



Town Of Webster

Massachusetts

Est. 1832

Finance Committee

350 Main Street
Webster, MA 01570

Nick Adamopoulos, Chairman
Sarah Sansom, Vice Chairman
Michael Finamore
Courtney Friedland, Recording Secretary

Laura Backus
Neil Dixon
Matt Fitton
Sean Williams

MEETING MINUTES January 17, 2019

Present: Nick Adamopoulos, Laura Backus, Neil Dixon, Mike Finamore, Matt Fitton, and Sarah Sansom and Sean Williams

The Finance Committee meeting was called to order by Chairman Nick Adamopoulos at 6:00 p.m. in the Selectmen Meeting Room in the Town Hall.

Meeting Minutes

Motion: made by Matt Fitton, seconded by Neil Dixon to approve the meeting minutes of December 6, 2019, with corrections.

Vote: Shawn Williams – yes, Matt Fitton – yes, Michael Finamore – yes, Neil Dixon – yes, Laura Backus – yes, Sarah Sansom – yes and Nick Adamopoulos – yes.

Town Administrator's Update

Mr. Willardson passed out the year to date budget. He stated there weren't too many issues with accounts being over. He stated the Town Accountant's salary line is high because we have to pay the old Town Accountant out for three months back in July. He stated the Town Counsel account is running well. In IT the professional services line item is currently all spent but money will be transferred from another account. Mr. Dixon asked who pays for the Special Town Meetings. Mr. Willardson stated there is no real cost to holding a Special Town Meeting except for the required legal notices in the local newspaper. He stated the custodian has been picked up by the School Department. He stated the public building overtime account is currently high because of the delay in opening the library. He stated \$3,000.00 will be paid back to this line item by the contractor. The building and grounds maintenance is running high but except to make it through this year. He stated they had some boiler issues that seem to be resolved. He stated electricity and fuel are going well. Mr. Finamore asked where the money from the sale of the Filmer Administration Building went. Mr. Willardson stated that Town Meeting voted that the money from the sale of the building would go directly to pay down the debt for the Bartlett High School Renovations. He stated he does know the opening date of the Armory. He stated the Town received a reimbursement from the SWCRVSD assessment because they received more money in state grants. He stated the streetlight conversation is complete for phase one. The Police Department custodian is over budget but they will be able to cover that amount from other line

items. He stated the Veteran's benefits are running low. He stated some of the retirement payout this year is very large. Mr. Dixon asked if the employee needed to give notice that they are retiring before the budget is finalized. Mr. Willardson stated in the past they would have to give notice or they would have to wait until it was appropriated at Town Meeting. He stated he suspect we can't hold anytime pay but says if money isn't available they will have to wait until Town Meeting. He stated the water and sewer account looks good.

Mr. Willardson passed out this Town Administrator's Report. He stated The Power up Program is going well. He said roughly 300 people have opted out. He stated free cash has been certified. Mr. Finamore asked why it wasn't added to the Town Meeting to put in the stabilization fund. Mr. Willardson stated he wants to make sure that the town has enough for all of the capital needs. He stated they are going to start the Shut-off Policy. He stated shut offs will happen in March and October. Ms. Sansom stated how the town was going to get the word out about these shut-offs. Mr. Willardson stated there will be a media blitz. Everyone will receive certified letters. Mr. Finamore asked about multifamily houses. Mr. Willardson stated he spoke with Town Counsel and they will be working closely with the Board of Health and will be sensitive to all situations. He stated National Grid is offering energy assessments. They are currently printing brochures and mailers for residents. He stated marijuana is on the warrant for the Town Meeting on the 28th. He stated the brokers for the K-Mart Plaza will now allow a marijuana facility to be located there. He said they can opt into a host agreement. Mr. Adamopoulos asked if we can add something to the host agreement that they are to do appointments only until things calm down. Mr. Willardson stated he is in favor of that. Mr. Dixon asked if we know how many are interested. Mr. Willardson stated we have three that are interested in the K-Mart Plaza. Mr. Willardson stated he will make a stipulation in the host agreement that \$150,000.00 will need to be paid before November 1, 2019, so that can be included in the FY20 funds. He stated the Joint Purchasing Group meets next Thursday and they will release the rates. He stated is agreed the rates will go into effect July 1, 2019. Mr. Willardson stated they applied for Opportunity Zones and was able to get East Main Street designated. He stated if someone was to invest into the opportunity zones they would get a deferment on taxes. Mr. Dixon asked if there was any interest in a hotel. Mr. Willardson stated there was some interest but that talk has died down. He stated he is trying to attract businesses and show them there is a lot of opportunities. Mr. Dixon stated he heard at the Selectmen's Meeting that the Town received \$650,000.00 in grants and he wanted to thank the Town Administrator.

Library Update

Mr. Dixon stated the Committee is talking about meet less now that the project this almost completely. Mr. Willardson stated he met with the Architect this week and they are working on the last few items on the punch list. He stated this should be done shortly. They have a tentative settlement agreement with the contractor for the extra time it took to complete the job. He stated they remain within budget. He stated the library is three times busier than they were last year.

Water Filtration Plant Update

Mr. Fitton stated we weren't able to attend the meeting. Mr. Willardson stated they are slightly behind but they are thinking they will make it up when work is completed inside. They are still estimating it will be completed at the beginning of July. He stated they are also cleaning and relining Myrtle Street. Mr. Adamopolous asked how they picked Myrtle Street. Mr. Willardson stated Greg Woods has a whole list of elements but it was based on breaks, complaints, and pressure.

Audit Update

Mr. Adamopoulos stated they have not met but will be meeting in February.

Capital Planning Process FY20

Mr. Adamopoulos stated last year they went and looked at what Departments were requested to replace. He stated he would like to do the same thing this year. Mr. Willardson stated they can set up a meeting. Mr. Finamore asked if anyone has looked at the Town's buildings. Mr. Willardson stated Dude Solutions did a needs analysis for each building.

Debt Planning – Biannual Interest Payments; Note Changes; etc.

Mr. Willardson passed around the debt service handout. He stated page one was actual debt and page two was BANs. He stated the Park Ave Elementary School will be transferred in April.

Update on Salary Negotiations for FY20

Mr. Willardson stated there is a lot of Union Contracts that are up this year. He stated they are in agreement to hold until a compensation study is done. Mr. Finamore asked if the language was going to be added back in the contract in which the Acting Town Administrator took out of the last contract. Mr. Willardson stated he would look into that. He stated that if he was suggesting putting back the residence requirement for the Police Department that he wasn't looking on doing that.

FY20 Preliminary Budget Update

Mr. Willardson stated he is meeting with the School Superintendent and the Business Manager later in the month. Mr. Dixon asked if there will be a budget in February. Mr. Willardson stated there will be a preliminary budget available in February. Ms. Sansom asked what changes they could anticipate. Mr. Willardson stated Departments are asking for more staff. Mr. Finamore asked if they could end the wish list budget. Ms. Backus asked if all Departments were getting looked at. She stated Animal Control is underfunded. Mr. Fitton stated some Departments are scraping in manpower. He stated he would like to see money go to where we need it. Mr. Finamore stated EMS is not affiliated with the Town. He stated the Town could charge them rent for using town property. He stated the Town owns the land. Ms. Sansom stated he would like to see something in writing regarding mutual aid. She stated they provide the Town a service.

January 28, 2019, Special Town Meeting – Review and Vote on Warrant Articles

Mr. Adamopoulos wanted to remind the Committee members that the Conflict of Interest and OML certifications need to be completed if not done within the last two years. He asked Mr. Willardson to send everyone the link to the test.

December Special Town Meeting – Review and Vote on Warrant Articles

Mr. Willardson went over the warrant. He stated article one was to distinguish a new overlay district. Mr. Dixon asked what would happen to the school buses and if that area was wetlands. Mr. Willardson stated the school buses would have to find another location and they are not looking to expand so the wetlands would not be affected. Mr. Dixon stated he had concerns watching the Board of Selectmen debate over approving the property. He stated even if this is approved the Board of Selectmen still have the authority to not enter into a host agreement with a

marijuana retailer. Mr. Willardson stated the Board of Selectmen did have some concerns about the area. He stated article number two is regarding the taking of interest in the property for the "Riverwalk." He stated this allows the Town to get easements for construction. Mr. Dixon asked if there were any costs associated with this. Mr. Willardson stated there will be no cost incurred by the town and it will be paid through grant money. He stated article three was for the infiltration and inflow analysis. He stated the DEP is requiring this. He stated the town will be seeking an additional four hundred and fifty thousand for close camera testing of the pipes.

Motion: made by Michael Finamore, seconded by Matt Fitton to recommend approval for articles 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 of the Special Town Meeting Warrant,

Vote: Shawn Williams – yes, Matt Fitton – yes, Michael Finamore – yes; Neil Dixon – yes, Laura Backus – yes, Sarah Sansom – yes, and Nick Adamopoulos – yes.

Schedule Next Meeting

Mr. Finamore suggested leaving the next meeting date open until we receive the draft budget. Mr. Adamopoulos stated the Committee has things they need to review and asked the Committee for their thoughts. The Finance Committee was in favor of holding a meeting on Thursday, February 7, 2019, at 6:00 p.m.

Adjournment

Motion: made by Sarah Sansom, seconded by Neil Dixon to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 p.m.

Vote: Shawn Williams – yes, Matt Fitton – yes, Michael Finamore – yes; Neil Dixon – yes, Laura Backus – yes, Sarah Sansom – yes, and Nick Adamopoulos – yes.

Respectfully submitted,
Courtney Friedland