

Finance Committee Meeting

March 28th 2013

The meeting was called to order at 7:05PM with Mr. David Herrick presiding, with Mr. Bill Hattendorf, Mr. Burt Imberman, and Mr. Ira Yohalem, Ms. Pat Mielke and Mrs. Prudence Spaulding in attendance. Guests were Mr. Michael Skorput, Mr. Nathaniel Yohalem, Ms. Tara White and Mrs. Barbara Marchione, Emergency Management Director.

The minutes for February 20th 2013 were distributed at 7:03PM. Minutes were accepted as read, Mr. Imberman 1st, Mr. Hattendorf 2nd passed unanimously.

Mr. Herrick reviewed and read a notice of a meeting from the Association of Town Finance Committees 617-695-1314) that invited the members of the Finance Committees and the Selectmen to a regional meeting to be held in the Amherst Town Hall on May 9th from 5-7PM with subjects of regionalism to focus on public health and regional solar purchasing. The members of the Finance Committee elected not to attend.

Mrs. Marchione was then invited to discuss the Emergency Management Expenses budget [60291.00]. The importance of Emergency Management is still very much uppermost in the minds of the town government, with memories of Irene still very fresh. Mr. Herrick stated that the Committee would not discuss Ms. Marchione's salary, since salaries were not being presented for discussion at this time. However Mrs. Marchione discussed the Emergency Management Expenses [60291.00] budget (\$3,150) now requesting {\$3,275}. Under "fees" there is a donation of \$500 to the LEPC (local emergency management association), which Mrs. Marchione stated met monthly at Fairview Hospital and was a very productive association. Within her budget there is also \$1,500 for the reverse 911 program, not in use at present but available to the town because of this fee. Other items included, mileage, fees, printing, postage, and duplication expenses to CEMP, COOP, FEMA, with money for equipment, office supplies and miscellaneous expenses. Mrs. Marchione stated that she was in the process of writing grants, however once they were accepted the assigned funds had to be spent within a brief time and before the grant money was available. Mrs. Spaulding stated that she had the same problem with the state incentive grant for the Council on Aging which had to be spent before the funds were received, and that many towns allowed some departments to run a negative balance to facilitate the process. Mr. Herrick questioned whether Mrs. Marchione had considered asking for funds from the Reserve Fund! Ms. Marchione stated that she had not considered asking for funds from the Reserve Fund. The Committee passed the

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Emergency Management budget, with Mr. Imberman 1st, and Mr. Hattendorf 2nd it was passed unanimously. Mrs. Marchione left and the committee continued to review budgets!

Workman's Compensation Insurance [90912.00] (\$12,500) now requesting {\$16,000} when questioned about the increase Mr. Skorput stated that this insurance was based on the gross salaries and it was purchased through MIA and based on an audit done by MIA. He also added that more of the people working for the town were now being covered. Ms. Mielke 1st, Mrs. Spaulding 2nd passed unanimously.

Insurance Expense [90914.11] (\$55,000) (regular insurance) now requesting {\$64,000}, again the committee asked some questions about the increase of \$9,000 over a period of a year. Mr. Skorput stated that he had underestimated the request for last year's budget and had to come to the Finance Committee to obtain about \$5,000 from the Reserve Fund. Mr. Yohalem asked to see the insurance contracts; whereupon Mr. Skorput brought three large loose leafs with information from the last three years of Insurance expenses. Mr. Skorput also added that the insurance bills do not come in until after the May Town meeting which makes estimating difficult. He had however contacted the agent who stated that the amount was expected to rise about \$5,000! Mr. Yohalem upon scanning the material quickly asked to be present when the insurance agent next came to the town. Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mrs. Mielke 2nd passed unanimously.

Library Trustees [50610.03] (\$320) level funded {\$320} this is in essence a stipend! Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Ms. Mielke 2nd passed unanimously.

Cemetery Officers Salary [20491.00] (\$400) level funded {\$400} this again is in essence a stipend! Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mrs. Mielke 2nd passed unanimously.

Town Records Preservation [10151.02] this budget had been placed "on hold" last meeting requesting further information. Mrs. Chretien, Town Clerk added a memo to the original request, station:

"I am still requesting \$5,000 for town Records Preservation, reason for the requested amount is for storage of Town records and to continue preservation town records and purchasing a small fire proof cabinet to store records in. Mr. Hugh Smith, President of Firelock-Fireproof Modular Vaults was invited by my request to do a presentation of fireproof vaults. Present was the Town Building Inspector, Mr. Thomas Carmody and Selectman Mr. Nathaniel Yohalem and the Historical Commission. After the long presentation it was decide that we would hold off putting a vault at this time, since we don't have enough space in the lower level of the Town Hall and due to the costs of installing a vault that would cost over \$70,000. I thank you in advance for taking this request under advisement."

After some discussion a motion was made by Ms. Mielke 1st, Mr. Yohalem 2nd and passed unanimously.

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A further **Town Hall Improvements Loan** budget was presented without an account number for the amount of \$14,788 which will be a payment on a loan. However the Finance Committee had passed a Town Hall Improvements [10194.05] for \$45,000 on January 31st! This budget will be money taken from Free Cash to pay for some of the Town Hall Improvements. Mr. Yohalem 1st, Ms. Mielke 2nd passed unanimously.

Building Inspector's Expenses [60241.02] (\$2476) now requesting {\$3,635} the increase in this budget is to purchase a new laptop to replace the old one. Mr. Imberman 1st, Ms. Mielke 2nd passed unanimously.

Visiting Nurse Associations [70522.00] (\$2, 451) now requesting {\$2,447} Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mr. Imberman 2nd passed unanimously.

Children's Health Program [70521.00] (\$1,000) level funded {\$1,000} Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mr. Yohalem 2nd passed unanimously.

SBRSD Capital [30001.00] (\$87,828) now requesting {\$85,824}. Mr. Herrick reminded the Committee that this budget does not include any money for capital repairs for the Mill River School. Mr. Nathaniel Yohalem stated that the school budget has included \$20,000 for emergency repairs for the local school, but that the SBRSD Finance Committee wanted the individual towns which had small school buildings to be responsible for the repairs of their individual buildings, or to turn over the school buildings to the School Committee, which should they then wish, they could close those schools. Ms. White added that the school agreement however made the SBRSD responsible for the repairs! Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mr. Yohalem 2nd passed unanimously.

SBRSD Operating [30000.01] (\$2,312,716) now requesting {\$2,316,701} Mr. Imberman 1st, Mr. Yohalem 2nd passed unanimously.

Police Department Rental [60210.98] (\$12,000) now requesting {\$12,000}. Because the proposed rental of space at the firehouse had not worked out the Committee questioned this budget request. Ms. White stated that the selectmen were looking into other places that the police department might use and it was for this reason that this budget request was made. Mr. Hattendorf 1st, Mr. Imberman 2nd passed unanimously.

Constable Expenses [60211.01] (\$95) level funded {\$95} Mr. Yohalem 1st, Ms. Mielke 2nd passed unanimously.

Animal Control Officer Expenses [60293.78] (\$1,470) now requesting {\$1,539} Mr. Yohalem 1st, Mr. Imberman 2nd passed unanimously.

Group Insurance [90914.70] (\$109,800) now requesting {\$148,122}. This insurance covers the medical insurance for the employees and reflects added employees requesting insurance. Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mr. Yohalem 2nd passed unanimously.

Highway Truck Loan [no number] (purchased in the 2013 budget year!) now requesting first payment of {\$42,907} Mr. Yohalem 1st, Mr. Hattendorf 2nd passed unanimously.

Highway Front End Loader [no number](will be bought this year) total \$88,000 Mr. Imberman 1st, Mr. Hattendorf 2nd passed unanimously.

Transfer Station Repairs (no number) there was \$15,000 brought forward from FYI 2013 and the selectmen requested another \$25,000 making a total of \$40,000 this will allow the town to purchase a compactor and thus save money on transportation (hopefully to be able to pay back the initial investment within the next five years) and do some needed repairs at the transfer station. The loan on this money will be a three year loan! Ms. Mielke 1st and Mrs. Spaulding 2nd passed unanimously.

Mr. Skorput told the Committee that there would be a request to increase the **Stabilization Fund** from \$50,000 to \$100,000 to provide some funds to help with the repair of the bridges. Mr. Nathaniel Yohalem stated that there were three bridges that were in trouble beside the ones that were in the process of being repaired (hopefully with grant money). The Clayton-Mill River Bridge estimated cost \$458,000, the Norfolk Road Bridge with an estimated cost of \$28,000 and the Campbell Falls Bridge which may cost about \$138,000 and then have to be completely replaced within a very short time. He added that with the increase in the Stabilization Fund should the estimates be somewhat lower than needed the selectmen would have some funds to make up the difference. Ms. White also added that the Umpachene Bridge had not even been considered for repair at this time.

Because there remained some budgets that have not been brought before the Finance Committee another meeting would be needed. It was decided to meet on Wednesday April 3rd at 7:00PM at the Town Hall.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Prudence Spaulding Secretary.

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