

HOLLISTON FINANCE COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
April 8, 2014

The Committee convened in Room 105 at the Town Hall at 6:35 PM. Present from the Committee were Chairman Ken Szajda, Vice Chairperson Michelle Zeamer, Dan Alfred, Bill Dowd, Beth Liberty and Brendan Shea. Charlie Kaslow was absent.

1. Budget Deliberations – Prior to the meeting, Ken Szajda, Michelle Zeamer, Dan Alfred, Bill Dowd and Beth Liberty had submitted FY15 budget worksheets versions showing how each of those members would deal with the many outstanding issues in reaching a balanced budget. Ken Szajda led a discussion around the difference to search for consensus.

The first issue explored was the Schools budget. After allowing each member to summarize their position, there was no clear consensus.

Ken then moved to a group of other open issues. On the matter of including the Selectmen's proposed compensation adjustments, there was a consensus to do that with Bill Dowd opposed. On the matter of allocating a portion of the OPEB appropriation to Water and Ambulance, all were in favor of doing so. On the matter of paying the Snow and Ice deficit out of the Reserve Fund, there was a consensus to do so with Bill Dowd opposed. On the matter of increasing the assumption on property tax revenue from New Growth, there was not a consensus to do so with Beth Liberty in favor. On the matter of providing a higher than guideline budget for the Police Dept., there was consensus to do so with Bill Dowd opposed.

Ken then moved to another group of open issues. On the matter of reducing the allocation to Capital to \$625,000, there was consensus to do so with Bill Dowd opposed. On the matter of including the Keefe roof cost in the Keefe operating budget, there was consensus to do so. On the matter of using the Conservation Commission revolving fund to supplement the omnibus budget, there was consensus to do so by increasing the assumption on Local Receipts on the revenue side by \$10,230, with Bill Dowd opposed. On the matter of approving an additional part time employee at the Council on Aging, there was a consensus to do so with Bill Dowd opposed. On the matter of the trash fee, there was consensus to both lower the fee and remove the article from the Warrant. Bill Dowd was opposed to lowering the fee.

Ken then moved on to another group of issues. On the matter of adjusting the Overlay Reserve, there was no consensus to do so with Beth Liberty in favor. On the matter of reducing the maintenance budgets in Fire, Highway, Police and Technology due to recent major equipment upgrades, there was no consensus to do so with Beth Liberty in favor. On the matter of reducing the Reserve Fund appropriation to \$200,000, there was no consensus to do so with Beth Liberty in favor. On the matter of sweeping the revolving accounts to capture excess accumulations, there was consensus to do so with the actual timing to be decided later. It was also noted that the sweep would exclude the Park Commission revolving account because it was authorized by a separate section of State law yet that account was unusually overfunded and in need of later FinCom attention. On the matter of allocating the \$64k in additional Chapter 70 state aid to the Schools in addition to the voted budget, after an explanation from Ken Szajda about the Cherry Sheet and history, there was no consensus to do so. On

the matter of Capital again, a question was raised around the consensus of the Committee to do both a Capital allocation of \$625,000 AND a Police budget of their "Realistic" version minus \$45,000 with the understanding that the budget would be viewed as fixed and not revisitable. There was consensus to do so. On the matter of withholding the projected salary and wage increases associated with yet to be negotiated union contracts, there was no consensus to do so with Bill Dowd in favor.

Finally, revisiting the Schools once again, there was a consensus to vote a guideline Schools budget.

With these consensus items, the Committee moved to votes on recommended budgets.

Budget	Amount	Moved	Seconded	Vote
Selectmen	\$ 425,910	Zeamer	Alfred	5 Yes, 1 No(Dowd) 0 Abs.
Finance Comm	\$ 1,525	Zeamer	Alfred	6 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abs.
Town Accountant	\$ 85,074	Zeamer	Alfred	5 Yes, 1 No(Dowd) 0 Abs.
Board of Assessors	\$ 188,685	Zeamer	Alfred	5 Yes, 1 No(Dowd) 0 Abs.
Treasurer/Collector	\$ 309,475	Zeamer	Alfred	5 Yes, 1 No(Dowd) 0 Abs.
Reserve Fund	\$ 212,675	Zeamer	Alfred	6 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abs.
Technology	\$ 98,171	Zeamer	Alfred	5 Yes, 1 No(Dowd) 0 Abs.
Town Clerk	\$ 140,514	Zeamer	Alfred	5 Yes, 1 No(Dowd) 0 Abs.
Elections	\$ 23,491	Zeamer	Alfred	6 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abs.
Conservation Comm	\$ 48,158	Zeamer	Alfred	5 Yes, 1 No(Dowd) 0 Abs.
Planning Board	\$ 75,825	Zeamer	Alfred	5 Yes, 1 No(Dowd) 0 Abs.
Zoning Board of Appeals	\$ 10,550	Zeamer	Alfred	6 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abs.
Public Buildings	\$ 240,833	Zeamer	Alfred	6 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abs.
Police	\$ 2,453,055	Zeamer	Alfred	5 Yes, 1 No(Dowd) 0 Abs.
Auxiliary Police	\$ 12,841	Zeamer	Alfred	6 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abs.
Fire Department	\$ 796,355	Zeamer	Alfred	5 Yes, 1 No(Dowd) 0 Abs.
Building Inspector	\$ 126,107	Zeamer	Alfred	5 Yes, 1 No(Dowd) 0 Abs.
Sealer	\$ 1,000	Zeamer	Alfred	6 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abs.
Emergency Management	\$ 10,519	Zeamer	Alfred	6 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abs.
Animal Control	\$ 38,359	Zeamer	Alfred	6 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abs.
Schools	\$29,999,742	Zeamer	Alfred	6 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abs.
Keefe Tech	\$ 762,815	Zeamer	Alfred	6 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abs.
Highway	\$ 1,235,250	Zeamer	Alfred	5 Yes, 1 No(Dowd) 0 Abs.
Street Lighting	\$ 61,200	Zeamer	Alfred	6 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abs.
Wastewater Treatment	\$ 69,700	Zeamer	Alfred	6 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abs.
Motor Vehicle Fuels	\$ 144,232	Zeamer	Alfred	6 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abs.
Board of Health	\$ 128,949	Zeamer	Alfred	5 Yes, 1 No(Dowd) 0 Abs.
Council on Aging	\$ 201,197	Zeamer	Alfred	5 Yes, 1 No(Dowd) 0 Abs.
Youth and Family Sacs	\$ 118,942	Zeamer	Alfred	5 Yes, 1 No(Dowd) 0 Abs.
Veterans Services	\$ 39,266	Zeamer	Alfred	6 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abs.
Library	\$ 461,088	Zeamer	Alfred	5 Yes, 1 No(Dowd) 0 Abs.
Park Commission	\$ 99,062	Zeamer	Alfred	5 Yes, 1 No(Dowd) 0 Abs.
Snow and Ice	\$ 250,000	Zeamer	Alfred	6 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abs.
Solid Waste	\$ 1,063,762	Zeamer	Alfred	6 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abs.
Group Insurance	\$ 4,348,582	Zeamer	Alfred	5 Yes, 1 No(Dowd) 0 Abs.

Benefits	\$ 2,042,479	Zeamer	Alfred	6 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abs.
Debt Service	\$ 5,583,261	Zeamer	Alfred	6 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abs.
Water Department	\$ 2,277,937	Zeamer	Alfred	5 Yes, 1 No(Dowd) 0 Abs.
Ambulance	\$ 437,757	Zeamer	Alfred	5 Yes, 1 No(Dowd) 0 Abs.
Capital Set Aside	\$ 625,000	Zeamer	Alfred	6 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abs.

The Committee then considered Article 21, the appropriation for the Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) trust for FY15. Moved by Michelle Zeamer, Seconded by Dan Alfred to appropriate \$1,444,013 with \$34,261 coming from the Water Department and \$21,726 coming from the Ambulance Revolving fund for a total addition to the Trust of \$1,500,000.

Erica Plunkett, Chairperson of the School Committee voiced her objection to Dan Alfred's comment earlier in the meeting that isolating Special Education cost and revenues from the budget could reduce the incentive of the School Department to find the most effective way of handling special education placements.

Ken advised the Committee that it would meet next week on a day to be determined due to holiday schedules and availability limits to complete review of the Annual Town Meeting Warrant.

2. Adjournment – At 10:06 PM, Moved by Dan Alfred, Seconded by Michelle Zeamer to adjourn. Six in favor, none opposed, no abstentions.

Respectfully submitted by Bill Dowd.

Approved __June 17, 2014_____