

**Finance Committee Meeting
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, April 4, 2023 at 5:30 pm
Bellingham Municipal Center
Arcand Meeting Room**

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

Finance Committee Members Absent: J. Flannery, J. Kuzmeskas

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

Minutes from the March 21, 2023 meeting were tabled until the April 18, 2023 meeting

Public Hearing: Library Director, Bernadette Rivard and Chair for the Board of Trustees were present to discuss the Departments FY24 Budget, with a 4% increase from last year. The increase comes from changes in salaries and Union contracts. The books & periodicals fund was increased in order to meet the State Requirement of 15% of the Department's Budget and also the purchase of a new wireless router for the Library is part of the operating budget increase.

Ms. Rivard's Department Budget in the amount of \$633,559, will be taken into consideration at a later date, after all Departments Budgets have been presented and discussed.

Public Hearing: Director of I.T., Karen Jasinski-Dutil was present to discuss the FY24 MIS Budget and additional services that are used by the Town for this department.

Ms. Jasinski-Dutil gave a summary about cyber-security and the activities that have taken place in this department in order to keep the Town's information safe. The managed services program that is currently in use by the Town is a needed service and the cost for this is included in the department's budget. As technology and security change, the program that is currently in use will change the services provided in order to continue to keep the Town's cyber-security a priority.

With the FY24 Budget there was an increase due to salary contract changes and minor operating cost increases.

The MIS FY24 Department request in the amount of \$651,432 will be taken into consideration. Recommendations from Finance Committee Members will be made at a later date, after all Department Budgets have been presented and discussed.

Public Hearing: Town Clerk, Larry Sposato was present to discuss various FY24 Budgets and additional items for Town Meeting.

The FY24 Department Budget for the Town Clerk's office was reviewed by Finance Committee Members and had very minimal increase from FY23.

Finance Committee Members will consider the FY24 Budget in the amount of \$146,800, after all Department Budgets have been presented and discussed by Committee Members.

Town Clerk, Larry Sposato, presented information to the Committee regarding his salary, showing information provided on salaries from other local Towns within Norfolk County. The Town Clerk position and office is a vital Department that mostly all other departments interact with. Mr. Sposato has presented this information to the Selectboard, and they are in agreement with a salary increase to \$92,000 starting next year, and the current FY24 Budget increase would be to \$84,000, starting as of January 1st, 2024. This would create less of an impact to the FY24 Budget, by increasing the Town Clerk salary to be \$84,000 for FY24, until the full increase of the proposed amount of \$92,000 that was agreed upon with the Selectboard, to become effective with the next Fiscal Year.

Article 20 – Acceptance of M.G. L. Chapter 41, Section 110A

Mr. Sposato gave an explanation on Article 20 which is to see if the Town will vote to adopt M.G.L. Chapter 41, Section 110A allowing Town offices to remain closed on any, or all Saturdays, as if it were a legal holiday, which will among other things, provide the Town flexibility concerning the last day to register to vote or other filing deadlines for local town meetings and elections; or act to do anything in relation thereto.

J. Collamati made a motion to recommend Article 20, as described above. Seconded by K. Keppler. Recommended 5/0.

Public Hearing: Building Commissioner, Tim Aicardi, was present to discuss the Departments FY24 Budget, as well as other business regarding Town Building repairs and upgrades

Mr. Aicardi gave a brief summary on the Inspectional Services Department Budget and the increased amount of money that the Department brings into the Town with permit fees, due to the growth and development within the Town. The FY24 Budget in the amount of \$246,919 was discussed, which includes a stipend being provided to the Building Commissioner for the additional services provided to the Town that is in addition to his current position and not a requirement of the Inspectional Services Department.

The FY24 Electrical Inspector Budget was provided to the Committee for review, with minimal cost of living increases. Finance Committee members didn't require any additional discussion on this Department Budget, in the amount of \$28,757.

FY24 Plumbing Inspector Budget was also provided to the Committee for review. The FY24 Budget in the amount of \$31,846 did not require any additional discussion by the Committee.

The Inspectional Services Budget will be taken into consideration after all other FY24 Department Budgets have been presented and reviewed.

J. Collamati made a motion to adjourn the meeting to the lower level meeting room at 6:34 pm. Seconded by K. Keppler. Recommended 5/0.

Meeting was re-commenced by the Chairman at 6:42 pm

Public Hearing: Ms. MacKinnon presented an FY23 Reserve Fund Transfer Request in the amount of \$42,875 for the purpose of the Town being in the last year of a short-term PILOT agreement with NextEra Energy. This is the power plant that is located on Depot Street. The Town needs to engage a consultant that is skilled at data collection, site inspection, and market analysis. This is a highly technical type of service that is not able to be performed in-house.

J. Collamati made a motion to approve the FY23 Reserve Fund Transfer Request in the amount of \$42,875, as described above. K. Keppler seconded. Recommended 5/0.

Public Hearing: Warrant Articles

Article 6 – Conveyances and Easements

K. Keppler made a motion to recommend Article 6 of the Town Warrant for Conveyances and Easements. J. McCarthy seconded. Recommended 5/0.

Article 7 – Purchase of Surplus Equipment

K. Keppler made a motion to recommend Article 7 of the Town Warrant for the Purchase of Surplus Equipment. B. Boyd seconded. Recommended 5/0.

Article 8 – Town Property Auction

K. Keppler made a motion to recommend Article 8 of the Town Warrant for Town Property Auction. J. McCarthy seconded. Recommended 5/0.

Article 9 – Highway Construction

K. Keppler made a motion to recommend Article 9 of the Town Warrant for the purposes of Highway Construction. Seconded by J. McCarthy. Recommended 5/0.

Article 17 – Acceptance of Candlelight Lane and Northern Lights Way as Public Way

Committee Members were made aware that Article 17 will be “passed over” at Town Meeting.

Article 19 – Deed in Lieu of Foreclosure

J. McCarthy made a motion to recommend Article 19, as described by Ms. MacKinnon, pursuant to the provisions of General Laws Chapter 60, Section 77C for a parcel of land located on Maple Street (Assessors Map Parcel 0020-0023) containing 0.084 acres. B. Boyd seconded. Recommended 5/0.

Article 21 – Amend General By-laws Chapter 71-6 Revolving Funds

J. Collamati made a motion to recommend Article 21 of the Town Warrant, to replace certain revisions to reflect those approved by prior Town Meetings, and further, to insert a new revolving fund for Town Beautification, as set forth in the Article, as presented. K. Keppler seconded. Recommended 5/0.

Article 22 – Depot Street DPW Parking and Access Land Acquisition

K. Keppler made a motion to recommend Article 22 of the Town Warrant, in an amount not to exceed \$45,000 from “Free Cash”. J. McCarthy seconded. Recommended 5/0.

Article 26 – Opioid Settlement Stabilization Fund and Opioid Revenues

K. Keppler made a motion to recommend Article 26 of the Town Warrant, pertaining to the creation of a new special purpose stabilization fund, to be known as the Opioid Settlement Stabilization Fund, which the Town has been in receipt of \$86,000 for this fund, at this point in time. J. McCarthy seconded. Recommended 5/0.

Article 27 – Transfer to Stabilization Fund

Finance Committee Members were informed that Article 27 will be “passed over” at Town Meeting

Article 28 – Transfer to Capital Investment Trust Fund

Finance Committee Members were informed that Article 28 will be “passed over” at Town Meeting.

Article 29 – Transfer to Group Insurance Trust Fund

Finance Committee Members were informed that Article 29 will be “passed over” at Town Meeting.

Article 30 – Unpaid Bills

Ms. MacKinnon let Finance Committee Members know that there are not currently any unpaid bills and that Article 30 will be “passed over” at Town Meeting.

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 - Animal Control in the amount of \$173,310 was reviewed by the Committee
FY24 Budget - Arts Council in the amount of \$7,500 was reviewed by the Committee
FY24 Budget - Board of Assessor's in the amount of \$224,608 was reviewed by the Committee
FY24 Budget - Assessor Revaluation in the amount of \$49,000 was reviewed by the Committee
FY24 Budget - Building Maintenance in the amount of \$402,287 was reviewed by the Committee
FY24 Budget - Cemetery Department in the amount of \$9,001 was reviewed by the Committee
FY24 Budget - Commission on Disabilities in the amount of \$20,500 was reviewed by the Committee
FY24 Budget - Conservation Commission in the amount of \$95,270 was reviewed by the Committee
FY24 Budget - Council on Aging in the amount of \$267,397 was reviewed by the Committee
FY24 Budget - Debt Service in the amount of \$886,798 was reviewed by the Committee
FY24 Budget - Finance Department in the amount of \$385,623 was reviewed by the Committee
FY24 Budget - Finance Committee in the amount of \$5,395 was reviewed by the Committee
FY24 Budget - Board of Health in the amount of \$160,687 was reviewed by the Committee
FY24 Budget - Historical Commission in the amount of \$3,000 was reviewed by the Committee
FY24 Budget - Human Resources in the amount of \$180,612 was reviewed by the Committee
FY24 Budget - Insurance (Group Health) in the amount of \$7,650,000 was reviewed by the Committee
FY24 Budget - Insurance (Property) in the amount of \$823,500 was reviewed by the Committee
FY24 Budget - Medicare in the amount of \$588,000 was reviewed by the Committee

K. Keppler made a motion to recommend the FY24 Budget Expenditure amounts, as proposed by the Town Administrator, for the Departments as listed above. J. Collamati seconded. Recommended 5/0.

New Business, Emails, Correspondence, Bills:

The next Finance Committee Meeting will take place on Tuesday, April 18, 2023, at 5:30 pm, in the Lower Level Meeting Room

J. Collamati made a motion to adjourn at 8:06 pm. Seconded by K. Keppler. Recommended 5/0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tina M. Griffin
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