

Finance Committee Meeting

March 3, 2021 7:00 PM EST
Zoom Remote Meeting Platform
Millis, MA 02054

In Attendance:

Pete Berube, Chairman
Craig Schultze, Vice Chairman
Doug Riley, Clerk
Joyce Boiardi
Jodie Garzon
Cathy MacInnes
Shawn Power
Katie Tieu

Invited Guest:

Michael Guzinski, Town Administrator
Carol Johnston, Finance Director
Patty Kayo, Council on Aging Director
Herbert Lannon, Council on Aging Board Chairman
Nate Maltinsky, Community Preservation Chairman

Pete Berube called the Finance Committee Meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Council on Aging FY22 Budget Request Discussion:

Patty Kayo gave an overview of the Council on Aging's function; providing a quality life to older residents. The Council provides individuals with community care including transportation, exercise programs, providing education on healthcare benefits and food stamps, Meals on Wheels and Fuel Assistance Programs as well as being a liaison to available State and Federal Aid Programs.

The Council on Aging's number of seniors served decreased during a very unorthodox year. However, there was an increase in Outreach – well being checks due to out-of-town family member's concern for their loved ones in Millis as well as the Council reaching out to seniors to assist with their needs and reassurance. Transportation requests had decrease as well; they were suspended in March but resumed in June.

The FY22 Budget was submitted Level Funded with the exception of the Part-Time Van Driver Wages, who are paid minimum wage, from a total of \$17,564.00 to \$21,645.00. An Above Level Funded Request to keep the Council on Aging Center open until 4:00 PM Monday to Thursday was submitted. In doing so, the Center could address the growing needs of the Senior population. However, that will require the need for another staff member, an Operations Manager, and additional hours for the Director.

The committee was provided a document with different staffing scenarios: Level Funded - \$115,773.00, Above Level Funded - \$161,445.00, Staffing Possibilities and the ultimate goal of 4 Staff Members with the Center open 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM Monday through Friday - \$171,768.00.

Pete Berube inquired about the job description and title in comparison to other positions in town. The addition of an Operations Manager would fulfill clerical duties and assist with programming for the Center; it is anticipated the position would be at a Department Assistant III salary range.

The development of over 55-year-old subdivisions over the last ten years has resulted in an increase in the Senior population. An additional \$3,000.00 in postage is necessary, to accommodate mailing the Council on Aging's Newsletters, approximately 1,575, to all applicable residents which is based on the census provided by the Town Clerk's Office. Doug Riley asked if consideration was given to send the newsletter electronically. Herbert Lannon said a survey would need to be conducted to analyze the Senior population's access to email. There is a growing need in programming for fitness and education for Seniors. The Council on Aging is currently servicing older Seniors and is looking forward to accommodating the younger Senior population by offering more programs such as financial planning. The Council on Aging would need to be operational until 4:00 PM in order to fulfill the needs of younger Seniors.

The membership to the Council on Aging is provided through the Friends of the Council on Aging. The membership fee is \$6.00 per year. The Friends of the Council on Aging raise approximately \$5,000.00 per year; most members contribute more than the membership fee. The Friends of the Council on Aging fund the Council on Aging's Thanksgiving and St. Patrick's Day celebrations for example. They also raise funds to offset the cost to purchase new vehicles.

Craig Schultze inquired how many visitors, prior to COVID-19, actually visited the Senior Center and would a new facility increase the number of participants. In 2019, approximately 700+ Seniors visited the Center; a new facility would certainly increase that number. The Council on Aging works collaboratively with the Library and Recreation Department to coordinate available programs to the Senior population.

Capital Items Requested include:

- Flooring, \$8,000.00, in the lunchroom
This would finalize the floor replacement at the Senior Center
- Replacement of the 2011 Handicapped Van, \$60,000.00
The Council on Aging Friends have raised \$17,000.00 to offset some of this expense.
- Replacement of the 8-year-old sedan, Chevy Cruise, \$25,000.00. This is their highest priority.
It's not an immediate request but will eventually have to be replaced; it's requested for transportation most frequently.
- Kitchen equipment, \$25,000.00

HCA (Host Community Agreement) Marijuana Impact Funds Request include \$45,672.38 to fund additional hours for the Operations Manager to educate Seniors in the medicinal benefits of marijuana.

Pete Berube, speaking not on behalf of the committee, considered this request a potential marketing function for promoting the facility in town that provides medicinal marijuana. The request requires a Full-Time Position. If the Select Board recommends the new position, the Finance Committee will then discuss and make a recommendation. Craig Schultze has the same concern; this request includes an additional staff member, it's the second largest request other than the School Resource Officer. Although the Select Board may recommend it, the Finance Committee makes their recommendation to Town Meeting; he would have a hard time recommending an additional position for medicinal marijuana education. Another consideration is the HCA Impact Funds expire in five years.

Community Preservation Act Committee Warrant Article Discussion:

Nate Maltinsky presented one confirmed Warrant Article funded by the Community Preservation Historic Resource Reserve Fund, Restoration of the Henry F. Walling Map – Phase II in the amount of \$1,469.00. This would digitize the map which depicts Millis and Medway in the 1800's. The request was made by the Trustees of the Library.

The Community Preservation Act Committee will vote tomorrow on funding the Millis High School Dugout Project in the amount of \$10,309.62 from Open Space/Recreation Resource Reserve Fund. This request was submitted by a High School Senior, Brian Nichols, as part of his Senior Project. The project would erect two dugouts at the High School Baseball Diamond. Permission to do so has been granted by the School Committee and other School Officials.

The Annual Community Preservation Act Warrant Article appropriates the following:

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| • FY22 Administrative Salaries and General Expenses (split equally): | \$12,549.00 |
| • Long-Term Debt Principal: | \$20,000.00 |
| • Long-Term Debt Interest: | \$ 9,950.00 |
| • Revenues for Historic Resources Reserve: | \$25,098.00 |
| • Revenues for Community Housing Reserve: | \$25,098.00 |
| • Revenues for Open Space Reserve: | \$25,098.00 |
| • Revenues for Budgeted Reserve: | \$80,000.00 |

Revenues have increased substantially with the additional new homes in town plus approximately \$40,000.00 from the State. An annual letter from the Norfolk County Registry of Deeds is sent to Finance Committee Members' home addresses outlining the funding sent to all towns in Norfolk County; approximately 15 – 20. Millis' surcharge is 1% while some towns such as Medway's is 3%.

Nate Maltinsky explained the 1% surcharge on Real Estate Taxes has a \$100,000.00 deduction on property values and the CPA also offers a Senior Restrictions. The average household surcharge is \$50.00. All projects require Prevailing Wage which often increases the overall cost of a project.

As of June 30, 2020, the CPA Balance was \$713,924.90, with appropriations for FY21 \$144,476.00 and two transfers, \$74,558.49 for the Memorial Fields Improvements Project and \$600.00 for the Walling Map Phase I Project, as of November 30, 2020, the balance is \$795,118.20.

The one borrowing project outstanding is the restoration of the Veterans Memorial Building Masonry Project, initially totaling \$450,000.00. The purchase of the Dewey Property, which is located at the corner of Exchange Street and Orchard Street, has been paid in full. The committee requested a follow-up email to clarify the exact outstanding borrowing amounts and projects. The town's Finance Department has yet to computerize the CPA Borrowing schedule; it is done manually.

Carol Johnston, Finance Director, clarified the outstanding balance on the Veterans Memorial Building Masonry Project is \$285,000.00 as of June 30, 2020. The borrowing will continue until 2034.

CPA Open Space/Recreation Funds could potentially be used to purchase the 61A Brain Property on Village Street. However, the CPA Committee has not been contacted by the Select Board or any other party regarding funding.

Review Select Board's FY22 Operating Budget Priorities:

The committee was provided a Memorandum to the Select Board from Town Administrator, Mike Guzinski, listing the Municipal Needs and Long-Term Objectives as of February 2021. Pete Berube read the items:

Municipal Needs:

- Expand Hours of the Senior Center to 40 hours per week
- Expand Library Operations to 7 days per week
- Expand Recreation Department Operations
- Develop Shared Services with the School Department: Human Resources and IT Director
- Establish Budget for Road Construction and Maintenance in addition to Chapter 90 Funds
- Increase Tree Trimming/Removal Budget
- 2 Additional DPW Crew Members
- Additional Executive Office and Select Board Office Staff Hours
- Additional Treasurer Office Staff Hours
- Municipal Facilities Director

Long Term Objectives:

- OPEB (Other Post-Employment Benefits) Funding
- Stabilization Fund Level at 5% of the Operating Budget
- Open Space Funding

Mike Guzinski clarified the Select Board did put the above list in a general priority level; the items listed at the top have more urgency. Pete Berube did note most of the needs listed, outside of road improvements and tree trimming, were staffing needs. The Finance Committee will be discussing with the DPW Director, Jim McKay, the urgent need to address PFAS Water Treatment. Craig Schultze expressed his surprise that maintaining the Stabilization Fund at 5% of the Operating Budget was listed in the second tier of priorities. The Board of Selectmen adopted a Stabilization Fund Policy several years ago. Mike Guzinski clarified the Select Board's goal is to maintain the 5% however, as the overall Operating Budget increases in the future, their long-term goal would be to maintain the 5%. The Select Board will be having further priority discussions at their upcoming meetings. Jodie Garzon did note the over the past two Fiscal Years, the Stabilization Fund is over the targeted 5% by approximately \$80,000.00. Doug Riley suggested increasing the 5% threshold of the Stabilization Fund given the increased revenues the town is recognizing at this time. This would allow for more flexibility in future years. Cathy MacInnes expressed her dismay that Road Improvements, additional DPW Staff and a Human Resources Director were not at the top of the list. Mike Guzinski made the committee aware the town is in the process of hiring an IT Director with the Town of Norfolk. Overall, the document provided of the Select Board's Priorities was disappointing to the Finance Committee. Mike Guzinski clarified that a more finalized list of Select Board's Priorities will be forthcoming.

May 3, 2021 Town Meeting Warrant Article Additions Discussion:

Mike Guzinski presented the current Warrant Article List which has not been finalized and is subject to change. He outlined the additional Warrant Articles since the last edition of the Warrant:

Article #4 SEIU (Service Employees International Union) #888 Contract Ratification
Article #5 Professional Firefighters Local #4704 Contract Ratification
Article #16 Previously Approved School Bus Lease – Year four of five
Article #17 Previously Approved School Computer Lease – Year two of three
Article #18 New Computer Lease
Article #24 Zoning ByLaw Amendment – Cannabis Delivery

Article #31 PILOT Agreement – Clyde F. Brown Solar

The Select Board will consider the above at a future meeting. Pete Berube inquired on placement of Town Meeting Warrant Articles. Mike Guzinski explained prior or current Fiscal Year Items are placed at the beginning of the Warrant, next are any upcoming Fiscal Year Budget Items: Operating Budget, Enterprise Funds, CBA (Collective Bargaining Agreement) Ratifications, followed by typical standard Annual Articles: Annual Audit, Revolving Funds for example. Capital Items wraps up the operational side of the Warrant. Special Articles are then listed which is typical for any Town Meeting Warrant. The Select Board does however have the authority to change the placement of Articles within the Warrant.

The May Town Meeting Warrant should be finalized by March 22, 2021 for the Finance Committee to start deliberating. The Finance Committee will schedule Department FY22 Budget Request Presentations for their upcoming meetings. Due to the unusual number of Zoning ByLaw Warrant Articles, the Planning Board will be scheduled as well.

Vote Finance Committee Policies and Procedures Handbook Sub-Committee Members:

Pete Berube asked Finance Committee Members to participate in developing the Policies and Procedures Handbook. Jodie Garzon, Joyce Boiardi and Shawn Power volunteered. Another member could participate without violating Open Meeting Law. He encouraged the Sub-Committee to enlist former Finance Committee Members, such as Rich Molloy and Susan Vecchi, for their input. The timeline is anticipated to be four weeks until the entire Finance Committee can review and discuss the handbook further.

Jodie Garzon has drafted a ten-page preliminary document which will be shared with the Sub-Committee. An Index of the preliminary document will be sent to all Finance Committee Members. Pete Berube thanked Jodie Garzon for her efforts in developing a draft handbook.

While a vote to approve the members of the Sub-Committee was probably not necessary,

Craig Schultze made a motion to form the Finance Committee Policies and Procedures Handbook Sub-Committee: Joyce Boiardi, Jodie Garzon and Shawn Power; Katie Tieu seconded. Vote: 8/0 motion carries unanimously.

Old Business/New Business:

Pete Berube asked the committee to review the FY22 Department Requests posted to the Finance Committee's Webpage: <https://www.millisma.gov/finance-committee/pages/fy22-department-budget-request>

Pete Berube encouraged members to view the Public Hearing on the 61A Purchase – Braun Property on Village Street held by the Select Board on Monday, March 1, 2021. The recording is available on the town's website: <https://www.millisma.gov/select-board/minutes/select-board-meeting-61a-hearing-3121>

The committee will discuss the 61A Purchase Warrant Article at their meeting on March 10, 2021.

Finance Committee Meeting Minutes Approval:

Jodie Garzon made a motion to approve the February 24, 2021 Finance Committee Meeting Minutes; Cathy MacInnes seconded. Vote: 8/0 motion carries unanimously.

The next Finance Committee Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 10, 2021 at 7:00 PM and invited guests include Jim McKay, DPW Director. Topics for discussion will include the FY22 DPW Operating Budget, and the following Warrant Articles: Update Emergency Response Plan, PFAS Treatment Design, and Design/Construction of Drainage – Birch Street and Village Street.

Adjourn Meeting:

Jodie Garzon made a motion to adjourn the Finance Committee Meeting at 8:36 PM; Cathy MacInnes seconded. Vote: 8/0 motion carries unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Deirdre Gilmore