

Finance Committee Minutes

January 23rd 2014

The meeting was called to order at 7:05PM. Present were Mr. Edgar Zukauskas presiding, Mr. David Herrick, Mr. Ira Yohalem, Mr. Burt Imberman, Mrs. Prudence Spaulding, guests were Mr. Nathaniel Yohalem, Ms. Tara White, Mrs. Michele Shalaby (Selectmen), Mr. Tom Carmody Building Inspector, Mr. Chuck Loring Highway Superintendent and Fire Chief, Mr. David Smith from the Fire Company, Mr. Neil Crawford, Mr. Joseph Krejci and Mrs. Maureen Krejci from the New Marlborough Rescue Squad.

The reading of the minutes from January 16th were waived, Mr. Zukauskas 1st, Mr. Yohalem 2nd passed unanimously.

The meeting began with a lengthy report from Mr. Carmody regarding the building Inspectors Expenses relating to the new Berkshire Online Permitting Program offered by Full Circle Technologies Inc. (suite 115, 11 Beacon Street Boston, MA01208. 617-722-0100).

This program is designed so that contractors and home owner's architects and engineers can make application and receive building permits on line. The advantage is that those people who need permits do not need to come to the Town Hall to get them and interrupt their busy schedule to accommodate the staff at the Town Hall. There would be a reduction in the use of paper. An application would incorporate the information from the Assessor's and Tax Collector's office, and thus be very thorough! The information would be stored in the "cloud". When questioned the staff in the Town Hall, i.e. Assessors, Tax Collector the Treasurer and Town Accountant would be involved and require training. Breaking down the costs, the software and implementation fee would be \$3,600. Added to this would be the cost of the training module of \$1,000 and the building commissioner's labor costing \$2,800. Once the program is set and the training has taken place, the yearly cost for 2016 would be \$2,700 and for 2017 \$2,810. Mr. Zukauskas questioned the fact that the program was dependent upon the cooperation of the staff involved. Mr. Imberman asked how long the neighboring towns (Lee, Lenox, Becket, Monterey, Sheffield, Dalton and Richmond) had been using the program and had there been any problems in the usage. Mr. Carmody stated that the problems that had arisen had been solved by the Full Circle staff. The towns have been using the program for about eight months and were very satisfied, so much so that Great Barrington and Stockbridge will incorporate it into their towns in the near future. 1400 applications have been obtained through the system in these towns, with Sheffield having 300 applications done this way. Mr. Carmody stated also that New Marlborough had brought in \$30,000 in fees which although went into the general account would have paid for this program. Prior to approving this request

Prudence Spaulding
January 24th 2014

the committee chose to contact some of the towns using the program for further input. Mr. Carmody stated the Mr. Bill Thornton of Lennox would be a good resource for this type of information. With no further questions at this time Mr. Carmody left. Later in the meeting the committee decided to put this budget on hold for further investigation.

The Committee then Asked Mr. Loring to come and support the **New Marlborough Rescue Expense** budget [60291.77] (\$26,550) now requesting {\$46,350} this budget was itemized and reflected much of the information that had been shared with the committee at a previous meeting. It was noted that the \$46,350 included the \$10,000 in stipends, and also some of the money in the increase will be taken from the COMSTAR account which although there was no specific amount in the account Mrs. Krejci thought it to be about \$200,000. Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mr. Imberman 2nd passed unanimously.

Fire Department Clerical [60220.88] (\$1,700) level funded {\$1,700} Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mr. Yohalem 2nd passed unanimously.

Fire Department Revolving [509.00] (\$5,000) no funds requesting no vote needed,

Fire Protection [60220.00] (\$50,900) level funded {\$60,900} Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mr. Zukauskas 2nd passed unanimously.

Fire Department Dues [60220.44] (\$200) level funded now requesting {\$200} Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mr. Yohalem 2nd passed unanimously.

Mr. Loring then proceeded to explain the various budgets that make up the Highway Department. None of the budgets included the breakdown of the total amount requested.

Propane [20422.18] (\$18,000) level funded now requesting {\$18,000} Mr. Loring stated that only about ½ this budget had been used last year, the use had been much greater this year so far and the price of propane although locked in to only so much over the Selkirk price has still risen. Mr. Zukauskas 1st, Mr. Imberman 2nd passed unanimously.

Roads and Bridges [20422.05] (\$187,000) now requesting {\$190,000} Mr. Loring stated that the cost of gravel and black top has risen. Mr. Yohalem 1st, Mr. Herrick 2nd passed unanimously.

Machinery Expense [20428.00] (\$66,046) now requesting {\$71,046} Mr. Loring stated that he had gone through the list of expenses for machinery from last year and noted that there was an increase of about \$44,000 some of these expenses had been absorbed by the Winter Roads account and other expenses had been paid by requesting money from the Reserve fund. Mr. Imberman 1st, Mr. Yohalem 2nd passed unanimously.

Highway Training Expense [20422.07] (\$1,200) now requesting {\$1,500} Mr. Loring stated that three of his staff required hydraulic licenses. And he was exploring the ways by which they could get them. One of his contacts stated that the cost would be \$300 each; he is hoping that he can get these staff members their licenses training for less since the town needs to pay for the cost! Mr. Zukauskas stated that he hoped that the staff trained by our town would remain in our town and not seek employment elsewhere! Mr. Zukauskas 1st, Mrs. Spaulding 2nd passed unanimously.

Electricity [20422.15] (\$4,500) level funded now requesting {\$4,500} Mr. Imberman 1st, Mr. Zukauskas 2nd passed unanimously.

Diesel [20422.19] (\$54,000) now requesting {\$59,000}, Mr. Loring stated that the department had used \$10,000 more than it budgeted for last year, and it appears that the department is using even more this year! Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mr. Yohalem 2nd passed unanimously.

Town Garage Maintenance [20425.00] (\$9,500) now requesting {\$11,500} Mr. Loring stated that the garage doors are presenting some problems. He had the repairman there and one definitely needs work, and the others leave a space that allows the cold air to come into the building. The repair man will submit an estimate for fixing all the doors. Mr. Herrick asked if the garage had automatic electric openers and closers on the doors, to which Mr. Loring replied that they did not. Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mr. Herrick 2nd passed unanimously.

Highway Uniforms and Gear [20422.78] (\$2,500) now requesting {\$3,000} this increase reflects new staff members. Mr. Imberman 1st, Mr. Yohalem 2nd passed unanimously.

With no further questions of Mr. Loring he left.

The minutes for January 16th were accepted as read Mr. Zukauskas 1st, Mr. Yohalem 2nd passed unanimously.

Moderator [19114.00] (\$145) level funded now requesting {\$145} Mr. Yohalem 1st, Mr. Imberman 2nd passed unanimously.

Berkshire Planning Commission [6012.00] (\$1,037) now requesting {\$1,062.68} this is an assessed amount for their services to the town. Mrs. Spaulding has asked Mr. Skorput earlier in the day to be specific about their services, he stated that they helped the selectmen on occasion, the planning board, and had helped the Highway Department. Although the budget was voted Mr. Zukauskas 1st, Mr. Herrick 2nd and passed unanimously, Mr. Zukauskas stated that he would like to put it on a **temporary HOLD** until he found out exactly what the services were to the town!

The following budgets were put on HOLD:-

Prudence Spaulding

January 24th 2014

New Marlborough Rescue Salary [60291.78] Building Inspector's Expenses [No number] remains on HOLD.

Fire fighters' Stipend [60220.05]

Winter Roads [20423.02]

Roads and Bridges Salaries [20422.03]

There had been some question about changing the time of the Finance committee Meetings, it was decided that the time namely 7:00PM would remain the same.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40PM. The next meeting will be scheduled when there are more budgets to review.

Respectfully submitted,

Prudence Spaulding, Secretary.

Prudence Spaulding
January 24th 2014