

Finance Committee Meeting

March 8, 2023, 7:00 PM EST
Veterans Memorial Building – Room #229
900 Main Street Millis, MA 02054
Participation Via Zoom Remote Platform

Committee Members In Attendance:

Pete Berube, Chair
Jodie Garzon, Vice Chair
Peter Underhill, Clerk
Joyce Boiardi
Michael Krone
Jonathan Loer
Cathy MacInnes
Sara Reyes
John Steadman

Invited Guest:

Michael Guzinski, Town Administrator
Carol Johnston, Finance Director

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

Assessors FY24 Budget Presentation:

- Salaries: \$139,258.00
- Expenses: \$ 45,138.00
- Total: \$184,396.00

Salaries are contractual under the SEIU CBA (Collective Bargaining Agreement). The SEIU CBA for FY23 – FY25 will be presented at Monday's Select Board Meeting. FY24 Salaries for all Town Hall Departments and Library will need to be amended once the agreement is approved by the Select Board.

The Expense Line Item has increased, \$7,296.00:

- Personal Property and Real Estate Interim Inspections: \$3,750.00
 - Includes 100 Residential and 25 Commercial Properties
- Data Cloud Software: \$1,825.00
 - Includes a \$500.00 fee to integrate Nearmap Software, an annual licensing fee as well as laser equipment costs
- Supplies and Expenses: \$ 500.00
- Postage: \$ 100.00
- Dues and Subscriptions: \$ 125.00
- Meetings: \$ 900.00
- Administrative Expense: \$ 21.00
 - Includes Administrative Support and Stipends for the Board of Assessors
- Mileage Reimbursement: \$ 75.00

Recertification is scheduled in 2028.

Finance and Accounting FY24 Budget Presentation:

- Salaries: \$282,342.00
- Expenses: \$ 9,515.00
- Total: \$291,857.00

Salaries are contractual and Expenses are Level Funded.

Treasurer/Collector FY24 Budget Presentation:

- Salaries: \$243,344.00
- Expenses: \$ 48,091.00
- Total: \$289,434.00

Salaries are contractual and Expenses are Level Funded. The Services Note Certificates Line Item, \$15,000.00, is for Short Term Borrowing. Many residents use the online Unipay System however, many residents pay their bills in person due to the terrific staff in the Treasurer's Office.

Executive Office and Select Board FY24 Budget Presentation:

- Salaries: \$390,582.00
- Expenses: \$163,265.00
- Total: \$533,847.00

The Assistant Town Administrator/Human Resource Manager position is part of the Personnel Plan. The COLA has not been finalized by the Select Board but is expected to be two percent. In addition, the Town Administrator's Contract expires on June 30, 2023 and will have an impact on the Salaries Line Item.

The Expense Line Item has increased:

- Advertising and Postage: \$ 700.00
 - Equipment: \$1,200.00
 - Police Details: \$2,000.00
 - Total: \$3,900.00
- Includes Audio for Town Meetings

The Consulting Fees Line Item, \$70,000.00, is for the Town Wide Social Worker and is funded by Marijuana Impact Fees. Administrative Support in the amount of \$18,400.00 is funded by HCA Revenues.

The Above Level Service Request would increase the Department Assistant I position's hours from 18 to 35 in an effort to centralize Human Resources. The position would perform low level HR data entry, which is being transitioned from the Treasurer's Office to the Executive Office and would provide Meeting Minutes for the Select Board Meetings. However, the request is being reviewed and will be updated within the next few weeks. HR Duties are being performed by the Department Assistant II position, 31 hours per week. Training with the Treasurer is taking place and the transition is working well.

The GIC (Group Insurance Commission) is making changes that will affect the overall cost of Health Insurance, the increased cost should be available in the next few weeks but are anticipated to be an average of a 5.5%. The Health Insurance Line Item is budgeted for five additional enrollees.

The Town Wide Social Worker's office is located at the Police Station and provides services to Municipal and School Department Employees. The town is in a 5-year contractual agreement for the Social Worker's Services. The Police Chief is updated on a regular basis on the progress the Social Worker is making to address the needs of the community.

The Finance Committee requested the following be provided:

- Social Worker Contract
- HCA Funding Timeline
- Executive Office Staff Job Descriptions

HCA (Host Community Agreement) Funding will eventually expire, requiring the town to consider funding several positions from the General Fund. The current HCA could be extended for three years. HCA Funding is experiencing a downward turn of approximately \$100,000.00 due to competition within the industry. Free Cash available for the May 2023 Town Meeting includes \$271,000.00 in HCA Funds. Free Cash is Certified in September of each year and it is anticipated \$200,000.00 will be certified for appropriation at the November 2023 Town Meeting. HCA Appropriations cannot be made until the funds are certified in Free Cash.

Legal FY24 Budget Presentation:

The budget is Level Funded for FY24, \$95,000.00, which includes a \$6,000.00 Monthly Retainer for Mead, Talerman and Costa as well as Labor Council whose monthly retainer has been unchanged for several years. It was suggested the town pay Town Counsel based on hours as opposed to a monthly retainer. Mike Guzinski will provide the committee with an average of the monthly hours provided by Town Counsel.

Town Buildings FY24 Budget Presentation:

- Salaries: \$ 38,177.00
- Expenses: \$227,000.00
- Total: \$265,177.00

Salaries are for a Part-Time Energy Manager.

The Expense Line Item has increased:

- VMB Repairs: \$15,000.00
 - The Building is 100 years old and has a two-pipe heating and cooling system which requires flushing 2 times per year.
- Supplies and Expenses: \$ 1,500.00
- VMB Water and Sewer: \$ 500.00
- VMB Electricity: \$ 5,000.00
- Library Electricity: \$ 2,000.00
- Total: \$24,000.00

The Budget includes \$10,000.00 for Special Expenditures for emergency costs which is similar to the Finance Committee's Reserve Fund of \$50,000.00. The Reserve Fund is available for unforeseen costs throughout the Fiscal Year and requires the Finance Committee's approval.

Spring 2023 Town Meeting Draft Warrant Article Review:

- Article #1 Unpaid Bills
- Article #2 FY23 Additional Wages and Expenses
- Article #3 FY24 Operating Budget
- Article #4 Sewer Enterprise Fund
- Article #5 Water Enterprise Fund
- Article #6 Stormwater Enterprise Fund
- Article #7 Consent Items:
 - Amendments to the Personnel Plan
 - Board of Health Appointing Authority
 - Revolving Funds
 - Community Preservation Fund
- Article #8 Capital Items
- Article #9 Design and Construction of Sidewalks
- Article #10 Tree Maintenance/Removal
- Article #11 General ByLaw – Powers and Duties of the Town Administrator
- Article #12 Establish Millis Net Zero Goal
- Article #13 Amend Plastic Bag Reduction ByLaw
- Article #14 Unemployment Insurance
- Article #15 OPEB (Other Post-Employment Benefits) Fund
- Article #16 Special Education Stabilization Fund
- Article #17 Stabilization Fund
- Article #18 Petitioned Article

Mike Guzinski gave a summary of the Draft Warrant Articles; Articles #1-8, 14, 15 & 17 are standard articles presented at the Spring Town Meeting. It is uncertain if there will be available funding for Article #9 & 10. The Select Board would like to readdress Article #11 which has been presented at previous Town Meetings. Article #12 was requested by the Energy Committee, the goal is set for 2050. Article #13 would amend the Plastic Bag By-Law and is under the jurisdiction of the Board of Health. Article #16 would simply establish the fund, not necessarily appropriate funding. The Petitioner of Article #18 presented the merits of the article at last week's Finance Committee Meeting.

The Town Administrator and Finance Director are focusing on balancing the FY23 Operating Budget and working to present the FY24 Operating Budget to the Select Board.

Board and Committee Liaison Updates:

Cathy MacInnes noted the Citizen Petition is being reviewed by Town Counsel. Jon Loer, Finance Committee Liaison to the Capital Planning Committee, noted Capital Items are expected to be \$796,000.00 for the May 2023 Town Meeting. The Capital Planning Committee will meet on March 16, 2023 to make their final evaluation of the overall town needs.

The Finance Committee has posted Meeting Agendas for Monday, March 13th 7:00 PM for the Tri-County School's Presentation to the Select Board. A Meeting Agenda has also been posted for Tuesday, March 14th 7:00 PM for the School Committee's Public Hearing on their FY24 Operating Budget. Steven Catalano, School Committee Chair, will be attendance at next week's Finance Committee Meeting to give an update on the FY24 School Department Budget.

Bills Payable Approval:

Michael Krone made a motion to approve payment to WB Mason in the amount of \$14.69; Cathy MacInnes seconded. Vote: 9/0. Motion carries unanimously.

Finance Committee Meeting Minutes Approval:

Jodie Garzon made a motion to approve the March 1, 2023 Finance Committee Meeting Minutes as written; Joyce Boiardi seconded. Vote: 9/0. Motion carries unanimously.

Adjourn Meeting:

Jodie Garzon made a motion to adjourn the Finance Committee Meeting at 8:00 PM; Cathy MacInnes seconded. Vote: 9/0 motion carries unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Deirdre Gilmore