of \$100,000.00 and they believe we have a need to address the dirt roads in our Town. The Board dramatically cut the budget request for roads but not as much as the Finance Committee did. Mr. Long concluded stating the Selectmen feel the Stabilization Fund will wait a year.

Ms. Shalaby continued that as a former Board member, 6 of the last 8 years there were arguments as to why we should fund Stabilization at lower amounts and she didn't think this year is an exception. Our town has so little excess capacity that if we take on debt to finance capital it forces us outside the 2.5% and that's when the tax rate jumps on residents. I do think we need to use debt and we need to have other options for funding.

Mr. Long suggested a more analytical look at expected capital stating amounts we have to invest in capital will be what they are whether we use saved Stabilization Funds or debt. He continued that debt may be a better option with this low interest rate environment which might even be negative and that the debt stream matches the capital investment. Mr. Long stated a mix of Stabilization Funds and debt works best for us, but he did not think the Board is wrong to recommend a modest cut in Stabilization Funding this year.

Mr. Klein asked the Board with respect to the Roads and Bridges budget if the Selectmen were sticking with their number of \$233,000.00. Mr. Newman then asked if the account was funded at the Board's recommendation of \$233,000.00 was the Board sure the Highway Department has the capacity, labor and materials to do all the work in the year with such a high budget.

Mr. Klein said that no one on the Finance Committee was suggesting that the Highway Department should eliminate x, y or z with the lower approved number. He said it is up to the Highway Department what to do with the money. He continued that though the Board of Selectmen stated this was about dirt roads, the Highway Department decides what they spend their budget on it. Mr. Klein said if this is truly a deferred maintenance issue about dirt roads, then what we ought to be doing is asking for a deferred maintenance plan as that is a capital investment. Mr. Newman stated the Town had paid for an assessment study for the Highway Department on all the roads in town but nobody on the Committee had any information how it was being used by the Department.

The Selectmen stated they were sticking with their recommendation of \$233,000.00 for Roads and Bridges.

Mr. Klein asked if there was a motion from the Finance Committee to revisit and increase the Roads and Bridges budget. Mr. Newman made a motion to increase the Finance Committee approved amount

\$15,000.00 from \$203,000.00 to \$218,000.00. There was no second and no further action was taken.  
**The motion failed.**

Mr. Klein then asked for any motion to revisit the Stabilization Fund and decrease the amount to raise and appropriate. Mr. Newman made a motion to reduce the Stabilization Fund amount by \$15,000.00. There was no second.  
**The motion failed.**

Ms. Marchione stated Ms. Shalaby and Mr. Long sounded great and she is fine with \$203,000.00 for Roads and Bridges but does think the Stabilization Fund should be dropped. She made a motion to lower the amount from \$112,500.00 to \$75,000.00. There was no second.  
**The motion failed.**

Mr. Newman then made a motion to lower Stabilization Fund from \$112,500.00 to \$100,000.00 with a second by Ms. Marchione.

**Motion failed 4-3.**

Steve Klein - Nay  
Barbara Marchione - Yes  
Robert Miller - Nay  
Doug Newman - Yes  
John Pshenishny - Yes  
Michele Shalaby - Nay  
Sandra Walker - Nay

#### **CAPITAL ITEMS**

Mr. Klein then moved onto the capital item requests. He discussed the funds requested for Umpachene Park proposal in the amount of \$7,500.00 to fully remediate the issue at the park with the funds coming out of free cash. The Finance Committee had not approved this amount, however, Mr. Long circulated materials from the engineers regarding the work since the vote and the Committee now had information. Ms. Walker stated she had not received any email with documentation about the remediation and was assured she had been included on the email.

Mr. Klein asked Mr. Long if he was sure that \$7,500.00 amount would completely remediate the issue at the park. Mr. Long asked Ms. Enoch to clarify that the amount might be a couple of thousand more depending on when the final repair amount is known to which Ms. Enoch said she thought that was correct. Mr. Newman asked if any money the Commission carried forward was going back into free cash. He was told it was.

Mr. Newman made a motion to approve \$7,500.00 from free cash seconded by Ms. Marchione.

**Motion passed 5-1-1 abstained.**

Steve Klein Yes  
Barbara Marchione - Yes  
Robert Miller - Nay  
Doug Newman - Yes  
John Pshenishny - Yes  
Michele Shalaby - Yes  
Sandra Walker - Abstain

Mr. Klein then reviewed the areas the Select Board and the Finance Committee do not agree upon include the following and this difference in recommendations will be noted on the Warrant:

Town Records  
Roads & Bridges  
Rescue Clerical  
Tree Work  
Board of Health Clerical

#### **ANIMAL INSPECTOR COMPENSATION**

Mr. Klein then made a motion to approve increasing the Animal Control Inspector's yearly compensation to the amount of \$2000.00 and offered that lowering the animal control officer's compensation by \$500.00. Before there was a second, Ms. Enoch explained the two compensations were not connected and the animal control officer had already been hired at that amount. Mr. Klein pulled his motion and Ms. Marchione motioned to increase the Animal Inspector Salary to \$2000.00 seconded by Mr. Miller.

#### **Motion passes 7-0.**

Steve Klein Yes  
Barbara Marchione - Yes  
Robert Miller - Yes  
Doug Newman - Yes  
John Pshenishny - Yes  
Michele Shalaby - Yes  
Sandra Walker – Yes

Ms. Marchione made a motion to adjourn and Mr. Newman seconded.

#### **Motion to adjourn at 8:40pm passed unanimously.**

Motion to adjourn Board of Selectman made by Ms. White and seconded by Mr. Long.

#### **Motion to adjourn at 8:40pm passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Fusco-Walker

From: SANDRA WALKER <sfwalker1@verizon.net>  
Subject: Fwd: Information Town Records Preservation  
Date: July 27, 2020 at 5:19:08 PM EDT  
To: Barbara Marchione <bemarch56@gmail.com>, Robert Miller <kejrmiller@msn.com>, Newman Doug <dougnewman44@gmail.com>, John Pshenishny <jpshenishny21@gmail.com>, Michele Shalaby <micheleshalaby@gmail.com>  
Cc: Klein Steven <sklein@firstinfra.com>

Good evening:

In regards to the town records preservation budget that is up for discussion tonight, I asked the Town Clerk for some information. Our correspondence is attached below. The correspondence begins at the bottom of the email and I have underlined the questions to help clarify the questions and answers.

Please do not respond to this email as it is only to provide you with information for tonight's discussion at the meeting. As required, I ask that this email correspondence be included with the minutes from tonight's meeting.

Sandra

Sandra Fusco-Walker  
Post Office Box 91  
Mill River, MA 01244  
413-644-0088

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Sandra Walker <[sfwalker1@verizon.net](mailto:sfwalker1@verizon.net)>  
**Subject:** Re: Information Town Records Preservation  
**Date:** July 27, 2020 at 11:16:26 AM EDT  
**To:** Chretien Kathy <[kchretien@newmarlboroughma.gov](mailto:kchretien@newmarlboroughma.gov)>  
**Cc:** White Tara <[tarabw@verizon.net](mailto:tarabw@verizon.net)>, Mari Enoch <[nmbos@newmarlboroughma.gov](mailto:nmbos@newmarlboroughma.gov)>, Klein Steven <[sklein@firstinfra.com](mailto:sklein@firstinfra.com)>

Dear Kathy:

Good morning! Hope you are surviving this heat wave. Thanks for getting back to me. I appreciate your responses.

I need to spend a little more time studying this but wanted to ask if you have an inventory of the town records. This would be helpful information as it would show what records are

available by year and in what format, including those that have been preserved and digitalized.

Would also be glad to help try and get any records from old media that you are unable to access updated so you have them on a hard drive you can use today and in the future.

Thanks again...stay well! I will get back to you if I have more questions.

Sandra Fusco-Walker  
P.O. Box 91  
Mill River, MA 01244  
413-644-0088  
201-400-8163

On Jul 23, 2020, at 1:40 PM, Kathy Chretien <[kchretien@newmarlboroughma.gov](mailto:kchretien@newmarlboroughma.gov)> wrote:  
Town Records Preservation:

Which NM records have been bound in books and put on disc to date? Mostly records that the Clerk Office has from the beginning of the Town, one of the BOS minutes (1909-1940).

Is every record bound (i.e. dog licenses, minutes, etc.)? No not every record. No dog licenses. We do Vitals, town meetings, warrants, minutes, etc

How many records were completed each year and what was the cost for this work each year? Can only use what is budget and when its only 4,000 or 5,000 might only be able to get 1 or 2 books done. It depends on what conditions the records are in and the size of the records.

How many years or months are left that must be completed? There are Town Tax Collector and Assessors records that aren't even been started on yet. Record go back many years (possible to the bring of the Town being established)

Is the Town now saving records in the present time to disk/memory stick now that we have that capacity? If so, what year did that start? Don't know what other departments are doing about records, I have some on memory sticks/disks. ( there are disks from the previous clerk but cant access the files.

Is the media we are saving the files on updated regularly? (floppy disk to hard disk to memory stick to the new hard drives that hold many gigabytes?) We have the town sever.

Is it required by the State that records be kept in bound books or would binders meet state

requirements as we also have electronic copies? All department/boards must follow the Commonwealth retention schedule. Most city/towns in MA preserve there records.

WE WERE VERY LUCKLY TO BE A TOWN THAT HAS THE RECORDS, THERE ARE SOME TOWNS WHO HAVE LOST THEIR RECORDS DUE TO FIRE, ETC. ALSO SOME YEARS AGO THE PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATOR AGREED RECORDS NEEDED TO BE DONE SO WE WOULDN'T LOSS THEM (SOME RECORS ARE WRITTEN IS BLUE INK AND FADES) AND PUT A ARTICLE ON FOR \$25,000 AND WE GOT ALOT OF OLDER CLERK RECORDS DONE WITH THAT MONEY. ALSO NOTE THAT THE PREVIOUS TOWN CLERK ONLY WAS BUDGETED FOR \$1,000 OR 2,000 AND YOU CAN'T GET MUCH DONE WITH THAT AS PRICES INCREASE.

Hopefully this answers your questions.

Katherine M. Chretien, CMMC/CMC  
New Marlborough Town Clerk  
807 Mill River Southfield Rd  
Mill River, MA 01244-0099  
Phone: 413-229-8278  
Fax: 413-229-7041  
Monday-Friday 7:30AM-3:30PM

**From:** Sandra Walker <[sfwalker1@verizon.net](mailto:sfwalker1@verizon.net)>  
**Subject:** Re: Information Town Records Preservation  
**Date:** July 21, 2020 at 10:28AM EDT  
**To:** Chretien Kathy <[kchretien@newmarlboroughma.gov](mailto:kchretien@newmarlboroughma.gov)>  
**Cc:** White Tara <[tarabw@verizon.net](mailto:tarabw@verizon.net)>, Mari Enoch <[nmbos@newmarlboroughma.gov](mailto:nmbos@newmarlboroughma.gov)>, Klein Steven <[sklein@firstinfra.com](mailto:sklein@firstinfra.com)>

Good morning:

The Finance Committee will be reviewing the Selectmen's recommendations regarding items that differ from the Finance Committee's approved budget of last week including Town Records Preservation.

I spoke with the Chair and am requesting information that will aid us in reviewing this category. I am assuming the invoices for the company doing the work can be pulled from past years records and each invoice should state what was done along with the cost and/or there is an ongoing list showing work completed to date with costs and work yet to be done.

I would appreciate it if you could help us by emailing answers to the following questions and sending copies of invoices, list, or other documentation that I can share with the committee.

Thanks in advance for your help.

Sandra

Town Records Preservation:

Which NM records have been bound in books and put on disc to date?

Is every record bound (i.e. dog licenses, minutes, etc.)?

How many records were completed each year and what was the cost for this work each year?

How many years or months are left that must be completed?

Is the Town now saving records in the present time to disk/memory stick now that we have that capacity? If so, what year did that start?

Is the media we are saving the files on updated regularly? (floppy disk to hard disk to memory stick to the new hard drives that hold many gigabytes?)

Is it required by the State that records be kept in bound books or would binders meet state requirements as we also have electronic copies?

Thanks again....appreciate your help.

Sandra Fusco-Walker  
Post Office Box 91  
Mill River, MA 01244  
413-644-0088