

**Finance Committee Meeting
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, April 18, 2023 at 5:30 pm
Bellingham Municipal Center
Lower Level Meeting Room**

Finance Committee Members Present: J. Allam (Chairman), J. Collamati (Vice-Chairman), K. Keppler, J. McCarthy, B. Boyd, J. Flannery, J. Kuzmeskas

Finance Committee Members Absent: All Members Present

Meeting Commenced: J. Allam called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

J. Kuzmeskas made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 21, 2023 Finance Committee meeting, as submitted. Seconded by K. Keppler. Recommended 7/0.

K. Keppler made a motion to approve the minutes from the April 4, 2023 Finance Committee Meeting, as submitted. Seconded by J. McCarthy. Recommended 5/0.

Public Hearing: DPW Director, Jesse Riedle was present to discuss Capital Requests for the Department, as follows:

Cemetery:

Mr. Riedle gave a brief summary on the request for construction of Columbarium #4 at a Town owned cemetery that is operated by the DPW.

K. Keppler made a motion to recommend \$45,000 from Other Cemetery Funds, for the construction of Columbarium #4. Seconded by J. Flannery. Recommended 7/0.

DPW:

Dam engineering services related to the design, permitting, and bid preparation for repairs and upgrades to the Silver Lake Dam was presented to Committee Members for review.

J. Flannery made a motion to recommend \$41,120 from Free Cash for the initial design, engineering, and permitting to the Silver Lake Dam repairs and upgrades. K. Keppler seconded. Recommended 7/0.

Stormwater:

Mr. Riedle gave a brief summary on the request for the purchase of a street sweeper, in the amount of \$242,510, which would replace one that is currently on lease.

B. Boyd made a motion to postpone this recommendation until the Selectboard hears this request and makes their decision. Seconded by J. McCarthy. Recommended 7/0.

Water:

A Capital Request for repair to the generator that is servicing Wells 7 & 8 was presented to the Committee. The current 100KW generator has failed, and it is needed to provide emergency standby power to run Wells 7 & 8. The Department is currently renting a generator, in order to maintain backup power.

J. Collamati made a motion to recommend the generator repair in the amount of \$65,000 from Retained Earnings and Prior Year Articles. Seconded by K. Keppler. Recommended 6/1.

PFAS/TTHM – HAFP:

Mr. Riedle gave a brief summary on the PFAS and TTHM Treatment that needs to be designed and constructed at the Hartford Avenue Filtration Plant. The initial design fee of 10% and OPM fee of 0.5% of projected cost of the estimated \$20 Million project is being requested.

J. Flannery made a motion to recommend \$2.1 Million from Borrowing for the initial design and engineering of the Hartford Avenue Filtration Plant. Seconded by J. Kuzmeskas. Recommended 7/0.

Tree Warden:

J. Kuzmeskas made a motion to recommend \$40,000 from Free Cash for the removal of trees and stumps. Seconded by J. Collamati. Recommended 7/0.

Town Administrator:

The DPW is requesting \$45,000 to acquire 20,000 sq. ft. of land from 97 Depot Street, in order to expand the site of the future DPW Administration Building.

J. Flannery made a motion to recommend \$45,000 from Free Cash for the land acquisition at 97 Depot Street. Seconded by K. Keppler. Recommended 7/0.

Article 23 – Construction of DPW Administration Building

The Town Administrator and DPW Building Committee are requesting \$2.5 Million for the construction of a new DPW Administration Building located at 215 Depot Street. The Building Committee has been currently working with architects to scope out the requirements for this building.

J. Kuzmeskas recommended \$2.5 Million from Borrowing for the construction of a new DPW Administration Building located at 215 Depot Street. Seconded by J. Flannery. Recommended 7/0.

Public Hearing: Ms. MacKinnon presented the Capital Request for a Police Department vehicle, as listed below:

The Police Department is requesting to replace a 2016 Ford Explorer with a 2023 Ford F-150 Responder pick-up truck. The current fleet of utility vehicles are completely stocked with equipment, which leaves the department without a viable available vehicle to transport bulk items. The pick-up truck would end the department's reliance on personal pick-up trucks, as well as vehicles from other Town departments.

J. Flannery made a motion to recommend the purchase of a 2023 F-150 Responder pick-up truck for the Police Department, with \$40,000 from the Police Vehicle Revolving Fund and \$36,368 from Free Cash. B. Brian seconded. Recommended 7/0.

Public Hearing: Building Commissioner, Tim Aicardi was present to discuss the following Requests:

Mr. Aicardi gave a brief summary on the exterior painting on the body of the Old Town Hall. Town Meeting appropriated \$16,000 under Article 7 of the November 2022 Town Meeting to replace trim boards and paint trim. This is for the 2nd Phase of the request, which is to paint the exterior body of the building.

J. Collamati made a motion to recommend \$20,000 from Free Cash for the exterior painting of the Old Town Hall. Seconded by J. McCarthy. Recommended 7/0.

Mr. Aicardi let Committee Members know that Fire Station 1, which is in South Bellingham, is in need of a new roof. This request is for the removal and replacement of shingles, and plywood, at Station 1. If there is additional funds left after roof replacement, the balance would be used to remove and dispose of an asbestos wrapped boiler that is not in use and has been abandoned at this location.

J. Collamati made a motion to recommend \$60,000 from Free Cash for the roof replacement of Fire Station 1 in South Bellingham and for the removal of a boiler that is not in use. Seconded by K. Keppler. Recommended 7/0.

Public Hearing: The School Department was present to discuss the Department's Requests and their FY24 Budget, as follows:

Mr. Marano explained the need for an additional 14-passenger bus for the athletic department. The department currently has 1 passenger bus which has yielded a significant savings over the Vendetti bus contract for athletic events. The current annual savings are estimated at approximately \$20-\$25k, which at an estimated cost of \$65k for the 14-passenger bus would have a 3-year payback vs. a life estimate of 10-15 years. The long term savings can run \$150k, per bus.

A request has been submitted for replacement of the High School cafeteria tables and chairs. The current tables and chairs are beyond repair and are becoming a hazard to move.

Request for replacement of the BHS Cafeteria Hallway was provided for Committee Members to review. The hallway VCT is cracking and a great portion of it needs replacement. The tiles have cracked at each seam creating a tripping hazard. The walls and floors have settled over the years and there are major concrete cracks which need to be ground down and leveled along the whole hallway.

A request for the paving and lighting of Handicap Parking at Bellingham Middle School has been presented. The excavation and paving at BMS for the addition of 12 parking spaces in the front of BMS. These spots will be used for Handicap spaces and short term parking in front of the school.

Mr. Garofano gave a brief summary on the access points replacements that are needed in all school buildings. The current access points are due for replacement and will provide additional bandwidth for users. Bandwidth requirements increase annually. 50% of the funding has been secured through E-Rate. The I.T. Department will do the installation, which will have a savings of an additional \$16,000.

J. Flannery made a motion to recommend these five requests, as presented, and funded from the sources listed below:

\$65,000 from the Operating Budget for the purchase of a 14-passenger bus,

\$84,180 from Free Cash for replacement of the High School cafeteria tables and chairs,

\$32,065 from Free Cash for replacement of the cafeteria hallway,

\$50,392 from Free Cash for paving and lighting of Handicap Parking spaces in front of the Middle School,

\$76,953 from Free Cash for the upgrade to Wi-Fi access points in all school buildings.

Seconded by J. Kuzmeskas. Recommended 7/0.

FY24 School Budget:

Mr. Marano and the School Committee presented budget comparison summaries for the Department's FY24 Budget to Finance Committee Members for review. The information provided was for the annual salaried budget and the non-salaried budget costs, which were further discussed during the presentation.

Ms. Rebelo continued the presentation showing the new position requests, contractual increases, additional materials needed for athletic supplies, technology hardware, utility increases, as well as additional breakdowns of items shown in the proposed budget.

School Transportation portion of the budget was discussed and the decrease to the transportation budget is due to the reduction of unfilled 7D driver positions, was explained.

J. Flannery made a motion to recommend \$30,279,081 from Taxation and other sources for the FY24 School Budget. J. Kuzmeskas seconded. Recommended 7/0.

J. Kuzmeskas made a motion to recommend \$3,112,710 from Taxation and other sources for the FY24 School Transportation Budget. J. Flannery seconded. Recommended 7/0.

Public Hearing: Standard Mileage Rate Change

K. Keppler made a motion to recommend the new IRS mileage rate of 65.5 per mile for business purposes, starting as of January 1, 2023. Seconded by B. Boyd. Recommended 7/0.

Public Hearing: Ms. MacKinnon was present to discuss additional FY24 Department Budgets to the Finance Committee for Departments that have not been into a Finance Committee Meeting, as listed below:

FY24 Budget – Memorial Day in the amount of \$18,000 was reviewed by the Committee

FY24 Budget – Moderator in the amount of \$100 was reviewed by the Committee

FY24 Budget – Occupational/Physical Health in the amount of \$41,800 was reviewed by the Committee

FY24 Budget – On the Job Injury in the amount of \$25,000 was reviewed by the Committee

FY24 Budget – OPEB in the amount of "Zero Dollars" was reviewed by the Committee

FY24 Budget – Planning in the amount of \$157,759 was reviewed by the Committee

FY24 Budget – Police (Auxiliary) in the amount of "Zero Dollars" was reviewed by the Committee

FY24 Budget – Reserve Fund in the amount of \$50,000 was reviewed by the Committee

FY24 Budget – Retirement Account in the amount of \$4,162,172 was reviewed by the Committee

FY24 Budget – School / BVT in the amount of \$1,137,538 was reviewed by the Committee

FY24 Budget – Selectboard in the amount of \$157,916 was reviewed by the Committee

FY24 Budget – Tax Title in the amount of \$40,000 was reviewed by the Committee

FY24 Budget – Town Administrator in the amount of \$222,899 was reviewed by the Committee
FY24 Budget – Town Counsel in the amount of \$35,300 was reviewed by the Committee
FY24 Budget – Town Reports Budget in the amount of \$1,115 was reviewed by the Committee
FY24 Budget – Treasurer / Collector in the amount of \$417,170 was reviewed by the Committee
FY24 Budget – Trust Fund Transfers in the amount of \$65,000 was reviewed by the Committee
FY24 Budget – Veterans Benefits in the amount of \$165,984 was reviewed by the Committee
FY24 Budget – Zoning Budget in the amount of \$8,600 was reviewed by the Committee

J. Flannery made a motion to recommend the FY24 Budget Expenditure amounts, from Taxation and other sources, for the Departments as listed above. B. Boyd seconded. Recommended 7/0.

FY24 Budget – Trash Budget in the amount of \$2,166,815 was reviewed by the Committee

J. McCarthy made a motion to recommend the trash budget, in the amount of \$2,166,815 from Trash Revenue. Seconded by J. Kuzmeskas. Recommended 7/0.

Public Hearing: Warrant Articles

Article 10 – Amend FY2023 Annual Operating Budget

Committee Members were made aware that Article 10 will be “passed over” at Town Meeting.

Article 11 – Amend FY2023 Trash Enterprise Budget

Committee Members were made aware that Article 11 will be “passed over” at Town Meeting.

Article 12 – Amend FY2023 Water Enterprise Budget

Committee Members were made aware that Article 12 will be “passed over” at Town Meeting.

Article 13 – Amend FY2023 Sewer Enterprise Budget

Committee Members were made aware that Article 13 will be “passed over” at Town Meeting.

Article 14 – Amend FY2023 Stormwater Enterprise Budget

Committee Members were made aware that Article 14 will be “passed over” at Town Meeting.

Article 24 – To Approve and Fund the AFSCME Labor Contract

Committee Members were made aware that Article 24 will be “passed over” at Town Meeting.

New Business, Emails, Correspondence, Bills:

J. Flannery made a motion to approve an invoice in the amount of \$318.32 for Finance Committee Clerk, Tina Griffin, for the month of April 2023. Seconded by K. Keppler. Recommended 7/0.

The next Finance Committee Meeting will take place on Thursday, May 4, 2023 at 5:30 pm, in the Arcand Meeting Room.

J. Flannery made a motion to adjourn at 8:03 pm. Seconded by J. Kuzmeskas. Recommended 7/0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tina M. Griffin
Tina M. Griffin