

Finance Committee Meeting
March 11, 2013
7:30 PM
Municipal Center – Selectmen’s Conference Room

Present: Chair, Lee Tarantino; Vice-Chair, Michael Flaherty; Peter Carignan; Thomas DeLuca; Richard Dorney; Stephen Evans; Paul Helmreich; William Rotondi; Michael Thomas.
Also present: Town Manager, Michael Yunits.

Absent: Jackie Desrochers.

Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm.

I. Approval of Minutes

Motion was made by Mr. DeLuca to approve the March 6, 2013 Finance Committee minutes as amended. Seconded by Mr. Flaherty. Vote: All in favor, with Mr. Evans abstaining. **Motion carries.**

II. New Business

FY14 Proposed Departmental Budgets

Town Accountant –

Mr. Yunits explained that the Salary portion of this budget includes a contractual increase. He also noted that last year a part-time position was approved and this year the budget includes a full year of funding for it. Mr. Yunits also pointed out that the Expense side has a slight decrease.

Mr. Tarantino pointed out an over 2% increase in salary for the Town Accountant is shown in the paperwork and that he didn’t feel that it wasn’t the time for the town to be funding it. Mr. Thomas mentioned that if the increase is contractual then the contract has already been agreed upon and signed.

Mr. James Puello, Town Accountant, said that he is presently making \$90K and that the FY14 proposal is for \$92,700. He noted that this is less of an increase than what Mr. Tarantino is looking at. He said that the salary that Mr. Tarantino is referring to was from 2 years ago, not this past year, so the increase looks even greater.

Treasurer/Collector –

Mr. Yunits noted that there are slight decreases in the Longevity and Salaries lines. He explained that a senior level employee left and was replaced by a newer, lower paid employee.

Tax Title Foreclosure –

Mr. Yunits said that this department has been level-funded at \$40K.

Maturing Debt –

Mr. Yunits said that his recommendation is for \$200K more than last year for borrowing for major repairs on buildings (capital expenditures).

Interest on Long Term Debt and Interest on Notes –

Mr. Yunits said that the request for Long Term Debt is \$325,525, and that the request for Interest on Notes is \$111,032.

Employee Benefits –

Mr. Yunits noted that there is a 2% Health Insurance increase. He said that by 2028 Bristol County plans to have the pension fully funded.

Unemployment –

Mr. Yunits said that Unemployment is level-funded at \$120K, but that it may need to be re-examined if there are going to be lay-offs.

Miscellaneous –

Mr. Yunits noted an increase of \$10K in the Gas line item for this year, explaining that gas prices are so unpredictable.

He also pointed out the significant increase in both Worker's Compensation and Police and Fire Accident Insurance because of the needs for it this past year and the anticipated continuing need.

Veteran's Services –

Mr. Yunits noted that the Contracted Services line is \$48,641, which is what Norton pays to the Veteran's District the town is now a part of, along with Foxboro, Mansfield, and Easton. Mr. Yunits also pointed out an overall slight decrease.

Mr. DeLuca said that he feels that the District is not working effectively. He said that the point of the district was to get the veterans of Norton better services and to lower the cost to the town. He said that the math is not adding up and that it seems that being a part of the district is costing the town more money.

Mr. Michael Johns, Veterans Agent, replied that the district provides better services and continuity to veterans for equal or less cost. He noted that Norton is paying less than a quarter of the district costs, as these costs are based on each town's population.

Mr. DeLuca emphasized that he is not disappointed with the service that veterans are receiving from the district, but has a problem with the cost. He pointed out that the idea was that the district was supposed to save the town money in Salaries and Contracted Services and it's not.

Mr. Tarantino pointed out that the salary of the part-time person went up 6%. Mr. Johns said that he would look into that and get back to the FinCom. He said it should be a contractual 2% increase.

Memorial and Vets –

It was noted that this budget was increased from \$1K to \$1,500.

III. Old Business

Reserve Fund Transfers – Treasurer/Collector:

A discussion was had on the concern over the low balance of the Finance Committee Reserve Fund.

- ATB (Appellate Tax Board) Expense:

Motion was made by Mr. Thomas to recommend the transfer of \$2,423.74 from the FinCom Reserve Fund to Account #001-750-594-5925 (Interest on Notes). Seconded by Mr. Flaherty. Vote: All in favor. **Motion carries.**

- Interest on Long Term Debt:

Motion was made by Helmreich to recommend the transfer of \$22,782 from the FinCom Reserve to Account #001-750-590-5915 (Interest on Long Term Debts) for payment of a FY13 interest obligation for the Winnecunnet Sewer Project Loan. Seconded by Mr. Thomas. Vote: All in favor. **Motion carries.**

- Salaries – Employee's Military Leave:

It was decided to wait on funding this request at this time.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for March 13, 2013 at 7:30 pm.

Adjournment

Motion was made by Mr. Thomas to adjourn at 8:35 pm. Seconded by Mr. Flaherty. Vote: Unanimous.
Motion carries.

Documents Referenced: Minutes of March 6, 2013
Budget #135 – Town Accountant
Budget #147 – Treasurer/Collector
Budget #158 – Tax Title Foreclosure
Budget #711 – Maturing Debt
Budget #750 – Debt Interest
Budget #910 – Employee Benefits
Budget #911 – Unemployment
Budget #940 – Miscellaneous
Budget #543 – Veterans
Budget #692 – Memorial and Vets
Reserve Fund Transfer requests – Treasurer/Collector

Respectfully Submitted by:

Lee Tarantino, Finance Committee Chair

Date Approved

Sara Lyons, Finance Committee Secretary