

3/11/21

TOWN OF WINCHENDON

WINCHENDON TOWN CLERK
RCUD MAY 17 2021 AM 11:35

Finance Committee

Telephone (978)-297-5419

Joint Meeting with Board of Selectmen

Finance Committee Minutes

March 22, 2021

Held Remotely via Zoom

Present: Chairman Thomas J. Kane Jr., Maureen Ward, Keith Kent, Douglas Delay, Phillip Levine, David Alexander, Charles Corts

Board of Selectmen Members present: Michael Barbaro, Chair, Rick Ward, Vice Chair, Barbara Anderson, Audrey LaBrie

Absent: Amy Salter, Board of Selectmen

List of Documents Presented at Meeting:

Memo from the Town Manager dated March 18, 2021 regarding Budget Information (attached)

- FY'22 General Fund Budget (attached)
- FY'22 Water Fund Budget (attached)
- FY'22 Sewer Fund Budget (attached)
- FY'22 Transfer Station Fund (attached)
- FY'22 Capital Improvement Plan (attached)

6:30PM: Dr. Ward called the Finance Committee meeting to order at 6:34 p.m. Keith Kent and Tom Kane of the Finance Committee joined at 6:38 p.m.

Financial Presentation of the Proposed FY2022 Town Budget by the Acting Town Manager: Interim Town Manager Stephen Delaney presented the final FY'22 budget; the draft was already presented at the Tri-Board meeting in January. He briefly explained the few things that changed, one revision being that the Department of Revenue would not allow the estimated revenue of cannabis since there was no history to base it off of. Staff also found there was a need to revise the indirect charges for school. A \$210,000 increase is required in local contribution. There was a \$500,000 budget gap, prompting staff to work hard to adjust to accommodate. Various line items have been reduced, savings from health insurance were applied, and it has been recommended to defer two capital items. Delaney explained that the Fire Department came in with an additional request for funds totaling over \$46,000. Looking through the numbers, Delaney was concerned about having a true handle on the accounts and is not recommending

the additional \$46,000 request. He has obtained the assistance of an outside accountant who will be taking a detailed look at the Fire Department accounts to make sure we have a good handle. Delaney explained that he does not see this as a negative, but that it is imperative to make sure there is a good handle on these accounts. He went on to inform the Board that the Capital Improvement Committee recommended to defer the replacement of the DPW roof. The Director agreed, noting that his priority is a dump truck. The Committee also suggested that it is appropriate to defer the study for Fire Station Improvements.

Ward noted that on page one, SPED Transportation, the FY'21 revised budget had \$500,000, and this one has \$1 million. Delaney responded that more students have transferred out and due to COVID-19 guidelines, transportation costs are higher.

Looking at the charges for the School Department, LaBrie asked what has changed. Delaney answered that there are indirect charges related to IT, as we don't service the School Department so IT Technology should not have been there.

Anderson was pleased to see an additional accountant come in, as she had concerns with the Fire Department budget.

Barbaro was optimistic that the Federal aid over the next two years will help the Town. With regard to the SPED Transportation, he asked if that number will go down once COVID restrictions are lifted, allowing more than one student on a bus at the same time. Joan Landers, Superintendent of the Schools, answered yes, having to separate the students was costly. Kane noted that one of the surprises was an increase in local contribution for the School Department. Kane also expressed that he is still not sure why the Spare Houseman account has increased and would like some explanation for that increase in the near future. Delay commented on the use of free cash this year, stating that it is one of our only ways to build the stabilization fund and we should concentrate on continuing to build that fund. Kane noted that the Finance Committee Special Reserve typically has \$45,000, and asked if that account will be refunded back to its original balance – Delaney answered that it would.

Barbaro said that the Fire Department budgets will be revisited to make changes that will help guide the Fire Department to next year. Kane noted that there was a 19% increase from fiscal 2019 to fiscal 2020, with no additional staff. He said that there is something that's different than the way business has been conducted in the past.

Ward moved to approve the final FY22 Budget presented this evening, seconded by LaBrie for discussion. LaBrie wished to clarify that the Board is voting on the budget as presented, but if something needs to be tweaked before Town Meeting, those changes can be made and presented back to the Board. With a roll call vote of Anderson, aye, Ward, aye, LaBrie, aye and Barbaro, aye, the motion carried unanimously.

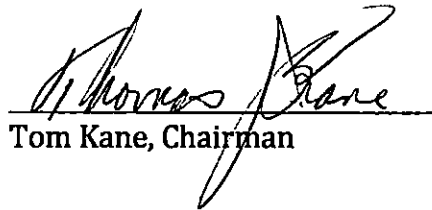
Member Comments: None was heard.

Public Input: None was heard.

Dr. Ward moved to adjourn the Finance Committee meeting, seconded by Corts. With a roll call vote of Dr. Ward, aye, Kent, aye, Delay, aye, Levine, aye, Alexander, aye and Kane, aye, the meeting adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Taylor Tower, Finance Committee Recording Secretary

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Kane", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial 'T' and a long, trailing flourish that extends downwards and to the right.

Tom Kane, Chairman