

**FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES
FEBRUARY 15, 2011**

The meeting was called to order at 7:33 pm in the Selectmen's Meeting room of Town Hall. The following members were present: Ken Szajda, Jay Leary, Tom Meehan, Jim Crews, Gordon Johnson, Mark Schultz and Pam Zicko.

Jay Leary, seconded by Pam Zicko, made a MOTION to approve the minutes of January 25, 2011. Passed 7-0-0.

Margaret Fitzpatrick presented the budget for Youth & Family Services. She was able to meet the guideline by using money from a gift account. She applied the money to the Court Diversion line. There are no reductions in service in her budget. Margaret summarized the services provided by her dept. and pointed out that the Court Diversion program had a value of service to the Town of \$2,240, based on \$8.00 /hour, which is minimum wage. The Middle School was awarded a \$60,000 grant from the Metro West Community Healthcare Foundation to address bullying. Youth & Family worked with the school in helping to submit the grant and are helping in the implementation. She also talked about the fund that the HBA has set up to help residents with short term financial difficulties. Youth & Family also started the process of applying for the CDBG grant and intends to go forward with it this year if the program is not cut. Margaret then went over her goals for the dept. and the effect the budget will have on them. Jim Crews asked about grants that ended last year. She said that a grant with the schools ended and the substance abuse grant ended. With the level funded budget, there is no money for education to keep up with licensure. Fortunately, if you work for a municipality, the required c.e.u.'s are less. Ken Szajda asked how much it would cost – and was told about \$1200. Pam Zicko asked about the supplies line and how much money is in the gift account. There is about \$1000 in that account. Mark Schultz thanked Margaret for what her dept. is able to do on such a limited budget. Ken Szajda asked about the communications line – it is for three phones.

Peter Tartakoff presented the Building Inspector's budget, which came in under the guideline. He had 2 models – one with the March increase carried through the year and the second with a modest increase for the 2 employees. Both of these came in under the guideline. Peter said that he was able to save money by allocating money from the assistant building inspector's position (which was eliminated) and he is swapping inspection services with surrounding towns, decreasing that line from \$5500 to \$3000. The supplies and materials line was up in FY11 to make a one time purchase of 2 computers; this is down again for FY12. There was still \$3300 for the assistant building inspector's salary, so that was removed in the FY12 budget. Jay Leary commented that the second budget model should not be considered – there are no raises. Tom Meehan asked about permitting action and was told that it has been steady and could go up in the spring.

At 8:15 PM, Gordon Johnson, seconded by Pam Zicko, made a MOTION to enter into Executive Session, with the intent to return to open session, for the purpose of discussing

possible litigation. A roll call vote was taken: Jay Leary: yes; Mark Schultz: yes; Pam Zicko: yes; Gordon Johnson: yes; Jim Crews: yes; Tom Meehan: yes; and Ken Szajda: yes.

At 8:46 pm, the FinComm returned to open session, and Chief Michael Cassidy presented the budget for the Fire Department. He was able to meet the guideline, with no reduction in service. Mark Schultz asked about overtime for the dispatchers and Mike said that they receive time off in place of overtime. Ken Szajda asked where the 2.1% increase for the dispatchers is in the budget, and was told in the ambulance fund. Firefighters are paid a monthly stipend and for the number of fire events they attend. Tom Meehan asked about the run rate and whether it is a 50/50 split. Mike Cassidy said that it is not a 50/50 split. Jim Crews asked about the fire protection line – it's gone and will be reimbursed from a grant. Jim asked how much the dept. receives from grants and was told it varies year-to-year. Jim asked Chief Cassidy if he could provide the FinComm with a list of grants and where the monies go. Mike said that he would get it to FinComm. Gordon Johnson asked about Professional Development and Mike said that it varies, but it will jump up soon. The largest part of this line is spent during the second half of the year. The NFPA renewal is due in February.

Mike Cassidy presented the Ambulance budget. It did not meet the guideline; much of it is paid from the revolving account. He said that they are no longer looking into establishing an Enterprise Fund; if so, they would never be able to purchase another ambulance. He is, however, looking into an account under Chap. 40, Sec. 5F, which is relevant to ambulance budgets. Mike said that he is looking for more ambulance drivers and to increase the ambulance service fee. Ken Szajda said that he is concerned with the 2010 numbers – there will only be about \$4000. Jay Leary asked when the Medicare increase hearing is and was told next week.

Michael Cassidy also presented the Emergency Management budget which met the guideline. The largest expense at this time is the new communication notification system which was just set up. The participation rate is at about 1500; there are about 3300 possible participants in town.

Rich Maccagnano presented the BOH budget. There is a \$4200 shortfall due to step and salary increases. By using money from the revolving fund set up for the flu clinics, the BOH is able to level fund the budget. The BOH staffed the clinics with volunteers, saving money. Medicare is the only liability. They also worked up a second budget – a “wish” budget. Jay Leary asked what their needs are and Rich said that there is \$500 in Professional Services for legal and professional engineering services, and ideally, he would like to see \$1000 there. There are no public health initiatives in this budget and the BOH would like to add to public health services.

Paul LeBeau presented the BOS budget, which meets the guideline. As for staffing, there are 2 full time clerical, 1 part time clerical (25 hrs.), an assistant town administrator and a town administrator. ¼ of the part time clerical is paid from a revolving fund. Purchase Services is the maintenance contract for the copier; Prof. Development is at \$2724, part

of which pays for the town to be part of the MA Municipal Assoc.; Prof. Services is up \$2500 and pays for the town wide audit and legal (there is presently one piece of on-going litigation); The BOS also pay for part of the Memorial Day celebration, along with the VFW and Legion. There is a surplus from FY11 for Property Liability Insurance, which includes buildings, equipment and liability. They offer training in loss-prevention techniques, which show as savings in the policy. Jay Leary brought up the establishment of a legal account and asked Paul's opinion. There would need to be a "gate-keeper".

Mark Schultz, seconded by Jim Crews, made a MOTION to transfer \$6100 from the Reserve fund to the Assessors (org. #01137), Professional Services (Obj. #52190). Passed 7-0-0.

The next meeting will be March 1, 2011, with the following depts. presenting their budgets: Technology, ConComm, COA, ZBA and Highway.

At 10:25 pm, Pam Zicko, seconded by Gordon Johnson, made a MOTION to adjourn the meeting. Passed 7-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Faith Antonioli, Secretary

Date Approved: March 8, 2011