

March 11, 2019

Town of Buckland Finance Committee meeting at Town Hall

Committee members in attendance: Karen Blom, Ben Murray, Ciara Hayden, Raymond Lanza-Weil

Others in attendance: Bob Markel, interim town administrator; Barry Del Castilho, Select Board member; Marilyn Kelsey, resident

Called to order at 7:10pm

The committee members reviewed the minutes from 3/4/19. Karen made a motion to approve, which Ciara seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

The committee members reviewed the debt listed on sheets handed out by Bob. He noted that the Town Hall Renovation project debt service is accurate in the committee's budget worksheet. It is excluded, bonded debt and is correctly included in the operating budget.

Franklin County Technical School debt is not excluded. The committee still needs future years' debt service for this item. Bob will call the school to request this info.

All debt and capital in the budget worksheet is accurate, per Bob, except for confirming the Technical School debt service.

Ben reviewed the budget worksheet and explained how it is organized and data are linked throughout. There was a general discussion about how the worksheet works and how we will update it.

The committee members briefly discussed what our approach to the Budget Memo should be.

The committee members reviewed the Stabilization Accounts and Reserves. Discussed and adjusted Reserve Account figures. The committee needs to decide on an amount to allocate to the reserve. Suggested that we draw down the reserve fund now and replenish next year.

Ben made a motion to fund up to \$16,000 for Apple Valley Internet from free cash; Raymond seconded. The committee approved the motion unanimously. It was noted that moving these funds must be on the April STM Warrant to be voted on by town residents.

Discussion continued regarding the amount of funds in Stabilization Accounts and the current deficit in the draft budget worksheets. The committee members discussed options to eliminate the deficit in the draft. The discussion included a review of roads repaving expense and whether that budget can be adjusted. Other expense items were considered as well. The committee members discussed making the following adjustments to the draft budget:

- Decrease roads paving expense from \$100,000 to \$50,000
- Eliminate \$15,000 for Senior Center
- Eliminate \$2,000 for Speed/OUI enforcement

- Eliminate \$2,000 from Tax Title expense

It was noted that the Select Board supports the idea of funding a specific project conducted by the Partnership and that the Towns must be able to demonstrate that the Partnership is providing a tangible product or service in return for funding.

Reviewed items flagged at last meeting, including FRCOG accountant expense and Town Hall expenses, particularly the electric bill. The committee members asked Bob to review the actual electric bill expenses and report to the committee. Bob will also review the tax overlay and overlay abatement accounts.

The proposed adjustments eliminated the draft deficit and created a draft surplus. It was noted that the budget may not yet reflect the full amount needed for a new Town Administrator. Discussion ensued regarding the amount of the salary that is paid via the Wastewater Treatment Plant budget. The draft budget for the Town Administrator was then adjusted upward in anticipation of needing to pay a higher salary. The committee members also discussed the library budget and made an adjustment. The result of these adjustments was a draft surplus of \$3,215.

Motion to adjourn made by Raymond; seconded by Karen. Unanimously approved. Adjourned at 9:15pm.

Respectfully submitted by Raymond Lanza-Weil

Next meeting March 18 at the Buckland Library at 7PM.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R. Lanza-Weil', with a stylized flourish below it.