

Finance Committee Meeting
March 12, 2014
7:00 PM
Municipal Center – Selectmen's Conference Room

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NORTON TOWN CLERK

Present: Chair, Michael Flaherty; Vice-Chair, Peter Carignan; Thomas DeLuca; Richard Donney; Stephen Evans; Michael Fiore; Paul Helmreich; Michael Thomas.

Also present: Town Manager, Michael Yunits.

Absent: Jackie Desrochers; William Rotondi; Lee Tarantino.

Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm.

I. Approval of Minutes

Motion was made by Mr. DeLuca to approve the March 5, 2014 Finance Committee minutes as written. Seconded by Mr. Carignan. Vote: All in favor. **Motion carries.**

II. New Business

Mr. Yunits informed the FinCom that there will be an increase in unrestricted Local Aid. More details to come.

FY15 Proposed Departmental Budgets:

Data Processing #155 – Ms. Charlene Fisk, Communications Director, reviewed the Data processing budget noting that the total requested is \$156,708, which reflects a couple of increases for software and firewall replacement. Upon review, Mr. DeLuca suggested that the firewall purchase could come from Capital. Ms. Fisk was open to this suggestion and said that she would pursue this further.

Communications #290 – Ms. Fisk noted that there is an increase in Salaries because of contractual step increases. The total requested amount is \$565,112, an increase of almost \$40K. She said that the department is still short one full-time employee. If this person was to be hired, there would be 2 people working 365/24/7. Ms. Fisk said that she would rather hire 2 part-time employees than 1 full-time employee because it would save the town from paying those benefits. In regards to Charges and Expenditures, Ms. Fisk said that an upgrade/replacement to the radio system is needed. The total amount requested is \$116,630, an increase of about \$7K.

Conservation #171 – Ms. Jennifer Carlino, Conservation Commission Agent, presented the proposed budget as follows: Salaries at \$86,199.68, which is an increase of about \$5K for contractual steps, and \$10,850 (level-funded) for Charges and Expenditures.

Town Accountant #135 – Mr. Yunits reviewed this budget noting that it includes 2 full-time positions and 2 part-time positions. He pointed out that the \$5,500 increase in the \$174,450 Salaries total is due to contractual increases. He also pointed out that the Annual Audit will cost \$24K and that Charges and Expenditures is at \$3,010, up about \$400.

Assessors #141 – Mr. Yunits explained that this budget is level-services. The requested Salaries is \$125,443.31 and Charges and Expenditures is \$32,330. He also noted that this department would like more hours for the part-time position. He also said that the largest increase in Contracted Services was for software.

Board of Health #510 and Public Nurse #522 – Mr. Leon Dumont, Health Agent, stated that Charges and Expenditures budget is level-funded at \$6,775 and that the Salaries request of \$130,058 only includes step raises. He stated that the same is true for the Public Nurse requested budget.

~Mr. Bernie Marshall, new Water/Sewer Superintendent, introduced himself to the FinCom, then addressed the following budgets for Water and Sewer:

Sewer Enterprise #60/440 – Mr. Marshall pointed out that there is an anticipated increase in the Legal expenses because of the MMA with Mansfield and Foxboro. The line would increase from \$5K to \$20K. He also noted that Engineering went up to \$50K from the \$20K it was for FY14.

Water Enterprise #61/450 – Not much was noted/changed on this budget, just the contractual increases in salary.

Council on Aging #541 – Mr. Yunits stated that the requested Salaries line includes a 1% increase and that the Charges and Expenditures are level-funded. He also noted that the funding for the Fuel Assistance Program is included.

Veteran's Agent #543 – Ms. Estelle Flett, new Veteran's Agent, addressed the FinCom regarding the proposed budget. She introduced herself to the committee and stated that she presently has 42 cases in town. She noted that the Expenses portion of the budget has been reduced from \$7K to \$3,330.

Memorial and Veteran's Day #692 – Ms. Flett pointed out that the requested budget for this account is increased from last year from \$1,500 to \$2,000 in anticipation of the need to hire a marching band from out of town.

Treasurer/Collector #147 – Mr. Yunits reminded the FinCom that the new Treasurer/Collector will be starting on Monday. He pointed out that the requested Salaries is \$194,412 which includes the Treasurer/Collector, the Assistant Treasurer/Collector, and 2 other staff members.

Tax Title #158 – Level-funded at \$40K.

Maturing Debt #711 – The total for this account is \$1,778,843.69. Mr. Yunits said that there would be \$6.5M bond for the High School, and the FY15 interest would be \$260K. He also said that \$2,042,943 would be bonded for school improvements and the Daggett-Crandall purchase, with the FY15 interest at \$40,858.

Debt Interest #750 – Mr. Yunits informed the FinCom that the FY15 amount for Debt Interest is \$637,563.29.

Employee Benefits #910 – Mr. Yunits explained that this account covers about 450 employees. He noted that Medical Insurance has increased 3% to \$7,000,200. He said that each Family Plan costs the town about \$16K/year.

Unemployment #911 – Mr. Yunits said he would like to keep the budget at \$80K for FY15.

Miscellaneous #940 – Mr. Yunits noted that this budget includes \$172K for Gas, Fuel, and Diesel. He also mentioned that Worker's Compensation could have a \$40K increase because 2 employees have been out for a while. Mr. Flaherty suggested bidding this out and Mr. Yunits said that he would look into it.

Annual Town Meeting Warrant Articles:

Revaluation Article – This article requests \$55K for the Revaluation, which would be raised and appropriated.

Norton Center Sewer Extension – The total amount for this article is \$2.7M.

Water Treatment Plant – This article is for the Water Treatment Plant on Pine Street. It is to treat drinking water from Wells 4, 5, and 6. Mr. Marshall explained that \$8.2M would be bonded.

Mr. Marshall stated that both Water/Sewer articles have been heard by the Capital Improvements Committee.

III. Old Business

Old business was not conducted at this meeting.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for March 18, 2014 at 7:00 pm.

Adjournment

Motion was made by Mr. DeLuca to adjourn at 8:30 pm. Seconded by Mr. Helmreich. Vote: Unanimous. **Motion carries.**

Documents Referenced:

~ Minutes of March 5, 2014
~ FY15 Proposed budgets for the following depts.: #s
60/440, 61/450, 135, 141, 147, 155, 158, 171, 290, 510, 522, 541, 543, 692, 711, 750, 910, 911, 940
~ Warrant Articles – Revaluation, Norton Center Sewer Extension, Water Treatment Plant

Respectfully Submitted by:


Michael Flaherty, Finance Committee Chair


Sara Lyons, Finance Committee Secretary


Date Approved