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TOWN OF NORTON
FINANCE COMMITTEE

April 14, 2021
7:00 P.M.
MINUTES

I. Call to Order

The April 14, 2021 meeting of the Finance Committee was held via Remote Participation Meeting and was called to order at 7:00 P.M. by Mr. Stephen Evans, Chairman of the Finance Committee.

Finance Committee Members Present: Ms. Aimee Sawyer, Mr. Peter Carignan, Ms. Paula Daniels, Mr. Michael Fiore, Mr. William Rotondi, Mr. Aaron Smith, Mr. Zachary Tsilis, Ms. Bonnie Yezukevich.

Absent: Mr. Kevin Snyder

Mr. Jack Conway, Select Board Chairperson, called to order the Special Meeting with the Select Board at 7:01 PM. Roll Call: Mr. John Conway, Ms. Rene Deley, Ms. Christine Deveau, Mr. Michael Toole, Absent: Ms. Megan Artz.

II. New Business

Mr. Evans asked for questions from the Finance Committee before beginning. Mr. Tsilis asked if we should be proactive in helping the School Budget now for FY23. He also asked what the Stabilization amount is and should we put more in this fund now. Mr. Yunits stated that we should be careful going forward for this year and next. The Stabilization amount is a little over \$2M. Mr. Evans asked if he has a forecast of what the potential of Free Cash will be. Mr. Yunits stated \$1.7 -2 M. The amount going toward the budget from the Stabilization Fund this year is \$73,199.

Mr. Yunits also stated that he has increased the School Budget recommendation by \$94,816 which will come from Free Cash. The total recommendation is now \$31,812,760.

Mr. Toole is concerned about the shortage to the school and the setting us up for failure next year. Ms. Daniels questioned if the 2 ½% increases in the budget was for Special Education. Does this mean zero increase to General Education?

Review, Discuss, and/or Vote Town Meeting and /or Operating Budget Requests, to include but not be limited to:

- A. **Annual Town Meeting Article 12- To expand the Purpose of Article 13 of the October 2019 Town Meeting to also include the so-called Reed & Barton Lots on Elm Street (Map 17, Lot 32-01, and Map 17, Lot 360.** Mr. Yunits read the Article as written in the warrant showing that the language has been amended as requested. Mr. DiGiuseppe stated that there was a meeting with CEC consultants to

ask how the remaining balance of the funds could be used. CEC said they could help identify any dangerous plumes via drilling multiple wells so remediation could be assessed. Mr. Zaner, Board of Health, also spoke that they would like to have a deep well to continue monitoring oil and other contaminants at the lagoon on Cross Street. The CEC hasn't received a cost for those wells, but were certain that the \$50,000 would be adequate. That would leave about \$13,000 to help with securing the site and pumping the remaining septic tanks. Ms. Sawyer asked if Council has reviewed these actions so we are not assuming ownership. Mr. Zaner stated that Council has reviewed these items and we are OK as long as we stay onsite. There was much discussion regarding the onus on the town regarding ownership and the remediation for neighbors. Some but not all of the points are written below: Mr. Evans asked how you sell property that no one owns. Mr. DiGiuseppe stated that the potential buyer would need to work with Council and the Courts to clear the sale. Mr. Tsilis asked how we are going to pay for the well testing and if the results are bad what happens. Mr. Zaner asked CEC the same question and they said the existing money should cover these expenses. Mr. Evans stated that this Article is not to make a plan but to allow some leniency with the existing funds. Mr. Yunits stated that if the results are bad, we would go to the state for existing help. Mr. Conway, Ms. Deley and others think we have a moral obligation to find out all we can. Ms. Deley requested the presence of Council at a meeting to ask and secure the questions. Mr. Evans agreed to wait on a vote for this Article.

B. Annual Town Meeting Article 17 – Zoning Bylaw Amendment to allow an applicant for a marijuana facility to apply for building permits after approval of a special permit and site plan.

Select Board voted April 1, 2021.

Mr. Evans entertained motion. Ms. Sawyer motioned to approve Article 17 as written. Mr. Smith seconded. Vote – Unanimous

C. Annual Town Meeting Article 16- Amend to the Storm Water By-Law.

Ms. Carlino stated that there are many changes coming from several areas in the State. The town also has to clarify their own items. She gave a high level review explaining how the By-Law has been changed and where clarification was needed.

Mr. Conway entertained a motion to approve. Ms. Deley made the motion to approve Article 16 as written. Ms. Deveau seconded. Vote – Unanimous.

Mr. Evans entertained motion. Ms. Sawyer motioned to recommend Article 16 as written. Mr. Smith seconded. Vote - Unanimous

D. Annual Town Meeting Article 9– To rescind the unused portions of previously authorized borrowing for E Main St Sewer Project.

Mr. Yunits stated that the amount of \$700,000 will be shown in the motion and shared the exact wording for the Article.

Mr. Conway entertained a motion to approve. Ms. Deley made the motion to approve Article 9 as written. Ms. Deveau seconded. Vote – Unanimous

Mr. Evans entertained motion. Ms. Sawyer motioned to recommend Article 9 as written. Mr. Smith seconded. Vote - Unanimous

E. Special Town Meeting Article 14 – To raise money for the Capital Improvement Fund.

Mr. Yunits stated that since we do not need additional fund we recommend no action. Ms. Deley asked if the entire articles can be removed rather than take no action. Mr. Yunits stated that this is possible and there would be no adverse effect.

Mr. Conway entertained a motion to remove Article 14 from the warrant. Ms. Deley made the motion to remove Article 14 from the warrant. Ms. Deveau seconded. Vote – Unanimous

The Finance Committee does not need to vote on this Article.

F. Special Town Meeting Article 15– To raise money for the Capital Improvement Fund.

This Article was removed from the warrant for the same reason as Article 14.

Mr. Conway entertained a motion to remove Article 15 from the warrant. Ms. Deley made the motion to remove Article 15 from the warrant. Ms. Deveau seconded. Vote – Unanimous

The Finance Committee does not need to vote on this Article.

G. Special Town Meeting Article 7 – To transfer \$3,000 to the Highway Department to pay for the collecting and disposing of discarded items abandoned along the roadways that require special handling.

Mr. Yunits stated that the Highway Department is usually able to cover this with the recycling fees, but has run out of money this year. Mr. Tsilis asked if there's a way to get Bristol County Prison to bring out people to help pick the streets up. Mr. Yunits will look into this. Ms. Deley asked that the \$3,000 be in the final warrant. Mr. Yunits stated that anyone can call the Highway Department when they see items that have been abandoned. Ms. Deley asked if people pick up in their neighborhoods could they call the Highway Department to pick up bags left along the street. Mr. Yunits answered in the affirmative.

Mr. Conway entertained a motion to approve. Ms. Deley made the motion to approve Article 7 as written. Ms. Deveau seconded. Vote – Unanimous

Mr. Evans entertained motion. Ms. Sawyer motioned to recommend Article 7 to use \$3,000 from Free Cash. Mr. Smith seconded. Vote – Unanimous

H. Special Town Meeting Article 6 – To authorize the Select Board to grant and convey all of its right, title, and interest in a parcel of land located a 0 E Main St – Assessors Map 1)Parcel 78.

Mr. Yunits shared the map of this parcel directly across from Leonard St.

Mr. Conway entertained a motion to approve. Ms. Deley made the motion to approve Article 6 as written. Ms. Deveau seconded. Vote – Unanimous

Mr. Evans entertained motion. Ms. Sawyer motioned to recommend Article 6 as written

Mr. Smith seconded. Vote – Unanimous

I. Review of Town Budget

1. Select Board Department (122)

Mr. Conway stated that the Select Board doesn't need to vote on each area. They vote at the end for the entire budget.

There was much discussion regarding the percentage of raises, how it affects the entire budget and where savings might be found. Mr. Yunits stated that a projection can be made showing the increases for the next few years. The Select Board is going to discuss this further before they approve. Mr. Evans stated that if the Select Board finds anything egregious the Finance Committee can reconsider their vote.

Mr. Evans entertained a motion to accept each line as shown below. Ms. Sawyer made the motion and read each line. Mr. Smith seconded. Vote – Unanimous for each line read.

Personnel Services	510	\$63,900.00	Unanimous
Charges & Expenditures	570	3,210.00	Unanimous
Totals		67,110.00	Unanimous

2. Town Manager Department (123)

Mr. Evans entertained a motion to accept each line as shown below. Ms. Sawyer made the motion and read each line. Mr. Smith seconded. Vote – Unanimous for each line read.

Personnel Services	510	\$271,097.00	Unanimous
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Charges & Expenditures	570	64,500.00	Unanimous
Totals		335,597.00	Unanimous

3. Town Accountant Department (135)

Mr. Evans entertained a motion to accept each line as shown below. Ms. Sawyer made the motion and read each line. Mr. Smith seconded. Vote – Unanimous for each line read.

Personnel Services	510	\$225,392.00	Unanimous
Purchase of Services	520	26,000.00	Unanimous
Charges & Expenditures	570	3,685.00	Unanimous
Totals		255,077.00	Unanimous

4. Assessors Department (141)

Mr. Evans entertained a motion to accept each line as shown below. Ms. Sawyer made the motion and read each line. Mr. Smith seconded. Vote – Unanimous for each line read.

Personnel Services	510	\$181,492.00	Unanimous
Charges & Expenditures	570	39,448.00	Unanimous
Totals		220,940.00	Unanimous

5. Treasurer/Collector Department (137)

Mr. Evans entertained a motion to accept each line as shown below. Ms. Sawyer made the motion and read each line. Mr. Smith seconded. Vote – Unanimous for each line read.

Personnel Services	510	\$246,517.00	Unanimous
Charges & Expenditures	570	53,350.00	Unanimous
Totals		299,867.00	Unanimous

6. Data Processing Department (155)

Mr. Evans entertained a motion to accept each line as shown below. Ms. Sawyer made the motion and read each line. Mr. Smith seconded. Vote – Unanimous for each line read.

Personnel Services	510	\$ 29,741.00	Unanimous
Charges & Expenditures	570	425,175.00	Unanimous
Totals		454,916.00	Unanimous

7. Town Clerk Department (161)

Mr. Evans entertained a motion to accept each line as shown below. Ms. Sawyer made the motion and read each line. Mr. Smith seconded. Vote – Unanimous for each line read.

Personnel Services	510	\$121,844.00	Unanimous
Charges & Expenditures	570	8,650.00	Unanimous
Totals		130,494.00	Unanimous

8. Conservation Commission Department (171)

Mr. Evans entertained a motion to accept each line as shown below. Ms. Sawyer made the motion and read each line. Mr. Smith seconded. Vote – Unanimous for each line read.

Personnel Services	510	\$132,851.00	Unanimous
Charges & Expenditures	570	20,172.00	Unanimous

Totals		153,023.00	Unanimous

9. Planning Board Department (175)

Mr. Evans entertained a motion to accept each line as shown below. Ms. Sawyer made the motion and read each line. Mr. Smith seconded. Vote – Unanimous for each line read.

Personnel Services	510	\$128,995.00	Unanimous
Charges & Expenditures	570	4,495.00	Unanimous
Totals		133,490.00	Unanimous

10. Municipal Bldg. Maint. Department (192)

Mr. Evans entertained a motion to accept each line as shown below. Ms. Sawyer made the motion and read each line. Mr. Smith seconded. Vote – Unanimous for each line read.

Charges & Expenditures	570	\$182,250.00	Unanimous
Totals		182,250.00	Unanimous

11. Police Department (210)

Mr. Tsilis stated that he'd rather see more full time employees to be able to reduce overtime expenses. Chief Clark replied that it is still more cost effective to not hire more people when you factor in salary and employee benefits.

Mr. Evans entertained a motion to accept each line as shown below. Ms. Sawyer made the motion and read each line. Mr. Smith seconded. Vote – Unanimous for each line read.

Personnel Services	510	\$3,608,257.00	Unanimous
Charges & Expenditures	570	209,800.00	Unanimous
Totals		3,818,057.00	Unanimous

12. Fire Department (220)

Mr. Evans entertained a motion to accept each line as shown below. Ms. Sawyer made the motion and read each line. Mr. Smith seconded. Vote – Unanimous for each line read.

Personnel Services	510	\$4,030,118.00	Unanimous
Charges & Expenditures	570	226,440.00	Unanimous
Totals		4,256,558.00	Unanimous

13. Emergency Medical Serv. Department (230)

Mr. Evans entertained a motion to accept each line as shown below. Ms. Sawyer made the motion and read each line. Mr. Smith seconded. Vote – Unanimous for each line read.

Charges & Expenditures	570	\$178,800.00	Unanimous
Totals		178,800.00	Unanimous

14. Emergency Planning Department (240)

Mr. Evans entertained a motion to accept each line as shown below. Ms. Sawyer made the motion and read each line. Mr. Smith seconded. Vote – Unanimous for each line read.

Charges & Expenditures	570	\$7,700.00	Unanimous
Totals		7,700.00	Unanimous

15. Inspection Department (241)

Mr. Evans entertained a motion to accept each line as shown below. Ms. Sawyer made the motion and read each line. Mr. Smith seconded. Vote – Unanimous for each line read.

Personnel Services	510	\$205,309.00	Unanimous
Charges & Expenditures	570	19,025.00	Unanimous
Totals		224,334.00	Unanimous

16. Animal Control Department (292)

Mr. Evans entertained a motion to accept each line as shown below. Ms. Sawyer made the motion and read each line. Mr. Smith seconded. Vote – Unanimous for each line read.

Personnel Services	510	\$84,228.00	Unanimous
Charges & Expenditures	570	14,030.00	Unanimous
Totals		98,258.00	Unanimous

17. School Department (300)

Mr. Evans entertained a motion to accept each line as shown below. Ms. Sawyer made the motion and read each line. Mr. Smith seconded. Vote – Unanimous for each line read.

Personnel Services	510	\$26,382,646.00	Unanimous
Charges & Expenditures	570	5,430,114.00	Unanimous
Totals		31,812,760.00	Unanimous

18. Southeastern Reg. Voc. Department (306)

Mr. Evans entertained a motion to accept each line as shown below. Ms. Sawyer made the motion and read each line. Mr. Smith seconded. Vote – Unanimous for each line read.

Assessments	560	\$1,505,760.00	Unanimous
Totals		1,505,760.00	Unanimous

19. Regional Agricultural School Department (308)

Mr. Evans entertained a motion to accept each line as shown below. Ms. Sawyer made the motion and read each line. Mr. Smith seconded. Vote – Unanimous for each line read.

Assessments	560	\$75,570.00	Unanimous
Totals		75,570.00	Unanimous

20. Highway Department (420)

Mr. Evans entertained a motion to accept each line as shown below. Ms. Sawyer made the motion and read each line. Mr. Smith seconded. Vote – Unanimous for each line read.

Personnel Services	510	\$853,348.00	Unanimous
Charges & Expenditures	570	104,200.00	Unanimous
Surface Treatment	580	8,000.00	Unanimous
Repairs to Private Ways	581	1,000.00	Unanimous
Totals		966,548.00	Unanimous

21. Board of Health Department (510)

Mr. Evans entertained a motion to accept each line as shown below. Ms. Sawyer made the motion and read each line. Mr. Smith seconded. Vote – Unanimous for each line read.

Personnel Services	510	\$170,758.00	Unanimous
Charges & Expenditures	570	10,200.00	Unanimous
Totals		180,958.00	Unanimous

22. Public Health Nurse (522)

Mr. Evans entertained a motion to accept each line as shown below. Ms. Sawyer made the motion and read each line. Mr. Smith seconded. Vote – Unanimous for each line read.

Personnel Services	510	\$41,639.00	Unanimous
Charges & Expenditures	570	10,250.00	Unanimous
Totals		51,889.00	Unanimous

23. Council on Aging (541)

Mr. Evans entertained a motion to accept each line as shown below. Ms. Sawyer made the motion and read each line. Mr. Smith seconded. Vote – Unanimous for each line read.

Personnel Services	510	\$ 98,657.00	Unanimous
Charges & Expenditures	570	14,070.00	Unanimous
Totals		112,727.00	Unanimous

24. Veterans Agent (543)

Mr. Evans entertained a motion to accept each line as shown below. Ms. Sawyer made the motion and read each line. Mr. Smith seconded. Vote – Unanimous for each line read.

Personnel Services	510	\$ 87,623.00	Unanimous
Charges & Expenditures	570	3,950.00	Unanimous
Veterans Benefits	579	230,000.00	Unanimous
Totals		321,573.00	Unanimous

25. Library (610)

Mr. Evans entertained a motion to accept each line as shown below. Ms. Sawyer made the motion and read each line. Mr. Smith seconded. Vote – Unanimous for each line read.

Other Charges & Expenditures	570	\$512,051.00	Unanimous
Totals		512,051.00	Unanimous

26. Recreation (630)

Mr. Evans entertained a motion to accept each line as shown below. Ms. Sawyer made the motion and read each line. Mr. Smith seconded. Vote – Unanimous for each line read.

Personnel Services	510	\$26,479.00	Unanimous
Charges & Expenditures	570	16,500.00	Unanimous

Totals		42,979.00	Unanimous

III. Old Business

Follow up items from this meeting:

Follow up items from previous meetings answered at this meeting:

1. Mr. Yunits was asked to put the dollar amount in Article 7. This was written as asking that \$600,000 from Free Cash be appropriated to the Capital Fund.

Follow up items from previous meetings unanswered:

1. Cost estimate if the Town Hall is condemned and the offices had to move into trailers.
2. The voting schedule for future budget meetings.
3. The financial numbers for all open TIFs.
4. Mr. Carignan asked if Mr. Yunits will provide a breakdown of the IP upgrade and the costs of the laptops.
5. Mr. Tsillis asked what the Total Debt of the town is. Ms. Van Dyne will send that out to the committee.
6. Mr. Tsillis asked for a breakdown of cell phone costs from each department.
7. Mr. Dorney asked if there is a breakdown showing the number of permits per electrical, plumbing, etc. And how much money the town receives through this process.
8. Ms. Sawyer asked if he has a number of houses on the Sewer system. He will get it to the Finance Committee next week.
9. Mr. Rotondi asked for a breakdown between the Town Salary and HR departments in the survey.
10. Mr. Tsillis asked if we can get a simple one page spreadsheet showing where the savings are for this year from last year in the different departments (lights, Insurance, SEMRECC, etc.).
11. Mr. Toole asked Mr. Morris from Southeastern Regional if he has a number of Norton applicants that applied but were not accepted. Mr. Morris will get that number for the committee and email to Mr. Yunits or Mr. Conway.
12. Mr. Yunits will ask if the Bristol Agricultural School will be getting any Federal Money that can be used toward the assessment.
13. Mr. Conway asked if the dispatchers been able to get their unemployment claims? Mr. Yunits said that all but two have gotten jobs and he will check on the others.
14. Mr. Evans asked what the status is regarding a reimbursement due to asbestos remediation and the window project at the Yelle School. Mr. Yunits will check and get back to the committee.
15. Before the Finance Committee votes Mr. Tsilis would like more information regarding the employment terms. Mr. Yunits will get this to us.

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

3. **Minutes**

4. **Adjournment**

Mr. Evans entertained a motion at 10:02 P.M. to adjourn this meeting. Ms. Sawyer moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Smith seconded. Vote – Unanimous

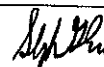
Mr. Conway entertained a motion to adjourn at 10:03 P.M. Mr. Toole made the motion. Ms. Deveau Seconded. Vote – Unanimous

Respectfully submitted by

Patricia Tarantino, Recording Secretary

Minutes approved by Committee on:

Signature:

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Evans', is written over a horizontal line.

Stephen Evans, Finance Committee Chair

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The document has been completed.