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**TOWN OF NORTON
FINANCE COMMITTEE
Remote Participation Meeting
June 10, 2020
6:30 P.M.**

MINUTES

I. Call to Order

The June 10, 2020 meeting of the Finance Committee was held via Remote participation 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. Aaron Smith, Mr. William Rotondi, Mr. Richard Dorney, Mr. Thomas DeLuca, Ms. Bonnie Yezukevich, Ms. Aimee Sawyer, Mr. Michael Fiore, Mr. Stephen Evans and Ms. Paula Daniels.

Absent: Mr. Walter Eykel.

II. New Business

**FY21 Budget Presentation, Discussion, and/or vote, including but not limited to:
Southeastern Regional**

Mr. Lopes, on behalf of the Southeastern school district, presented the FY21 budget. He stated that the original budget was presented in March, based 99% on the minimum assessment by each community and the amount of chapter 70 provided.

Mr. Lopes emphasized that there as a cut of 1.7 million dollars on their budget revision in May. He added that he is recommending using the assessments originally supplied by the government and once the house and senate releases the new funding numbers, their school committee will reconvene and reassess.

For Norton's assessment, there was an increase of \$200,000.00. Mr. Lopes believes that the FY21 number will be adjusted for enrollment. He added that Norton's property values increased, more than most communities. But he doesn't know definite numbers, but he is recommending for Norton to approve the \$1,447,135.00 figure.

Mr. Rotondi asked if with the 1.7% reduction what was specifically cut. Mr. Lopes cut supplies by 30%, eliminated all professional development activities, educational trips, they were able to save some money in health insurance, cut all summer activities. He stated that the school committee voted to put all staff on notice that there will be a Reduction in Force.



Mr. Rotondi asked if the committee should vote to approve the original funded amount and if this is subject to change (possible reduction) at a later date. Mr. Lopes stated that yes, this is a hope.

Mr. Rotondi asked if the money we fund Southeastern is monthly. Mr. Lopes stated that this payment happens quarterly. He added that if there is an overpayment, there would be a credit for the town.

Water/Sewer Budgets

Mr. Yunits moved to discuss the recommendation of Sewer Enterprise budget (totaling \$1,765,877.00). Mr. Yunits stated that some of the charges are for paying back the note on the construction of the water treatment plant. Mr. Grant, water/sewer commissioner, stated that the increases are for the plant upgrade and the modifications for the treatment of the water.

Mr. Carignan made a motion to recommend the whole amount (corresponding to personnel services, interfund transfer, charges and expenditures, debt service). Mr. DeLuca seconded the motion. No further discussion. All were in favor and the vote was unanimous.

Mr. Yunits moved to discuss the recommendation of Water Enterprise budget (totaling \$4,563,342.00). Mr. Yunits stated there were increases in the budget due to salaries, where \$75,000.00 applied to the foreman position and another for the position of assistant superintendent. The debt interest increased as well. Mr. Rotondi asked if there is anyone in line for the assistant superintendent position. Mr. Yunits and Mr. Fournier stated that there very low interest, due to the salary not being competitive, when compared to other towns.

Mr. Carignan made a motion to recommend the whole amount (corresponding to personnel services, interfund transfer, charges and expenditures, debt service). Mr. Fiore seconded the motion. No further discussion. All were in favor and the vote was unanimous.

Review, discuss, and/or vote Town Meeting Articles, including but not limited to: FY21 Capital Improvements Plan

Mr. Yunits moved to discuss the FY21 Capital Improvements Plan budget (totaling \$1,765,877.00). Mr. Yunits stated that the Finance Committee recommends \$16,500 to replace the antivirus in the town side, \$60,000.00 to replace three police department vehicles, and \$11,000.00 to replace an AC unit at the police station; on the school side a



recommendation of \$10,000.00 for a calming device, \$22,000.00 on a minibus; for the highway department, a recommendation of \$36,000.00 for a dump truck; for the tree department a recommendation of \$53,400.00 on a bucket truck; on the water department side, a recommendation of \$34,000.00 on a new truck and \$850,000.00 to replace wells 5 and 6.

Mr. Rotondi stated that the estimate is 1.3 million for phases 3,4 and 5 to decommission the wells and replace them with new ones. Mr. Fournier stated that this is correct, considering that replacing a new well is a lengthy process and after that, it will be connected to the new water treatment facility.

Mr. Dorney asked if the contract offered a warranty of any kind. Mr. Fournier stated that he doesn't have the specifics. Mr. Rotondi asked how long does a well last. Mr. Fournier stated that it depends on the size, how deep it is and how you maintain it. Iron and manganese, if not cleaned, it will accumulate and now allow the water into the well from the aquifer.

Ms. Sawyer asked for confirmation if we are borrowing the funds for this project and will be repaid from the water enterprise or the town's budget. Mr. Fournier stated that it comes from the water revenues and not municipality.

Mr. Yunits stated that the total request for capital budget is \$1,300,165.00, where \$416,150 is from the town budget and \$850,000.00 is to be borrowed.

Mr. Carignan made a motion to recommend the whole amount. Mr. DeLuca seconded the motion. No further discussion. All were in favor and the vote was unanimous.

Chapter 90

Mr. Yunits made the recommendation approval of article 2, chapter 90 funds. Mr. DeLuca made a motion to recommend the budget. Mr. Fiore seconded the motion. No further discussion. All were in favor and the vote was unanimous.

Tree Services

Mr. Y made the recommendation of approved the budget for article 5 funds, to make sure that the tree services have a special crane. Mr. Carignan made a motion to recommend the budget. Mr. Fiore seconded the motion. No further discussion. All were in favor and the vote was unanimous.



West Main Street Sewer Project Augmentation

Mr. Yunits made the recommendation to approve the budget for article 15, to augment the sewer project on West Main Street by \$1.1 million dollars. Representatives from Wesson and Sampson (Mr. Steve Petersen) stated that the additional cost comes from dealing with the means and methods of construction (MASS DOT is requesting the rock not to be blasted, rather to be worked manually). Ms. Sawyer asked why the contractor didn't know that DOT did not allow to blast. Mr. Petersen stated that the state looks at all physical aspects of the project, and they are hopeful that once DOT looks at the lack of progress and they will decide to blast the area. The contractor applies for the blasting permit and it's up to the state to approve it or not.

Ms. Sawyer asked if the housing authority has kicked in any funds. Mr. Petersen stated that they capped at 1.7 million.

Mr. Rotondi asked for the timeline of this project and its cost. Mr. Pedersen stated that 3.5 million has been spent thus far.

Mr. Smith made a motion to table this recommendation for a later time, in order to get more information on the actual cost of this project. Mr. Fiore seconded the motion. No further discussion. All were in favor and the vote was unanimous.

III. Old Business

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

V. Review and Approval of Minutes

VI. Executive Session

VII. Adjournment

Mr. DeLuca moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:48 P.M. Ms. Sawyer second. All were in favor, and the vote was unanimous.



Respectfully submitted by

Sonia Tsilis, Recording Secretary

Minutes Approved by Committee on:

7/13/2020

Signature:

William Rotondi

William Rotondi, Finance Committee Chair