

Finance Committee Meeting

October 30, 2019 7:30 PM EST
Veterans Memorial Building, Room #229
900 Main Street
Millis, MA 02054

In Attendance:

Jodie Garzon, Chairman
Peter Berube, Vice Chairman
Doug Riley, Clerk
Joyce Boiardi
Jim Borgman
Jim Bullion
Craig Schultze
Katie Tieu
Mike Guzinski, Town Administrator
Carol Johnston, Finance Director
James McCaffrey, Select Board Vice Chairman
Peter Jurmain, Select Board Clerk
Chief Soffayer, Police Department
Erin Underhill, Town Moderator
Kathi Smith, Assistant Town Clerk

Jodie Garzon called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

Jodie Garzon opened the Pre-Town Meeting Public Hearing at 7:32 PM.

November Town Meeting Article Review and Discussion:

Article #1 Plastic Bag Reduction ByLaw:

Craig Schultze: This Article has a lot of merit to it preventing the use of one-time use plastic bags at checkout. Adopting the ByLaw is the right thing to do environmentally. If passed the ByLaw would take effect in six months. The Finance Committee recommends approval of this Article.

A resident from Timberline Road inquired about the fines for businesses that do not comply with the ByLaw. The proposed fines are:

1 st Offense	Warning
2 nd Offense	\$ 50.00
3 rd Offense and subsequent Offenses	\$100.00

Surrounding towns who have implemented this ByLaw have fines from \$200.00 - \$300.00.

Craig Schultze explained the ByLaw can be amended at future Town Meetings if businesses choose to ignore the ByLaw.

Article #2 Unpaid Bills:

Katie Tieu: This is an Annual Article paying previous fiscal year invoices, the total is \$6,074.62. The Finance Committee recommends approval of this article.

Article #3 Operational Budget Items would fund:

Jodie Garzon: The article brought forth by the Select Board included:

Part-Time IT Director	\$ 25,000.00
Study of IT Structure of Municipal and School	\$ 20,000.00
Replace Fire Engine II Motor	\$ 27,679.00
Police Academy Training Wages (2) Officers	\$ 60,000.00
Tree Trimming/Removal	\$ 50,000.00
Total:	<u>\$182,679.00</u>

The Finance Committee's recommendation funds:

Part-Time IT Director	\$ 25,000.00
Replace Fire Engine II Motor	\$ 27,679.00
Police Academy Training Wages (1) Officer	\$ 30,000.00
Tree Trimming/Removal	<u>\$ 50,000.00</u>
Total:	<u>\$132,679.00</u>

Mike Guzinski made the committee aware of a few errors in the Warrant. Article #1 should reference Article XXIV of the Town's General ByLaws and the Table of Contents transposed Articles #8 and #9. Town Counsel has confirmed these errors are ministerial in nature and Article #1 can be changed in a motion at Town Meeting.

The Select Board met Monday, October 28, 2019 and posted a meeting to attend tonight's meeting. The Select Board unanimously supports the Chief's request for (2) Officers to attend training. The new funding amount for this item has been reduced from \$60,000.00 to \$38,474.00. Marijuana Impact Fees will offset the School Resource Officer's salary in FY21, and overtime costs will be significantly reduced with the (2) additional officers in FY21. Craig Schultze noted the Finance Director has stated there are no new revenues for FY21. In FY20, the town authorized the addition of a Part Time Economic Director and the elevation of the Assistant Town Accountant to Town Accountant. He is opposed to adding staff mid fiscal year, Approximately \$50,000.00 for the Part Time IT Director and \$120,000.00 for the officers in FY21. If new revenues are not forecasted the town would be faced with \$100,000.00 in cuts to other Municipal Departments – School, DPW, Library, Council on Aging, etc. The committee asked the Town Administrator if he and the Select Board are comfortable making cuts to other departments in order to fund the additional Police Staff - they are. Mike Guzinski said the net impact to the town's FY21 Operating Budget is approximately \$40,000.00; \$120,000.00 less approximately \$35,000.00 in reduced overtime and \$45,000.00 from Marijuana Impact Fees. The \$120,000.00 does not include approximately \$50,000.00 for benefits. The Marijuana Impact Fees are intended to offset additional costs to departments, perhaps a School Guidance Counselor or Fire Fighter. Mike Guzinski is willing to trim the town's Operating Budget in FY21 to sustain the Part Time IT Director and the (2) Additional Officers. The committee acknowledged trimming the town's budget by 1 -2 % in expenses in FY21 should not be problematic.

An updated Revenue Forecast for FY21 was not provided. The Finance Director takes a conservative approach when forecasting revenues due to the uncertainty of the number of new homes being built or new businesses opening in town. Marijuana Revenues will not be included in the forecast until the town sees a consistent stream as a result of the facilities opening. CommCan has received the go ahead from the state and will open very soon.

The committee questioned if the additional staff was such a priority why it was not included on the May 2019 Town Warrant. The FY20 Operating Budget the Select Board presented to the Finance Committee did not include the (2) additional officers.

Chief Soffayer addressed the committee and explained the reduction to the cost to send the officers to training was due to an academy opening in West Boylston in February 2020 as opposed to November 2019. Typically, the training is held in Plymouth, Lowell or Reading; West Boylston is the closest location. Only funding (1) officer would push the timeline out for the other officer to be "road ready" by twenty months. The School Resource Officer (SRO) is state mandated. In some municipalities the cost of an SRO is included in the School Department's Operating Budget. The cost to attend the Police Academy is paid by each officer who is reimbursed after five years of employment with the town; this assures officer retention.

Jodie Garzon asked a member of the Select Board to speak to the committee. Mr. McCaffrey asked the committee to reexamine their recommendation to fund only (1) officer; the Select Board's perspective is the request is reasonable. It addresses the public's safety as well as officer safety. He added that changes were made to the Police Department's Collective Bargaining Agreement to reduce Comp Time which will in turn reduce overtime costs. The town is obligated to present a balanced budget to the May 2020 Town Meeting. The Select Board is reviewing the process town departments may request Marijuana Impact Fees to offset costs. The Finance

Director is developing a form which will be part of department budget request for FY21. Sales Tax Revenue from Retail Marijuana Sales will be included in the General Fund. Similar to the Meals Tax, the Marijuana Sales Tax will be collected by the state and then reimbursed to the town approximately six months later. The Select Board accepted the Finance Committee's recommendation to defer the IT Study of Municipal and Schools. The Select Board also supports cutting other department's staff to have trained officers on the streets.

Doug Riley made a motion to reconsider Article #3, Operational Budget Items; Joyce Boiardi seconded. Vote: 8/0 motion carries unanimously.

Peter Berube made a motion to recommend approval of the following:

Part-Time IT Director	\$ 25,000.00
Replace Fire Engine II Motor	\$ 27,679.00
Police Academy Training Wages (2) Officers	\$ 38,474.00
Tree Trimming/Removal	<u>\$ 50,000.00</u>
Total:	<u>\$141,153.00</u>

Doug Riley seconded. Craig Schultze noted the committee had a unanimous vote to fund (1) officer. Funding (1) is better than not funding any. Jim Bullion concurred, until better Revenue Projections are available there is a concern with department cuts in FY21. Jim Borgman's vote was swayed this evening after reviewing the public safety risk. He also noted maybe the Finance Committee should have a policy in place not to add positions mid budget year. Jodie Garzon agreed, the Select Board and Town Administrator are committed to taking a risk knowing tough choices will have to be made for the FY21 Operating Budget. Vote: 6/0 motion carries.

Article #4 Capital Items:

Peter Berube: This article funds the following:

Fire Scott Air Packs & Bottles	\$ 30,000.00
DPW Intersection Safety Signs	\$ 13,000.00
DPW Engineering Study – Village & Birch streets	\$ 38,000.00
School MS/HS Boiler Repair	\$ 25,000.00
School Engineering Study – Roof & Mechanicals	\$100,000.00
School MS/HS Locker Replacement Phase II	<u>\$ 20,000.00</u>
Total:	<u>\$226,000.00</u>

The Capital Planning Committee met several times to prioritize the town's capital needs. The above items were considered the highest priority. The items were discussed at the Tri-Board Meeting. The Finance Committee recommends approval of this article.

Craig Schultze voiced his objection to the limited list of capital items the Select Board bring forth for consideration. There were items on the Capital Planning Committee's list such as a School Passenger Bus, Phase II of the Furniture Project or the Wireless Network that could have been considered with the funds slated for items the committee did not vote to recommend. The limited list deems the Finance Committee a rubber stamp committee; given the exact number of items funds are available for. Jodie Garzon expressed her agreement and would have liked to have the option of funding road improvements. The road improvements capital request of \$200,000.00 was removed from the Warrant by the Select Board, had it not been, the committee could vote to fund some road improvements. Doug Riley inquired if there should be an annual article for road improvements at each Fall Town Meeting when Free Cash is available. The Town's Operating Budget does not fund road improvements; all road improvements are funded with Chapter 90 Funds provided by the Commonwealth. Jim McCaffrey will consider the group's concerns. The Select Board presents to the town what they feel are the town's priorities. The process of determining what goes on the Warrant can be discussed at a future Tri-Board Meeting. Jodie Garzon noted the committee's role is to consider any financial ramifications voting certain items have on the town's overall budget. The committee consists of nine volunteer members. Town Meeting is their constituency. Reducing their role to a rubber stamp committee is a disservice to the time and effort it takes to make recommendations on Warrant Articles and the town's Operating Budget.

Peter Berube acknowledged the Capital Planning Committee's time and effort in their prioritization of the town's capital items and noted Jonathan Barry did a great job. Jodie Garzon thanked the Capital Planning Committee for their efforts and acknowledged the town has a much better picture of the town's capital needs in the next five to ten years.

Article #5 Police Cruiser Lease

Jim Borgman: This article, in the amount of \$17,700.00 would fund a three-year lease of a Police Cruiser. The Finance Committee recommends approval of this article.

Article #6 OPEB Actuarial Study

Jodie Garzon: This article, in the amount of \$7,000.00, was an oversight at the May 2019 Town Meeting. The studies are conducted every two years. The Finance Committee recommend approval of this article.

Article #7 Change of Name from "Board of Selectmen" to "Select Board"

Joyce Boiardi: This article will change the Town's Charter to reference "Select Board" instead of "Board of Selectman" and reference "the Moderator" instead of "he". The Finance Committee recommends approval of this article. Jim McCaffrey noted that the change is a two-part process; the first a Town Meeting Vote and the second a Ballot Question.

Article #8 Zoning ByLaw Amendment Senior Residential Community Development Age Qualifications

Jim Bullion: The ByLaw amendment would clarify the rules regarding exceptions by explicitly setting the minimum age at 22 years for over 55 communities. The Finance Committee recommends approval of this article.

Article #9 Zoning ByLaw Amendment Municipal Facilities Overlay & Zoning Map

Jim Bullion: This article will add a parcel of land on Island Road to the ByLaw. The parcel of land is primarily wetland, is owned by the Town and has no facilities on it. The Finance Committee recommends approval of this article.

A resident from Island Road inquired if there are plans to build on that parcel of land; there are not. She thanked the Finance Committee for their time, hard work and diligence in making recommendations to Town Meeting.

Jodie Garzon closed the Pre-Town Public Hearing at 9:03 PM.

Bills Payable:

Peter Berube made a motion to recommend approval of payment to Our Town Publishing Impressions in the amount of \$2,459.10 for printing the Finance Committee's Report; Craig Schultze seconded. Vote: 8/0 motion carries unanimously.

Meeting Minutes Approval:

Craig Schultze made a motion to recommend approval of the October 16, 2019 Meeting Minutes; Joyce Boiardi seconded. Vote: 8/0 motion carries unanimously.

Adjourn:

Craig Schultze made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 PM; Peter Berube seconded. Vote 8/0 motion carries unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Deirdre Gilmore