

**Buckland Finance Committee
Meeting Minutes
March 16, 2020 - virtual meeting**

This meeting was conducted in accordance with the state of Mass. recommendations for virtual meetings during the time of Covid-19 pandemic.

Present - Karen Blom, Ciara Hayden, Larry Langford, Ben Murray, Raymond Lanza-Weil

Absent - Paula Consolo,

Others - Heather Burke, Dena Wilmore, Barry DeCastilho, Marilyn Kelsey

Meeting commenced at 7:05 pm

- 1) Meeting minutes from 3/2/2020 were reviewed. Karen moved to accept the minutes, Ciara seconded. Roll call - Karen - yes, Ben - yes, Larry - yes, Ciara - yes. Motion passed.
- 2) FY 21 budget discussion - revenues could be down after the near closure of many businesses due to the virus. We already decreased the meals tax revenue from \$6,000 to \$4,000 due to several restaurants being closed. This brings the rev/exp analysis levy limit to \$15,000. We may need to look at reducing expenses. Dept heads will be told to be careful with spending. There was a general consensus to wait and see what happens over the spring before making any changes.
- 3) The North St resurfacing project - the BOS has asked the state for a \$35,000 earmark for engineering costs.
- 4) The FY 21 deficit/surplus of \$15,600 - is this ok? Roll call - Karen - yes, Ben - yes, Larry - yes, Ciara - no (should be lower). At this time we will leave it as is.
- 5) Discussion on the FY21 Treasurer/Collector's budget. We don't agree with the increased travel budget requested. We recommend dropping travel by half to \$1,300 and memberships to \$200. This still allows adequate travel to meetings and training. This drops the dept request by \$1,500. Heather will let her know of this change.
- 6) There's been a request from 3 Buckland students to attend Smith Vocational High School next year. This represents an additional student to the two already enrolled. We need to make sure these students can't receive the requested programs at Mohawk or Franklin Tech. Heather mentioned that the process has changed from the past when there was a solid deadline for application. Now it's a rolling application time frame. The town needs to stay on top of this since the cost is close to \$30,000/student.
- 7) Review of the ATM financial Memo - Larry has been updating the memo in Google. He suggested a graph showing increased tax rate over time since most residents want to know how the budget affects their taxes. There was a short discussion about the FRCOG town accounting costs - would we save if we hired our own accountant for one day a week. Presently, we pay around \$64/hour for services. It could be hard to get the quality or experience with a local person - we have a very good FRCOG accountant.

Karen motioned to adjourn, Ciara seconded. Roll call - Karen - yes, Larry - yes, Ciara - yes. Meeting adjourned at 8:37pm

Respectfully submitted by Karen Blom