

Buckland Finance Committee Minutes
Monday, December 16, 2019

Meeting called to order at the Buckland Public Library, 30 Upper St, Buckland MA, 7:06 p.m.

Committee members present: Karen Blom, Paula Consolo, Ciara Hayden, Larry Langford, Ben Murray, Raymond Lanza-Weil.

Ben leaves at 8:30pm

Others present: Town administrator Heather Butler

Karen motions to accept the minutes from the November 18, 2019 meeting. Larry seconds. Unanimously approved.

Review of Senior Center Meetings

1. Karen reports that the Select Board Members and Finance Committee Members from Shelburne, Ashfield and Buckland were present at the meeting held on December 4, 2019.
 - a. All members agreed something was needed for the senior population
 - b. Question floated: How much capital can the town's afford? Shelburne suggested a total combined cost of \$1 Million of which Buckland's share would be \$313,000 over 5 years. (or an average of \$75 per single family dwelling each year for 5 years).
 - c. Operating costs estimated to double for each of the towns. Buckland currently contributes \$58,000/year. Estimated new total contribution for Buckland would be approximately \$116,000/year.
2. Paula reported that she attended the Ashfield meeting to discuss the Senior Center and found their discussions were similar to those had by the Buckland Finance Committee. She stated they were interested in pursuing a distributed services model as an alternative to the proposed larger Senior Center.
3. Other updates
 - a. The senior center is contracting with consulting firm P3.
 - b. Survey results narrowed final building sites to (6,000 sq ft) at
 - i. Masonic Hall
 - ii. Buckland Police Station
4. Discussion:
 - a. Finance Committee members discussed and came to the consensus that our voters will not likely support a tax increase to fund the expansion of the senior center. We would be interested in learning more about the distributed services model. We would like to seek affirmation from voters in moving forward. Possibly a referendum in May discussing options and tax increases.

Capital Requests for the Town include:

1. John Deere Loader for the Highway Dept (\$275,000)
2. Town Administrator (\$3,100)
3. Town Clerk (\$10,000 capital, annual operating expense \$1,600/year)
4. Recreation Dept
5. Historical Society
6. Highway maintenance software
7. Senior Center

Budget Planning Process

1. Next meetings - Jan 13th, Jan 20th

Operating Budget Requests

1. Franklin County Recycling contract update. Old contract provided the town with approximately \$7,000 revenue annually, the new contract charges the town \$99/ton (cost approximated at \$11,000/year). This issue will be further researched and discussed.
2. Town Clerk - pending leave of absence. Additional expenses requested:
 - a. Estimated outsourced clerk duties \$2,700
 - b. Election \$2,800
3. Town Collector
 - a. Technical adjustment for assistant town collector from operating expense budget line to salary expense line.
4. Reports
 - a. Town accountant has completed fiscal year 2020
 - b. Town received FY2019 Recap for Free Cash valued at \$141,499.
 - c. Fiscal FY2020 Revenues are not up-to-date
 - d. Fiscal FY2020 Expense Reports, General ledger summaries are available for review.

Update on Highway Garage Building

1. Architect's subcontractor for drainage/stormwater plans has some discrepancies. New engineer contracted to redevelop drainage plans. Partial building use planned in the short-term for winter operations.

No public comments.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm

Next meeting is scheduled for January 13th, at the Buckland Town Hall at 7 pm

Respectfully submitted by Ciara Hayden

