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**TOWN OF NORTON
FINANCE COMMITTEE
Remote Participation Meeting
May 18, 2020
6:30 P.M.**

MINUTES

I. Call to Order

The May 18, 2020 meeting of the Finance Committee was held via Remote participation meeting and was called to order at 6:32 P.M., by Mr. William Rotondi, Chairman of the Finance Committee.

Finance Committee Members Present: Mr. Peter Carignan, Mr. Walter Eykel, Mr. Aaron Smith, Ms. Paula Daniels, Ms. Aimee Sawyer, Mr. Stephen Evans, Mr. William Rotondi, Mr. Richard Dorney, Mr. Thomas DeLuca, Ms. Bonnie Yezukevich.

Absent Mr. Michael Fiore.

II. New Business

Update on Town Meeting Timeline

FY21 Budget Presentation and/or Discussion

Mr. Yunits began the meeting by stating that there are uncertainties in the budget and with this it will move forward with the town meeting and a budget: new growth reduction of 154,068.00 from FY20 estimate (\$745,000). Local aid is estimated to \$16 million, or a 10% reduction from FY20 (government aid was restricted to \$220,702.00). Chapter 70 is the big unknown and if cut 10% it would be disastrous (it could result to \$1.2M loss). There is hope the federal government comes through to help maintain the state's chapter 70. Local receipts would be reduced to 23% from FY19. Support from finance committee is \$600,000.00 from free cash and \$439,500.00 from stabilization to help cover some of the cut in state aid, reduction and receipts. Southeastern Regional budget is still not finalized, but it was prepared before the pandemic. He's hopeful something will be done to reduce the budget.

Based on revenue available the entire budget will increase 2.5%, general government will increase 2.2% and the Norton Public Schools budget will increase 2.5%. There were reductions all around. Original requests from departments was 2.07% increase and this is being reduced. The public school's budget will be reduced by \$1.6M.

Ms. Rotondi asked about the local aid number. Mr. Yunits stated that this is \$16,000,441.84. Mr. Rotondi asked the difference between the estimated number and the actual number. Mr. Yunits stated that he needs to look at the actual local aid.



Mr. Smith asked about that the chapter 70 would be a 10% reduction. Mr. Yunits stated that because our chapter 70 was not going up much, he hopes that with federal funding, they would leave this number alone. Mr. Smith asked if this funding would come from the governor, to which Mr. Yunits agreed.

Mr. Evans asked how confident are we that the local aid will be reached, are we doing enough to make sure that this number is achieved. Mr. Yunits stated that we are using an ultra-conservative number, but he's concerned about 2022 as we won't generate a lot of free cash.

Ms. Sawyer asked if the state house knew when the final budget would be out. Mr. Yunits stated that he will reach out to Senator Feeney and will let us know about it in the next meeting.

Mr. Rotondi expressed his concern that a year from now, that if we do what we normally do in October, how much worse will it be next year. Mr. Yunits stated that people should be made aware that we may not be getting more money in October. He added that our receipts are a million dollars ahead of what was anticipated. Mr. Rotondi asked how anticipated, to which Mr. Yunits answered anticipated to what was budgeted last year.

Mr. Rotondi asked if the money is not there what's the next plan – especially for the school budget. Mr. Yunits stated that in discussion with the superintendent, he stated that what they are not paying in bus fees there will be some turn back, and they are anticipated that this extra cash will be available in the fall.

Mr. Smith stated that a note should be placed to revisit the issue of the fees for special education transportation.

Mr. Rotondi asked if the select board decided on the town meeting issue and Mr. Yunits stated that they will meet this Wednesday. Mr. Rotondi asked if June 8 was still a go, to which Mr. Yunits stated that it won't happen on that time frame. Mr. Rotondi asked if after that he would have had the discussion with the department head. Mr. Yunits agreed.

Mr. Evans asked if a communication was done with other departments about the budget cuts. Mr. Yunits stated that he hasn't communicated with anyone.

Mr. Eykel asked what will be available next Wednesday for the fin com meeting. Mr. Yunits stated we will discuss the full budget and by then he would have discussed the cuts with all the departments.



Mr DeLuca asked what's the balance in free cash after the \$600k. Mr. Yunits answered just over one million.

Mr. Evans asked how much in turn back will we be receiving. Mr Yunits stated that there will be some. Mr. Evans asked how come we don't see the personnel items in the school budget. Mr. Yunits answered he doesn't remember not requesting it, but they always presented this way. Mr. Evans added that even the revenue form changed.

Mr. Dorney stated that he remembers to see the salaries for the school administration officers and how there was a little of confusion on determining who was part of the personnel in that list.

Mr. Evans is there was a delay with the 911 collaborative. Mr. Yunits stated that because they were essential, this never stopped operating.

Mr. Rotondi stated that he received an email from Dr Baeta stating that he wanted to set up a joint meeting between all three boards and that he didn't hear anything from the selectmen. Mr. Rotondi answered if the cost of the food distribution could be presented to the Finance Committee. Mr. Rotondi asked if there was a possibility to develop an ad-hoc committee to determine the cost of the food distribution. Mr. DeLuca asked he doesn't understand the creation of this ad-hoc. Mr. Yunits stated that Ms. Steele and Ms. Deley would like to be part of the ad-hoc meeting. Mr. Rotondi stated that he was thinking a presentation and a discussion would happen, instead of creating an ad-hoc committee. Mr. DeLuca asked what people are expecting with the ad-hoc committee, and if they were expecting for money to be distributed. Mr. Rotondi stated that he doesn't know the purpose of this committee. Mr. Evans stated that there were some outstanding questions that ought to be answered and maybe to schedule a joint meeting with the school committee, instead of ad-hoc would be preferable.

Mr. Evans what's the due date to submit the recommendations from the Finance Committee. Mr. Yunits stated that the warrants need to be posted 14 days before the town meeting. Mr. Rotondi asked at what point do we have to have the public hearing. Mr. Yunits stated that the warrant with recommendations would have be posted on June 16, if the meeting would happen on June 25.



III. Old Business

IV. Open session for topics not reasonably anticipated 48 hours in advance

V. Review and Approval of Minutes

Mr. Carignan moved to approve the minutes for February 26, 2020 as amended. Ms. Sawyer second. All were in favor, except for four abstentions (Mr. Dorney, Mr. Rotondi, Mr. DeLuca and Ms. Yezukevich).

Mr. Carignan moved to approve the minutes for February 27, 2020 as amended. Mr. Evans second. All were in favor, except for three abstentions (Mr. Dorney, Mr. DeLuca and Ms. Yezukevich).

Mr. Smith moved to approve the minutes for March 9, 2020 as amended. Ms. Sawyer second. All were in favor, except for one abstention (Mr. Dorney).

Mr. Carignan moved to approve the minutes for March 11, 2020 as amended. Mr. Evans second. All were in favor, except for one abstention (Mr. Dorney).

VI. Executive Session

VII. Adjournment

Mr. Rotondi entertained a motion at 7:53 P.M. to adjourn this meeting. Mr. DeLuca moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Smith second. All were in favor, and the vote was unanimous.

Respectfully submitted by

Sonia Tsilis, Recording Secretary

Minutes Approved by Committee on:

6/10/2020

Signature:

William Rotondi

William Rotondi, Finance Committee Chair