

Brimfield Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: January 30, 2024

Location: Hitchcock Academy

Committee Members Present: Joe Ballou: Chair, Mike Moloney, Denise DuPont, Nancy Waugh, Ted Steensen, Patrick Kubala, Billie Jean Rubio

Town Staff Absent: Patricia Plasse (Finance Committee Clerk)

Town Staff Present: Marie Arsenault (Accountant), Zach Lemieux (Highway)

Called to order: 6:35: p.m.

November 14 Meetings Notes Approval:

Joe Ballou asked if everyone had a chance to review the November 14th meeting notes and if there were any changes. Joe was only one who had updates incorporated.

MOTION: Nancy Waugh made a motion to approve the November 14th meeting notes.

SECOND: Denise DuPont

VOTE: All

Budgets:

Cemetery budget

Zach Lemieux presented Cemetery budget recommending to accept on target level funded.

MOTION: Billie Jean Rubio made a motion to approve recommendation.

SECOND: Denise DuPont

VOTE: All

Highway budget

Zach Lemieux presented Highway budget. The budget included an increase of 3% for the Machine budget. Zach recommended to accept budget which was close to target.

MOTION: Patrick Kubala made a motion to approve recommendation.

SECOND: Nancy Waugh

VOTE: All

Tree Warden budget

Zach Lemieux presented Tree Warden budget recommending to accept on target level funded.

MOTION: Billie Jean Rubio made a motion to approve recommendation.

SECOND: Denise DuPont

VOTE: All

ZBA budget

Zoning Board recommended to accept on target level funded.

MOTION: Ted Steensen made a motion to approve recommendation.

SECOND: Patrick Kubala

VOTE: All

Recreation budget

Recreation budget recommending to accept on target level funded.

Discussion: There was a discussion on fees, and donations.

MOTION: Nancy Wauch made a motion to approve recommendation.

SECOND: Patrick Kubala

VOTE: All

School budget

Discussion: School budget will incur increases particularly to address Special Ed. requirements. The elementary school will need a new roof. This will have to be added to the Capital Plan for future expense. There was no motion or vote at this time.

Clerk budget

Discussion: Clerk budget hours were reduced for assistant. Joe will meet with Deb Fagerstrom, the Clerk, to review and validate her budget submission. There was no motion or vote at this time.

Senior Center (COA) budget

Discussion: Senior Center (COA) budget included an increase for rent at the Congregational Church to \$22,540/year and increased snow removal charges. It was discussed the possibility of moving Senior Center to Hitchcock once planned improvements are made to add an elevator, expand, and improve kitchen, and add offices... among other changes. Currently Hitchcock facility usage is limited during daytime hours. There was no motion or vote at this time.

Board of Health budget

Discussion: Board of Health budget has issues with a new trash contract, which is currently out to bid. A discussion on trash bags not being included in a future contract took place. The town pays Republic currently \$217,000 for their service and receives \$80,000 back in trash bag sales. There was no motion or vote at this time.

Fire Department budget

Discussion: Fire Department details are no longer being covered by the Flea Market Public Safety Fund. It was requested that \$31,500 be added to the Fire Department budget to cover the flea Market detail. Discussion took place on town residents/taxpayers subsidizing Flea Market Services. The town has a liability of \$7,500 from the September 2023 flea market detail and Fire will be requesting a reserve fund transfer. There was no motion or vote at this time.

Reserve Fund Transfer Requests:

Hampden County Retirement Transfer

Joe Ballou asked Marie Arseneault (Town Accountant) to speak about the reserve fund transfer request to pay the Hampden County Retirement System. She stated that there was a total of \$10,119 not deducted from one employee over 68 pay periods. There was a shortfall of \$5,328.98 in County Retirement Fund. Marie requested that shortfall be transferred from the Reserve Fund.

MOTION: Ted Steensen

SECOND: Patrick Kubala

VOTE: All

Building Committee:

Joe Ballou briefly provided a high-level summary of the Building Committee project with 4 potential options and scope. Right now, the price tag of what the Building Committee is reviewing is about 8 million dollars just for town offices for employees.

There was discussion surrounding the potential tax increase. Marie Arsenault said the tax increase could potentially be \$1.85/thousand based on property evaluation.

MOTION: Ted Steensen made a motion to adjourn meeting.

SECOND: Patrick Kubala

VOTE: All

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

The next meeting is February 27th, 2024, at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Patricia A. Plasse, Clerk

Approved