July 1, 2020

Meeting of the Finance Committee held on Wednesday, July 1, 2020 beginning at 6:00 p.m. in Conference Room #1, Town Hall

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Members present: Eric Gregoire, Chairman, Maureen Downing, Susanne Boyea, Richard Moskal and Beverly Tokarz

Members excused: Anthony Alves, Joan Cavallo and Nicole Parker

Kimberly Collins joined the meeting on a conference line as did the Police Chief, Lisa Halpin and the Fire Chief

First Order of Business: The Pledge of Allegiance

At this time the committee met with Chief Daniel Valadas to discuss his request for a Reserve Fund Transfer for their Taser Lease in the amount $7,765.31

Action must be taken to waive the rules which dictate a seven-day file window.

Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Ms. Boyea to waive the date rules for the transfer
Vote: 5-0 in favor

Chief Valadas and Lisa Halpin explained that when they met with the committee in March, they requested what they thought was the balance of the Taser Lease. It was the wrong amount on the line item. The original amount was never put in the budget. They should have asked for $12,275 and not $4,475. The $12,275 is a yearly payment. The amount is now in their budget for three more years. Ms. Collins explained their budget and the taser line item.

Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Mr. Moskal to approve the Reserve Fund Transfer in the amount of $7,765.31 to the Police Department for the Taser Lease.
Vote: 5-0 in favor

Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Mr. Moskal to approve the Interdepartmental Transfer of $8,455.09 from EMT Tuition and Training and EMT Supplies (due to a Sergeant's training which is more expensive. The training is for six month) to the Overtime Training Account
Vote: 5-0 in favor

Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Mr. Moskal to approve the Interdepartmental Transfer in the amount of $13,000 from PT Dispatch and Clothing Allowance into Police Overtime and Vehicle Repair and Maintenance
Vote: 5-0 in favor

At this time the committee met with Chief Pease to discuss the department's Interdepartmental Transfer from Firefighter's Salaries in the amount of $44,600 to address some overages. Chief Pease outlined all the departments that the transfers will be going to. The first one is Ambulance Repairs and Maintenance for repairs to an old ambulance until the 2019 ambulance was delivered. There were also repairs to a second ambulance also with routine repairs that they are currently running. Their call volume increased more than 10% this year. Medical supplies also increased. There was not enough man power to cover three ambulances, so overtime was needed for fire coverage.

On the Fire side, Vehicle Repairs and Maintenance – They are maintaining two apparatus that are over 28 years old and the other is 20 years old. They will be replacing a 1992 vehicle. Diesel Fuel is not all representative on the fire side. The Chief had problems with the DPW's electronic keys. They usually go through more fuel on the ambulance side than the fire side. He contacted the director and staff and he's waiting to hear back from them. This has been going on for months and he could not get the account adjusted before the end of the year. That is why he transferred the money to the diesel fuel line item. He also transferred $3,100 to the Selectmen, due to a retiree pay buyout for disability which was approved for June 30th.

Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Mr. Moskal to approve $44,600 from the Firefighter Salaries into Ambulance Repairs and Maintenance, Ambulance Medical Supplies and Ambulance Overtime, Fire Vehicle Repair and Maintenance, Fire Diesel Fuel and a Sick Leave Buyback for a Retiree
Vote: 5-0 in favor

Members from the Golf Course were not available to discuss their Interdepartmental Transfer. Mr. Gregoire outlined the accounts. There was a vacancy in the laborers position which explains the extra funds. Ms. Collins had concerns because there is nothing on the transfer for Capital. She is trying to research their accounts and will get back to the committee shortly.

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The committee voted on the Council on Aging $7.00 transfer.

Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Ms. Boyea to approve the transfer of $7.00 for the Council on Aging from Dues and Membership to WestMass Eldercare
Vote: 5-0 in favor

Ms. Collins researched the Golf Commission budget. She looked at their General Expenses, Personnel Services and Capital Outlay. They didn't request a transfer into Capital Outlay. This is not part of the general fund so she didn't have a review on it. She is hoping that Mr. Linton will be able to adjust the line items. They are negative in their Capital line item in the amount of $453. She said she sent a year to date golf report which shows that their Personnel Services expenses had $23,009.71 available and their General Expenses, they had $15,399.87 available and $463.75 negative. She's looking at their transfers, and doesn't think they were created appropriately. She didn't have a chance to review their requests. Mr. Gregoire will hold this to the end of the meeting to see if Mr. Linton will join in.

The committee discussed the Interdepartmental Transfer for the IT Department. Mr. Moskal questioned the $4,500 expense and why it wasn't used. Ms. Collins said that they were trying to get LCTV completely automated and there was money in the budget for that process but there has been some miscommunication with MUNIS and the IT Department. They were not able to get the process going and that could account for the extra money.

Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Mr. Moskal to approve the IT Interdepartmental Transfer in the amount of $4,500 from the Software line item to Service Contracts
Vote: 5-0 in favor

The committee discussed the Interdepartmental Transfers for the Board of Selectmen - $30,000 from Veterans Services benefits to Legal Services. Ms. Collins said there has not been a change in the Legal Services contact for several years. They signed a new contract and in addition to that there have been numerous events that have required legal services. Ms. Villano made a substantial increase to this line item for next year to cover all of the issues. There was money in the Veterans account so Ms. Villano asked if she could use money from the Veterans budget and the Veterans Agent agreed to that. They are

able to move from department to department as well as within a department. Veterans Services has a line item to pay out to veterans. There is money available in that line item based on the veterans he can support. He has given money in the past to other departments

Moved by Ms. Boyea, seconded by Mr. Moskal to approve the Interdepartmental Transfer from Veterans Services to Legal Services in the Selectmen's Office in the amount of $30,000
Vote: 5-0 in favor

Ms. Downing has an issue with the next two transfers. The committee just approved a transfer from Firefighter salaries in the amount of $44,600 and there is another transfer from that line item for $50,000. Did they not use almost $100,000? Ms. Collins said that in the Fire Department budget there was $171,000 left in the salaries line item. In Chapter 111F the line item is negative $90,000. She feels the State gave control over departments entire budget to move money around to cover things. There is only $71,000 available in the two-line items, but the Chief is able to transfer money out of each line item. The money that is needed for Property Liability Insurance is for the new school and senior center. There was a revaluation done of all the buildings within the Town and the appraisals were raised. This is accounted for in next year's budget.

Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Mr. Moskal to approve the Board of Selectmen Interdepartmental Transfer from Firefighter Salaries ($50,000), Energy Services ($5,000) and Building Repairs ($5,000) to Property/Liability Insurance in the amount of $60,000
Vote: 5-0 in favor

The Board of Selectmen - $4,000 from Veterans Services to All Other Services in the Selectmen's Department.

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Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Mr. Moskal to approve the Interdepartmental Transfers from Veterans Services in the amount of $4,000 to Selectmen's Department All Other Services $4,000
Vote: 5-0 in favor

Ms. Downing thought that departments should have provided background information or have some representation from those departments submitting transfers especially since it's so late. Mr. Gregoire hopes that this won't happen next year as far as the timeline.

The committee again discussed the Golf Commissions requests. Everyone is confused. Are there insufficient funds for them to be able to achieve the transfers? Ms. Collins calculated how much is coming out of salaries, general expenses and how much is going into each line item. The net of what their requesting is. Their taking $17,000 out of Salaries. They have $23,000 in that line item. Their putting $17,000 into General Expenses and in that line item they have $15,000 left. The only thing that they didn't account for is that they need to cover their Capital Outlay of expenditures since they have no budget there. She recommends adjusting the transfer to move $500 out of General Expenses to Capital Outlay line item to cover that, which is in a deficit of $463.75. Ms. Collins explains further the moving of funds into different line items. She would recommend that Mr. Gregoire speak with Mr. Linton and ask what they plan to spend the $17,000 on, and if they are previously needed items. Ms. Downing and Ms. Collins went through all of the Golf Course transfer requests from different line items and came out with a deficit in their Capital account for $500. Ms. Collins said they could take that amount from their salaries line item. The total transfer out and in is $29,900. Mr. Linton called in and Mr. Gregoire explained to him what the committee did with his Interdepartmental Transfer, so that he is balanced on all three-line items that is required under the law.

Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Ms. Boyea to approve the Golf Course Interdepartmental Transfer from Labor Salaries, $10,000; Energy Supplies, $3,000; Utilities Electric, $5,000; Communications

Advertising, $1,000; Labor Salaries, $3,400; Labor Salaries, $7,000; Labor Salaries, $500, and transfer into, Vehicle Repairs and Maintenance, $10,000; All Other Purchases Services, $3,000; Building Supplies, $5,000, Fees and Taxes, $1,000; Employee Benefits, $3,400; Grounds, $7,000 and Capital, $500. Total $29,900
Vote: 5-0 in favor

The committee voiced their frustration with requests coming in at the last minute and at a late date. Ms. Collins agrees but with the COVID issues with spending, grants from the State etc. it effected the process the most. There needs to be representation or background information for the transfers.

The next meeting will be held on the third week of September, unless there is an emergency.

Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Ms. Boyea to adjourn the Finance Committee meeting at 7:19 p.m.
Vote: 5-0 in favor

Ludlow Finance Committee

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