

Finance Committee Meeting

November 1, 2017 7:30 PM EST
Veterans Memorial Building, Room 229
900 Main Street
Millis, MA 02054

In Attendance:

Craig Schultze, Chairman
Jodie Garzon, Vice Chairman
Peter Berube, Clerk
Tayana Antin
Jim Bullion
Peter Jurmain
Jerry Nunnaley
Doug Riley
Susan Vecchi
Mike Guzinski, Town Administrator
James McCaffrey, Board of Selectmen Chairman
Denise Gibbons, School Committee
Paul Jacobsen, Town Moderator
Lisa Hardin, Town Clerk

Craig Schultze called the meeting to order at 7:32 PM

Pre-Town Meeting:

Craig Schultze made a motion to open the Pre-Town Meeting at 7:32 PM; Jodie Garzon seconded. Vote: 9/0 motion carries unanimously.

Article #1 Unpaid Bills: This article funds bills from prior fiscal years. The total amount is \$7,236.05. The Finance Committee recommends approval of this article.

Article #2 By-Law – Marijuana Moratorium: The Board of Selectmen has requested a moratorium for one year on recreational marijuana sales in town. The moratorium will allow the town time to establish regulations and change Zoning By-Laws. Failing this moratorium, anyone would have the ability to sell recreational marijuana anywhere in town after April 1, 2018. The Finance Committee recommends approval of this article.

Article #3 By-Law – Stormwater Management Utility: This article would create a new utility with fees used to cover the cost of all Stormwater Management operations and ensure compliance with the MS4 (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System) Permit. Previously, the costs were paid out of the DPW's Operating Budget. The fees are based on the impervious surface on all parcels of land. It is a mechanism to generate revenues for infrastructure repairs, catch basin cleaning, street sweeping and data recording. The impervious surface will be determined using satellite and will be charged \$3.00 - \$5.00 per square foot. The By-Law meets the test of fairness for all property owners in town. The increased regulations are effective July 1, 2018. The Board of Selectmen will set the rates for this utility at an Open Public Hearing. There will be a Public Hearing to set Water and Sewer Enterprise Fund rates on November 20, 2017. New construction in town has to comply with Stormwater Management regulations. The Town of Millis is part of a lawsuit challenging some of the requirements. If the article does not pass, approximately \$400,000.00 in FY19 Operating Budget cuts will be necessary. The Finance Committee recommends approval of this article.

Article #4 Funding Consulting Stormwater Management Utility: The article funds the consulting fees to set-up and implement operations of the Stormwater Utility. The Finance Committee recommends approval of this article in the amount of \$69,400.00. If Article #3 does not pass this article will be dismissed.

Article #5 Fire – SCBA (Self Contained Breathing Apparatus) Pack and Bottle Replacement: The bottles have a 15 year life. This article would fund the replacement of (5) packs and bottles in the amount of \$41,075.00 and would provide our Fire Department with safe equipment. The Finance Committee recommends approval of this article.

Article #6 Fire – Fund (2) ALS Paramedic Students: Three years ago the town voted to approve funding an ALS (Advanced Life Support) Certification Program. This is the final phase of the program. The Finance Committee recommends approval of this article in the amount of \$20,000.00.

Article #7 Town Gas and Diesel System Replacement: The Finance Committee recommends dismissal of this article due to insufficient funds.

Article #8 DPW – Front End Loader: The Finance Committee recommends approval of this article in the amount of \$170,000.00 from Borrowing over 10 years.

Article #9 Traffic Enforcement Upgrade: This article would fund flashing stop signs for dangerous intersections in town. The Finance Committee recommends dismissal of this article due to lack of funds. The Department of Public Works will have funds in their Operating Budget to purchase a few flashing stop signs to address some of the more dangerous intersections in town.

Article #10 Sewer System Infiltration and Inflow Analysis/Plan: This article funds the analysis of different parts of our existing sewer system in order to comply with the MassDEP Guidelines for Performing I/I Analysis and Sewer System Evaluation Surveys (SSES). The Finance Committee recommends approval of this article in the amount of \$218,290.00 from Sewer Borrowing.

Article #11 Police Vehicle Lease: This article funds a three year lease for (4) cruisers. At the end of the lease each cruiser can be purchased for \$1.00. The Finance Committee recommends approval of this article in the amount of \$150,906.93 of which \$50,302.31 will be paid for the first year of the lease.

Article #12 Police/Fire Copper Line to Fiber Line Transition: This article will convert the Police and Fire communication lines to fiber. As of March 2018 Verizon will no longer support the copper lines. This article funds the equipment needed for compatibility with the new lines. Payment is not due until November 2018. The Permanent Building Committee can offset some of the \$90,000.00 cost by approximately \$50,000.00 if the Board of Selectmen agree. The Finance Committee recommends approval of this article.

Article #13 CPC – Niagara Fire Engine House Book Preservation: The Finance Committee recommends approval of this article in the amount of \$7,000.00 from CPC funds.

Article #14 Town Website Upgrade: The Finance Committee recommends dismissal of this article due to lack of funds.

Article #15 Repurchase Cemetery Lots: This article is for the buyback of (5) cemetery lots in the amount of \$2,100.00 from Cemetery Funds. The town will resell the lots at a later date. The Finance Committee recommends approval of this article.

Article #16 School – Establish School Bus Stabilization Fund: This article establishes a Stabilization Fund for the purchase of school busses at the end of their lease. The Finance Committee recommends approval of this article.

Article #17 School – Fund School Bus Stabilization Fund: The request is in the amount of \$90,000.00 for the purchase of (2) busses. The Finance Committee recommends approval of this article in the amount of \$45,000.00 for the purchase of (1) bus.

Article #18 School – Auditorium Seating, Lighting and Sound System: The Finance Committee recommends dismissal of this article due to lack of funds. Denise Gibbons contacted the Massachusetts Cultural Council and the School Committee plans to send a letter of intent for a grant to fund this article.

Article #19 School – Special Education Van: The Finance Committee recommends dismissal of this article due to lack of funds.

Article #20 School – Curriculum and Instructional Materials: The article would update Social Studies and Unified Arts materials. The Finance Committee recommends dismissal of this article due to lack of funds.

Article #21 OPEB (Other Post-Employment Benefits): When claims are filed the town is funding them however, the town should be setting aside funds for these benefits. The Finance Committee recommends dismissal of this article due to lack of funds.

Article #22 Replenish Stabilization Fund: The fund balance is more than the 5% General Operating Budget required by the town's Stabilization Fund Policy. The Finance Committee recommends dismissal of this article.

Article #23 Establishment of Speed Limits – Accept MGL C90 17C and Article #24 Establishment of Speed Limits – Accept MGL C90 18B: These articles give the town authority to reduce speed limits in thickly settled areas as they see fit. The Finance Committee recommends approval of this article.

Article #25 PILOT – Large Scale Ground Mounted Community Solar – 1280 Main Street: This article authorizes the Board of Selectmen to enter into a PILOT (Payment In Lieu Of Taxes) agreement for the solar project at 1280 Main Street. The Finance Committee recommends approval of this article.

Article #26 Authorize Moderator to Appoint a Committee – Voting Procedures/Town Meeting Dates: The committee would research and establish voting procedures and explore different days of the week to hold Town Meeting. The Finance Committee recommends approval of this article.

Article #27 Senior Property Tax Work off Program Amendment: Under MGL C59 the program allows seniors to reduce their property taxes by \$1,000.00 annually. This article would allow a disabled individual to designate an abled bodied person to perform the work for them. The Finance Committee recommends approval of this article.

Article #28 Petitioned Article: Cease & Desist Clyde F. Brown School Location: This article would halt the project and charge the Elementary School Building Committee with determining (2) different site locations for the project. If this article passes the MSBA grant of approximately \$21 million would be lost; the grant is tied to the specific location on the hill. The ESBC did consider other sites such as GAF and Cassidy Field – both sites would be more expensive. The Finance Committee recommends dismissal of this article.

Article #29 Transfer Land to Article #97: This article would transfer 6.4 acres of land back to park and recreational status which would be protected under Article #97. The Finance Committee recommends dismissal of this article.

Article #30 Replacement Facility for Clyde F. Brown Elementary School: This article is a rewrite of Article #13 from the June 2017 Town Meeting. Its intent is to send a clear message to the MSBA that the town supports the school replacement project. At this point in time, the town cannot enter into a contract with MSBA due to pending litigation. The Board of Selectmen will be asked to award contracts to begin work on the project. If this article is voted down it will send a clear message to the board that the town's support for the project has eroded.

The Moderator asked the Town Meeting attendees to keep the meeting civil. All sides will be given the opportunity to state their case.

Craig Schultze made a motion to close Pre-Town Meeting at 9:30 PM; Jodie Garzon seconded. Vote: 9/0 motion carries unanimously.

Warrant Article Reconsiderations:

Jim Bullion made a motion to reconsider Article #11 Police Vehicle Lease; Craig Schultze seconded. Vote: 2/7 motion does not carry.

Warrant Article Funding:

Free Cash will not be certified by Town Meeting. Therefore, Stabilization Funds can be used and replenished at the May 2018 Town Meeting with certified Free Cash. Although it is very uncommon for the Town of Millis to not have Free Cash certified by the November Town Meeting other municipalities have used this practice in the past. It's a very unfortunate situation but it is believed \$250,000.00 will be certified when the FY17 accounts are closed out. Once Free Cash is submitted to the State, it takes two to three weeks for it to be processed and certified. The town is not in danger of missing any deadlines with the submission. Unless Free Cash is certified it is not considered Available Funds and cannot be used. The Finance Director, responsible for filing for Free Cash certification, reports to the Board of Selectmen who will address why Free Cash hasn't been submitted to the Department of Revenue. The committee requested the Moderator preface Town Meeting that funding by Stabilization Funds requires a 2/3 majority vote whereas Free Cash requires a simple majority.

Susan Vecchi made a motion to recommend funding Article #1, Unpaid Bills, in the amount of \$7,236.05 with Stabilization Funds; Jodie Garzon seconded. Vote: 9/0 motion carries unanimously.

Susan Vecchi made a motion to recommend funding Article #4, Funding for Consulting Stormwater Management Utility, in the amount of \$69,400.00, Article #5, Fire – SCBA Pack and Bottle Replacement, in the amount of \$41,075.00, Article #6, Fire – Fund ALS Paramedic Students, in the amount of \$20,000.00, Article #11, Police Vehicle Lease, in the amount of \$50,302.31 and Article #17, School – Fund School Bus Stabilization Fund, in the amount of \$45,000.00 contingent on Article #16, Establish School Bus Stabilization Fund with Stabilization Funds; Jodie Garzon seconded. Vote: 9/0 motion carries unanimously.

The Warrant Article for Article #8 was not written to reflect the \$15,000.00 trade in and therefore must be funded for the entire amount.

Craig Schultze made a motion to reconsider Article #8 DPW – Front End Loader; Susan Vecchi seconded. Vote: 9/0 motion carries.

Peter Jurmain made a motion to recommend approval of Article #8, DPW – Front End Loader, in the amount of \$182,698.00 from Borrowing; Tayana Antin seconded. Vote: 9/0 motion carries unanimously.

Susan Vecchi made a motion to recommend funding Article #30, Replacement Facility for Clyde F. Brown Elementary School in the amount of \$51,765,857.00 from Borrowing; Craig Schultze seconded. Vote: 9/0 motion carries unanimously.

Old Business/New Business:

Craig Schultze made a motion to recommend approval of a Water Enterprise Reserve Fund Transfer in the amount of \$4,385.91 to Water Department Short Term Debt Interest; Jodie Garzon seconded. Vote: 9/0 motion carries unanimously.

Craig Schultze made a motion to recommend approval of payment to Our Town Publishing Impressions in the amount of \$2,662.50 for printing of the Finance Committee Report; Peter Jurmain seconded. Vote: 9/0 motion carries unanimously.

Minutes Approval:

Susan Vecchi made a motion to recommend approval of the October 25, 2017 Meeting Minutes as written; Jodie Garzon seconded. Vote: 8/0 1 abstained motion carries.

Adjourn:

Susan Vecchi made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:51 PM; Jodie Garzon seconded. Vote 9/0 motion carries unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Deirdre Gilmore