

Minutes, January 29, 2020

## **FINANCE COMMITTEE – Meeting, January 29, 2020**

A scheduled meeting convened at 7:00 p.m. at Town Hall in Room 7.

Present: Mr. Creighton, Ms. Harrison, Mr. Oldeman, Mr. Weld, Ms. Mellish and Mr. Pratt

Board of Selectmen: Mr. Bodmer-Turner, Ms. Jaques and Ms. Driscoll

Staff Present: Town Administrator, Mr. Federspiel, Finance Committee Clerk, Ms. Hunter

Mr. Creighton called the Finance Committee meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

### **Review and Approve Meeting Minutes –**

*Mr. Weld move to approve the minutes of January 15, 2020 with the edit provided by Mr. Oldeman; Mr. Creighton seconded the motion. The motion passed with Mr. Pratt abstaining.*

### **Review of Parks & Recreation Budget and Capital –**

Mr. Weld referenced the note at the bottom of page H-3 regarding \$50K transfer of funds to the General Fund. He asked what that was regarding. Mr. Creighton stated it was the delta between receipts and expenses. Mr. Federspiel indicated the funds went into the General Fund to offset salaries and expenses. The balance of funds in the revolving fund pay for programs. Revenue for Parks & Recreation does not reflect revenue for Singing Beach which is recorded in the Town Clerk's budget.

Mr. Pratt asked about revenue from movie production companies. Mr. Federspiel indicated there was not significant revenue generated from production companies. The movie Manchester-by-the-Sea paid the Town \$10K in fees. Police details are billed directly to production firms.

The Committee discussed rental fees for the Chowder House at Tuck's Point. Rental rate for Residents is \$300.00 and Non-Residents \$500.00. Rental rates vary depending on day of the week and half day vs. full day. The Committee universally agreed the Non-Resident rate should be double the Resident rate.

*Mr. Weld moved to double the Non-Resident rate for renting the Chowder House at Tuck's Point and to recommend the rate increase to the Parks & Recreation Committee; Mr. Pratt seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

Mr. Creighton stated the costs vs. revenue for Crowell Chapel is inverted. The Chapel holds 120 people and is used for weddings, small music concerts and recently an art show. The Chapel is deed restricted for use and cannot be converted to office space, affordable housing or another unrelated purpose. Parking is challenging. Mr. Federspiel indicated use is increasing, Parks & Recreation is open to promoting the Chapel for rental. Ms. Jaques asked about rest rooms, Mr.

Federspiel stated at best the rest room facility is marginal. He does not believe it will become a money maker and will follow up on the deed restriction.

Ms. Mellish asked about off season sanitation facilities at Singing Beach and Masconomo. There are no facilities available after October. She mentioned in January there were two 70-degree days and the parking lot at Singing Beach was full. Ms. Driscoll pointed out porta potties are moved to make way for snow removal during a usual winter. Seasonal porta pottie disappearance will be further reviewed.

Mr. Creighton inquired about Parks & Recreation liability insurance. Mr. Federspiel stated insurance is reviewed annually with the carrier to assure coverage is appropriate. Mr. Pratt asked what the liability cap was \$5M or \$10M. Mr. Pratt and Mr. Weld support a \$10M cap. Mr. Federspiel will follow up with insurance carrier.

Mr. Weld recommends Parks & Recreation develop a 5-year facility management plan including Singing Beach, Crowell Chapel, Chowder House and Rest Rooms at Tuck's Point.

Ms. Jaques asked about the professional services line and what was included. Mr. Federspiel stated the line item covers the security camera at Singing Beach which requires technical support. There have been incidents of mischief at the beach and the loop is a highly traveled road. Ms. Mellish asked if the camera fed directly to the Police Department, Mr. Federspiel stated it did.

*Ms. Mellish moved to approve \$154,436 in salaries and expenses for Parks & Recreation, \$155,281 for salaries and expense for Singing Beach Operations, \$37,795 for Tuck's Point and Crowell Chapel and \$18,000 for other Recreation; Mr. Oldeman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

Mr. Weld reported on Parks & Recreation requests for CPC funding. The request for funding Pay and Display parking at Singing Beach was passed over as not a good use of funding. Mr. Federspiel stated the cost of implementing Pay and Display parking has come down to \$13K with newly acquired estimates. Additionally, a Parking Study has been proposed for this spring and summer and will likely make recommendations on how to best manage parking in Town. Ms. Driscoll stated the BOS discussed the proposal and concluded the study should come first with public outreach following the study. Mr. Weld stated there is no way to enforce the Pay and Display system.

*Mr. Weld moved to recommend against Pay and Display parking in the Parks and Recreation capital budget; Ms. Harrison seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

Mr. Weld reported CPC had approved \$50K for the design and engineering study at Sweeney Park. He is somewhat confused as to the total amount required for the project, he understood the total request was for \$100K. Mr. Federspiel stated the most recent estimate for the project is \$150K including all the different tests required, design, construction documents, notice of intent and storm water report permitting requirements. The project includes 25% for design.

The design work is for a project that will ultimately cost \$1.5M. Mr. Oldeman stated he was not against the concept of the project, but it is the kind of project that requires a lot of consideration. He asked if Conservation Commission had permitted the project given the entire area is a wetland. Mr. Oldeman concluded the goal is to end up with a better functioning recreational field. Unfortunately, there are not too many alternatives to Sweeney Park it is what the Town has.

Ms. Driscoll stated as part of the Recreational Master Plan all the Boards and Commissions were asked to sign off on the recommendations. Ms. Mellish requested more definitive feedback prior to voting on the request.

Mr. Creighton asked if \$150K is the appropriate amount to invest in a report to prepare for a Town vote on the bigger project a new turf field costing \$1.5M. Mr. Federspiel stated he believes it is plenty and perhaps could be pulled back a little.

Mr. Bodmer-Turner asked about converting the burn dump to a playing field. Mr. Federspiel stated the Town has not yet decided if that is the best use for the burn dump site. The BOS is meeting on February 18, 2020 to review the Recreation Master Plan and the Committee will make their decision following the BOS meeting and recommendations.

Mr. Creighton asked the Committee to briefly back track to **Fire Department Salaries and Expenses**. Mr. Pratt asked how the discussion on call fire fighter had gone with Chief Beardsley. Mr. Creighton stated the discussion was not hopeful requirements, training and time commitments result in a high bar for potential call fire fighters. Mr. Pratt suggested the Town advertise the need as Hamilton has done with a large banner hanging from the Fire House. He also believes the fire fighting and medical emergency needs be addressed separately.

Mr. Creighton stated Essex is facing pressure and their call fire fighter numbers are dropping. Ms. Mellish asked about the line item stipend for call back. Mr. Federspiel replied the line item provides a stipend for call fire fighters who respond to a certain number of calls during the year and they earn the stipend.

*Mr. Oldeman moved to approve the salaries for the Fire Department in the amount of \$1,320,336 and expenses in the amount of \$143,850; Ms. Harrison seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

Mr. Oldeman asked if the Committee was going to follow up on the discussion the Committee had with Chief Fitzgerald regarding negotiations around the requirement for police officers to be licensed EMT's and that the Chief believes it is an impediment to recruiting officers. Mr. Federspiel replied police officers are often the first on the scene and at a minimum officers should have first responder training. It is good to have the basic training. He is in favor of keeping the contractual requirement it provides the residents with a valuable service and makes the officers more valuable.

Mr. Federspiel stated it is the Quinn Bill that is the bigger issue in negotiations. The officers are not complaining about the EMT license as much as they are negotiating for reinstatement of the Educational incentive. Initially the State paid 50% of Quinn and Towns paid 50%. Several years ago, the State stopped paying 50%. The Town grandfathered the officers on Quinn at \$100% and new hires receive 50%. The union is pushing hard to get 100% for everybody. The Quinn Bill provided a salary increase for police officers based on their level of education.

### **Review of General Government Budget and Capital –**

B-5 Town Administrator's Office, Ms. Mellish asked for an explanation in the change of personnel. Mr. Federspiel stated the new budget proposes restoring .5 position as a Clerk Receptionist to handle phone calls and walk-ins freeing up the Administrative Assistant to provide additional assistance to the Town Administrator.

Mr. Weld asked about the Communication person at \$40K. A Communication person was hired at \$26,650.00 and she is working part time. Mr. Creighton asked about the audit which is budgeted at \$47K and comes in at \$37K. Mr. Federspiel stated the audit takes place every other year and Mr. Sherman's bill did not come in FY19. OPEB audit will be due in FY21.

Mr. Weld asked about maintenance on page B-6 which is being reduced by 20% he sees work that needs to be addressed and recommends the Town develop a Maintenance plan. Mr. Federspiel stated the development of a maintenance plan is on Mr. Desrosiers list. Ms. Mellish stated there are some items in capital including HVAC.

Mr. Creighton stated IT salaries seemed low but assumes it is covered in several budget lines. Mr. Federspiel stated the Town is 100% contract labor for IT support services. Ms. Mellish noted the increase in IT services from \$70K to \$125K. In FY20 and FY21 the line item includes new computers and software.

*Mr. Weld moved to approve the Town Administrator's office salaries and expenses in the amount of \$472,714.00; Ms. Harrison seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

*Ms. Mellish moved to approve the Town Hall and Town Common budget in the amount of \$84,050.00 and Street Lighting in the amount of \$35K; Mr. Oldeman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

*Mr. Creighton moved to approve the Finance Committee budget for salaries and expenses in the amount of \$3,820.00; Mr. Oldeman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

*Mr. Creighton moved to approve the Reserve Fund in the amount of \$160K; Ms. Mellish seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

*Mr. Creighton moved to approve the Town Clerk's budget for salaries and expenses in the amount of \$124,903.00; Ms. Mellish seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

Ms. Mellish requested revenue in the Town Clerk's office be applied to the budget the revenue supports. The Town Clerk takes in the money but does not support the work.

**Election and Registration** on hold for answer to question on voting equipment which the Town owns. Mr. Federspiel will follow up.

*Mr. Weld moved to approve the Parking Clerk budget for salaries and expenses in the amount of \$29,224.00; Ms. Mellish seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

*Mr. Weld moved to approve the Accounting Department budget for salaries and expenses in the amount of \$162,422.00; Mr. Oldeman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

Assessor –

B-18 GIS line increase new ability to do fly overs annually the Town picks up things like decks, swimming pools and sheds the revenue makes up for increase in the line item. Park time Building inspector and Plumbing inspector. Tax assessments are required to keep hard copy and must be bound. Mr. Federspiel stated part time inspectors may require additional hours, the discussion will take place in the next year or two.

*Mr. Weld moved to approve the Assessors budget for salaries and expenses in the amount of \$213,670.00; Mr. Oldeman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

Legal and professional services includes HR consultant, Fire assessment and other smaller consulting services. Legal expenses account for \$70K and HR approximately \$30K.

*Mr. Weld moved to approve Legal and Other Professional Services in the amount of \$120K; Ms. Mellish seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

*Mr. Creighton moved to approve the Treasure Collector salaries and expenses in the amount of \$182,512.00; Ms. Harrison seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

*Mr. Oldeman moved to approve the Zoning Board of Appeals salaries and expenses in the amount of \$10,350.00; Mr. Weld seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

**Edit "Anti-Snob" to Affordable Housing Zoning Act on page B-24.**

*Mr. Creighton moved to approve the Planning Department salaries and expenses in the amount of \$105,362.00; Mr. Oldeman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

**B28 – new page required for pensions**

*Ms. Harrison moved to approve Insurance in the amount of \$1,779,850.00; Mr. Oldeman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

### **Review of Other Environmental Budget and Capital –**

*Mr. Creighton moved to approve the Historic Commission budget for salaries and expenses in the amount of \$2,450.00; Mr. Oldeman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

Ms. Mellish noted the budget had increased this year. Mr. Federspiel stated additional hours had been invested in writing grants. The Conservation Commission was responsible for generating a \$72K grant for Sawmill Brook and \$150K in FEMA funding.

*Mr. Weld moved to approve the Conservation Commission budget for salaries and expenses in the amount of \$81453.00; Mr. Oldeman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

### **Review of Human Services Budget and Capital –**

Public Health will likely be experiencing a change and consideration is being given to contracting for Public Health nursing services with the VNA or Lahey. The current budget assumes status quo. The nurse works 10 hours a week monitoring infectious diseases, running flu shot clinics and home visits as needed.

*Mr. Creighton moved to approve the Board of Health budget for salaries and expenses in the amount of \$117,305.00; Mr. Oldeman seconded the motion.*

*Mr. Weld moved to approve the Veterans Services budget in the amount of \$43; Mr. Oldeman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

*Mr. Oldeman moved to approve the Council on Aging budget for salaries and expenses in the amount of \$191,908.00; Ms. Mellish seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

### **Review of Library Budget and Capital**

*Mr. Oldeman moved to approve the Library budget for salaries and expenses in the amount of \$501,232.00; Ms. Harrison seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

### **Review of Non-Appropriated Expenses**

Will be reviewed at the next meeting of the Committee.

### **Other Business, as may not have been reasonably anticipated by the chair (discussion only).**

*Mr. Oldeman moved to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Mellish seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

#### Meeting Materials:

FY 21 Preliminary Budget and Meeting Minutes, January 15, 2020

#### Upcoming Meetings:

February 5, 2020 – Joint Meeting with BOS review of Capital Budget