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TOWN OF NORTON
FINANCE COMMITTEE
Municipal Center – Selectmen’s Conference Room

MARCH 18, 2019
7:00 P.M.

MINUTES

I. 7:00 P.M. Call to Order

The March 18, 2019 meeting of the Finance Committee was held in the Board of Selectmen’s Room and was called to order beginning with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:00 P.M., by Mr. William Rotondi, Chairman.

Members Present:

Mr. Peter Carignan, Mr. Tom DeLuca, Mr. Richard Dorney, Mr. Stephen Evans, Mr. Walter Eykel, Mr. Mike Fiore, Mr. Paul Helmreich, Ms Aimee Sawyer, Mr. Aaron Smith, and Ms Bonnie Yezukevich.

Absent: None

Also in attendance was Mr. Yunits, Town Manager

II. New Business

Proposed FY20 Budget Reviews:

#300 – Norton Public Schools – Dr. Baeta, Superintendent, presented the budget pointing out contractual increases, where class sizes are increasing and how to staff accordingly, how State Mandates will cause increases, circuit breaker, transitional position request, para-professionals, retirees and the cost to replace them, other creative funding sources that will help the school budget. He would like to reinstate a Health and Wellness person, and acquire a Second Resource Office. He spoke about some of the schools successes, for example: the 62 students currently in the ‘Before and After School Reading Program’. He also mentioned a State House Bill in regards to the amount of money Norton receives per student and that Norton is in the very low range compared to other towns in the state. There are members of the MA and Local Teacher Association have agreed that the amount should be more and want to pursue this.

Questions asked of Mr. Baeta:

1. Regarding the Article you want to present at the Town Meeting, please be more specific. Yes
2. What is the Delta of students? We have a delta of 35 students.
3. What is included in the 3.58% increase? This increase includes level services and the State Mandate.
4. Is there mandated Kindergarten from the State? Yes and the new formula will help Norton.
5. How many school choice students do we have? We have 110 students.
6. Is there a vetting process? Yes. Dr Baeta reviews older students himself.

7. Has there been a number of Norton Students that have left? This number stays about the same. Also, the School Choice amount per student is \$5,000-6,000 and this has been frozen for years.
8. Do you see any one community coming here more than others? Yes, the highest numbers are from Attleboro and Taunton.
9. What is our retention? It fluctuates each month, but stays relatively the same.
10. How many school choice students need services? We currently have 2 in English as Second Language and 1 in Special Education.
11. Are we still working on getting Inter District services? Yes, we are looking at this for specific programs to share costs.
12. If the school population is going down why is the class size going up? It depends on what grades you are looking, we have a bubble that is currently at the 3rd grade and a large increase in Kindergarten. The teachers have to shift to accommodate this bubble.
13. Are all the schools at full capacity? LGN has 1 open room, HAY has 2 open, Middle School has some open space in one wing and the others are full.
14. Where is the request for a Second Resource Officer? This request is in the Police Budget.
15. What is the process to increase resources? It is the same for each position and it is usually done during the summer.
16. What is your latest Administrative hire? The last was the Assistant Principal at JCS.
17. I did not see the Second Resource Officer in the Police Budget nor in the School Budget. Mr. DeLuca stated that is was in the Police "wish" budget.
18. What has been the effect in the new lunch room services? He has found that the quality has gone up and there are more students and staff purchasing. The first year numbers are not in yet, but he thinks costs will be down.
19. When are the Teacher Contracts ending? At the end of this year and renegotiating will begin then.

#290 - Communications – Mr. Yunits presented the budget. He mentioned that a per diem person is being requested to cut down overtime costs. This is also the last year of operating in the old dispatch center as Norton will be moving to the new Regional Communication Center.

Questions asked of Mr. Yunits:

1. Where are our savings at the New Regional Center? Mr. Yunits will bring a breakdown at the next meeting.

FY20 Capital Improvements Plan Recommendations – Mr. Yunits reviewed his recommendations for the items that need to be done now and removed the ones that can wait until fall.

Questions asked of Mr. Yunits:

1. Has last year's backup for schools been resolved? Mr. Baeta stated, yes, funded through Capital Improvements last fall. Mr. Yunits stated the town hall did the same.
2. What are we trying to do with the Field Master Study? Mr. Baeta stated that they are looking at the best approach to long term field improvements. Currently the football field is closed due to its condition for soccer games. We use Camp Finberg's fields, but at a cost for their use.

Mr. Yunits stated that on March 20th at 6 PM there will be a meeting defining and discussing the Stretch Code at the High School. Also the same night, March 20th 7 PM at the High School, there will be an informational meeting about the Town Hall/Senior Center project.

Mr. Kimball stated that the Board of Selectmen has not taken a position regarding the new buildings yet. They feel that the New Town Hall is a credible request and the Senior Center is necessary. The Senior Population of

Norton will be 22% in a few years. He added that this project is not going to be built without Debt Exclusion. There was discussion regarding that a Debt Exclusion is a totally separate entity and does not affect the speed at which the town pipes are replaced or the school budget. Mr. Smith asked if the Debt Exclusion would be shown separately on the Tax Bill? Showing an amount for budget and another for Debt Exclusion. If not how can we clarify this to the townspeople? Mr. Yunits – No, there is only one total. We just have to explain how the Debt Exclusion has no affect on the annual budget.

III. Old Business

IV. Open items

Next Meeting Monday March 25, 2019

Mr. Eykel volunteered to take minutes on March 24, 2019

Ms Sawyer volunteered to take minutes on April 1, 2019

Ms Yezukevich volunteered to take minutes on April 8, 2019

V. Minutes

Minutes for March 11, 2019 reviewed.

Motion to accept minutes by Mr. DeLuca

Second by Mr. Helmreich

8 yes – 0 no - 2 Abstain due to absence at the meeting being reviewed.

VI. Adjournment

Mr. DeLuca motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:37 P.M.

Seconded by Mr. Helmreich

Unanimous

Respectively submitted by: William Rotondi 5/20/19
William Rotondi, Finance Committee Chair Date Approved
Patricia Tarantino
Patricia Tarantino, Recording Secretary