April 28, 2021

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2021 APR 28 P 12:28
TOWN OF LUDLOW

Finance Committee budget meeting held on Wednesday, April 28, 2021, beginning at 6:00 p.m. in the Selectmen's Conference Room, Town Hall.

Members present in person: Eric Gregoire, Chairman, Joan Cavallo, Susanne Boyea, Maureen Downing, Richard Miskal, Anthony Alves and Beverly Tokarz.

Members present by conference call: Nicole Parker, Christopher Ganhao

A Roll Call vote was taken and all members were present
Vote: 9-0 in favor

Ms. Villano was also in attendance.

First Order of Business: The Pledge of Allegiance

The committee met with the DPW Chairman Steve Santos and James Goodreau to discuss a few of their Articles for Town Meeting.

Article 12: To see if the Town will vote to transfer an amount from Sewer Enterprise Account Retained Earnings and/or transfer the remaining balances from the following Sewer Division Capital Improvements articles: Article 22 of the May 9, 2016 Annual Town Meeting; Article 2 of the November 6, 2017 Special Town Meeting; and Article 9 of the May 13, 2019 Annual Town Meeting and/or borrow by the issuance of bonds or notes such sums of money as may be necessary for the Sewer Division Capital Improvements beginning July 1, 2021.

Mr. Santos explained that there were many Articles in the past that were not totally expended. They transferred monies from those Articles into one Article, titled Engineering and Construction. Money can be expended for both projects without having to create separate Articles. There is a job that is being bid on for after July 1st. There is $300,000 being transferred into that one Article and the project will cost $453,000. He doesn't know if those funds will be enough to cover the job. The project entails three different streets. Tower Road is the preliminary job, Motyka Street from Marie Street to West Street is another project and option 3 is Grimard Street. The next section to be done is West Orchard, West Belmont, Fairview, the streets between Cady Street and the turnpike, towards West Street Park. Those streets will be tied in to the manhole created from the first project. The maximum out of Retained Earnings that can be transferred is $307,456 in order to maintain 20% of the operating budget. If there is $720,000 all project will be completed. If not, the projects will be done in stages.

Jim Goodreau gave an explanation of the completed projects and other projects that show on the spreadsheet. Ms. Downing and Mr. Goodreau discussed the cost for the projects and what money is in the Articles.

Articles 13 and Article 16 - No action being taken

Article 14: To see if the Town will vote to appropriate State Chapter 90 Highway Aid Funds for engineering, construction, reconstruction and/or repairs to Town roads and bridges and authorize

the Board of Selectmen, if necessary, to borrow in anticipation of the receipt of such State Aid; pass any vote or take any action relative thereto.

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This is the Chapter 90 Article. They will be receiving $694,010 from the State, for Highway Aid.

Article 15: To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Public Works to enter into a contract with the Massachusetts Department of Transportation for the construction and maintenance of public roads for the ensuing years; pass any vote or take any action relative thereto.

This Article is needed for the DPW to spend the Chapter 90 money received from the State.

Article 16: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate and/or transfer a sum of money to establish a Fiscal Year 2022 budget for the Department of Public Works Enterprise Fund for the Closure of the Landfill; pass any vote or take any action relative thereto.

No action will be taken. The money is now in their budget for the closing of the Landfill. The Article will be withdrawn.

Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Ms. Boyea to approve Article 12 for the DPW Enterprise.

Mr. Alves, yes; Ms. Boyea, yes; Ms. Cavallo, yes, Mr. Ganhao, no answer; Ms. Parker, yes; Ms. Tokarz, yes; Mr. Gregoire, yes. Vote: 8-0 in favor

Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Mr. Alves to concur with the DPW and take no action on Article13.

Mr. Alves, Ms. Boyea, yes; Ms. Cavallo, yes; Ms. Downing, yes; Mr. Moskal, yes; Ms. Parker, yes; Mr. Ganhao, no response; Ms. Tokarz, Mr. Gregoire, yes. Vote: 8-0 in favor

Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Mr. Alves to approve Article 14 to have the Town appropriate Chapter 90 Highway Funds in the amount of $690,010.

Mr. Alves, yes; Ms. Boyea, yes; Ms. Cavallo, yes; Ms. Downing, yes; Mr. Ganhao, no response; Mr. Moskal, yes; Ms. Parker, yes; Ms. Tokarz, yes; Mr. Gregoire. Vote: 8-0 in favor

Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Mr. Alves to approve Article 15 to enter into the contract for Chapter 90.

Mr. Alves, yes; Ms. Boyea, yes; Ms. Cavallo, yes; Ms. Downing, yes; Mr. Ganhao, no response; Mr. Moskal, yes; Ms. Parker, yes; Ms. Tokarz, yes; Mr. Gregoire, yes. Vote: 8-0 in favor

Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Mr. Alves to concur with no action taken on Article 16 for the DPW

Mr. Alves, yes; Ms. Boyea, yes; Ms. Cavallo, yes; Ms. Downing, yes; Mr. Ganhao, no response; Mr. Moskal, yes; Ms. Parker, yes; Ms. Tokarz, yes; Mr. Gregoire, yes. Vote: 8-0 in favor

Ms. Villano gave background information on the Selectmen's Articles in the May Town Meeting Warrant as follows:

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Article 1: The Town Report

Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Mr. Alves to approve Article 1

Mr. Alves, yes; Ms. Boyea, yes; Ms. Cavallo, yes; Ms. Downing, yes; Mr. Ganhao, no response, Mr. Moskal, yes; Ms. Parker, yes; Ms. Tokarz, yes; Mr. Gregoire, yes. Vote: 8-0 in favor

Article 2: This is a standard Article that accepts the reports of the outstanding committees that are appointed and to have them continue.

Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Mr. Alves to approve Article 2

Mr. Alves, yes; Ms. Boyea, yes; Ms. Cavallo, yes; Ms. Downing, yes; Mr. Ganhao, no response; Mr. Moskal, yes; Ms. Parker, yes; Ms. Tokarz, yes; Mr. Gregoire, yes. Vote: 8-0 in favor

Article 3: Budget

Article 4: This Article sets the appropriations for the Revolving Fund. On the Onsight Sewage System that there is a dollar. She was informed after the Warrant was completed that they've done away with that particular Revolving Fund. The health agent is now a contracted person. In October they will be cancelling the Revolving Fund completely. The rest are the standard numbers, she checked with the different departments and the numbers are fine.

Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Mr. Alves to approve Article 4 for the Revolving Funds. CPR Training, $5,000; Zero dollars for Sewage System; $20,000 Vaccine; $50,000, Consultant; $80,000 Wetlands; $26,000 Purple Bags, $5,000 Dog Park.

Mr. Alves seconded for discussion. He asked Ms. Villano if any of the amounts increased. Ms. Villano said the figures are the same as last year.

Mr. Alves, yes; Ms. Boyea, yes; Ms. Downing, yes; Ms. Cavallo, yes; Mr. Ganhao, no response, Mr. Moskal, yea; Ms. Parker, yes; Ms. Tokarz, yes; Mr. Gregoire, yes. 8-0 in favor

Article 5: Celebrate Ludlow. The Selectmen voted to postpone Celebrate Ludlow this year. This Article will be postponed.

Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Mr. Alves to concur with the postponement of Article 5 for Celebrate Ludlow

Ms. Alves, yes; Ms. Boyea, yes; Ms. Cavallo, yes; Ms. Downing, yes; Mr. Ganhao, yes; Mr. Moskal, yes; Ms. Parker, yes; Ms. Tokarz, yes; Mr. Gregoire, yes. Vote: 9-0 in favor

Article 6: Allocate $25,000 from Free Cash to the newly established 250th Anniversary Committee. The anniversary is in 2024. They intend to have a year long celebration with events going on throughout the entire year. Th committee will be purchasing flyers, approach people etc. they felt it was appropriate to allocate start-up money. They will also open up a special revenue fund to accept gifts and donations.

Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Mr. Alves to approve Article 6, Semi-Quincentennial celebration and appropriate $25,000 for start-up one- time fee.

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TOWN OF HOLLOW

Mr. Alves, yes; Ms. Boyea, yes; Ms. Cavallo, yes; Ms. Downing, yes; Mr. Ganhao, yes; Mr. Moskal, yes; Ms. Parker, yes; Ms. Tokarz, yes; Mr. Gregoire, yes. Vote: 9-0 in favor

Article 7: Single Use Plastic Bag Prohibition. This was on the October Town Meeting last year. Now that the restrictions have been lifted its back on the Warrant. Table for discussion.

Article 8: To Change the Senior Citizen Property Abatement Program by changing the dollar amount from $500 to $750 changing the Federal minimum wage to follow the MA minimum wage. The minimum wage will go up to $13.50. Ms. Villano explained that the program with 75 people is $37,500 in abatements. If it is increased to $750 per person it will increase to $56,250 in abatements. The threshold for hours will change from 68 hours to 56 hours. Same number of slots. The people that were chosen last year but couldn't work because of COVID, will work this year and finish their program. Ms. Villano explained the lottery system and waiting list. The program varies from town to town.

Mr. Alves said that there will be a loss of labor hours. He asked if there is a need for those lost hours. Ms. Villano said that they sometimes struggle to find work for people to do. The Senior Center rely heavily on their slots. The library has a list of jobs as does the Golf Course. Candidates have to be 62 years of age or older and own your home for ten years. One member per family can work the program.

Moved by Mr. Alves, seconded by Ms. Downing to approve Article 8.

Mr. Alves, yes; Ms. Boyea, yes; Ms. Cavallo, yes; Ms. Downing, yes; Mr. Ganhao, yes; Mr. Moskal, yes; Ms. Parker, yes; Ms. Tokarz, yes; Mr. Gregoire, yes. Vote: 9-0 in favor

Article 9: This Article was at the request of the Police Chief. The registration fee for a solicitor is $5.00. He would like to increase the fee to $25.00. This is for commercial canvassers and the money goes into the General Fund.

Moved by Mr. Alves, seconded by Ms. Cavallo to approve Article 9.

Mr. Alves, yes; Ms. Boyea, yes; Ms. Cavallo, yes; Ms. Downing, yes; Mr. Ganhao, yes; Mr. Moskal, yes; Ms. Parker, yes; Ms. Tokarz, yes; Mr. Gregoire, yes. Vote: 9-0 in favor

Article 10: Appropriate $15,000 from Free Cash to perform the Classification Review of all the positions in the LATOS Union. Mr. Alves wanted an explanation as there was something on the Warrant last year. Ms. Villano stated that last year the review was for non-union personnel, this one is for the Union. The studies will be done separately. Because of the pandemic, they were not able to do the first study. There will be a conference call with the department managers the day after Town Meeting and should be completed before the end of the year. The Union review will follow. A study hasn't been done on either group since 2005-2006. Adjustments will take place in 2023. Ms. Villano explained the levels in the pay scales.

Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Ms. Cavallo to approve Article 10.

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Mr. Alves, yes; Ms. Boyea, yes; Ms. Cavallo, yes; Ms. Downing, yes; Mr. Ganhao, yes; Mr. Moskal, yes; Ms. Parker, yes; Ms. Tokarz, yes; Mr. Gregoire, yes. Vote: 9-0 in favor

Article 11: There is a new Animal Control Officer that comes from the Western part of the country. She has a lot of experience in animal control and doing a study of all of the neighboring communities they found that the fines that are assessed for dangerous dogs, unleashed dogs etc. are very low. The officer suggested that changes be made to the fines in the six categories. Ms. Villano read the old amounts that were charged for violations.

Moved by Mr. Alves, seconded by Mr. Moskal to approve Article 11.

Mr. Alves, yes; Ms. Boyea, yes; Ms. Cavallo, yes; Ms. Downing, yes; Mr. Ganhao, yes; Mr. Moskal, yes; Ms. Parker, yes; Ms. Tokarz, yes; Ms. Gregoire, yes; Vote: 9-0 in favor

Article 18: Capital Improvement Project. The total Capital Improvement Plan that was recommended and approved totaled $479,419.29 of which $77,000 is coming from the Ambulance Subscription Fund; $402,419.29 is coming from Free Cash. The committee has the attachments for a breakdown of the funds.

Moved by Mr. Alves, seconded by Mr. Moskal to approve Article 18.

Mr. Alves, yes; Ms. Boyea, yes; Ms. Cavallo, yes; Ms. Downing, yes; Mr. Ganhao, yes; Mr. Moskal, yes; Ms. Parker, yes; Ms. Tokarz, yes; Mr. Gregoire, yes; Vote: 9-0 in favor.

Article 19: $100,000 will be taken from Free Cash and placed in the Reserve Fund for the Finance Committee.

Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Mr. Alves to approve Article 19, for $100,000.

Mr. Alves, yes; Ms. Boyea, yes; Ms. Cavallo, yes; Ms. Downing, yes; Mr. Ganhao, yes; Mr. Moskal, yes; Ms. Parker, yes; Ms. Tokarz, yes; Mr. Gregoire, yes. Vote: 9-0 in favor

Article 20: Building Infrastructure Article. Place $25,000 from Free Cash into the Building Infrastructure Article. The balance is in the range of $79,000. The funds are used for unexpected issues and repairs that arise, that far exceed the repair budget.

Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Ms. Cavallo to approve Article 20 at $25,000 for Infrastructure.

Mr. Alves, yes; Ms. Boyea, yes; Ms. Cavallo, yes; Ms. Downing, yes; Mr. Ganhao, yes; Mr. Moskal, yes; Ms. Parker, yes; Ms. Tokarz, yes; Mr. Gregoire, yes; Vote: 9-0 in favor

Article 21: Money in the amount of $700,000 to be deposited into the Stabilization Fund from Free Cash.

Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Mr. Moskal to approve Article 21 to place $700,000 into the Stabilization Fund from Free Cash.

Mr. Alves, yes; Ms. Boyea, yes; Ms. Cavallo, yes; Ms. Downing, yes; Mr. Ganhao, yes; Mr. Moskal, yes; Ms. Parker, yes; Ms. Tokarz, yes; Mr. Gregoire, yes. Vote: 9-0 in favor

Article 22: Place a sum of money from Free Cash into this Article to cover those items from the COVID 19 expenses that were not acceptable. The amount would be $150,000. They are working with a consultant to confirm that this money can be placed in this Article. Parameters for the COVID money has changed so the next wave of money they are not sure about or how their going to receive it and what it can be used for. Their biggest concern is if they made a purchase for a large amount of money and it's not covered by COVID, the Town is liable for the money. This money will come out of Free Cash. Some of the articles would be cleaning supplies, overtime, message sign boards, air purifiers, etc. If the money is not used the Article will be closed out and the money will revert back to the General Fund or transferred into Stabilization.

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Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Mr. Moskal to approve Article 22 in the amount of $150,000.

Mr. Alves, yes; Ms. Boyea, yes; Ms. Cavallo, yes; Ms. Downing, yes; Mr. Ganhao, yes; Mr. Moskal, yes; Ms. Parker, yes; Ms. Tokarz, yes; Mr. Gregoire, yes. Vote: 9-0 in favor

Special Town Meeting:

Article 1: Unpaid Bills. The balance stands at $436.55. Departments have until Town Meeting to add to the unpaid bills. Ms. Villano doesn't feel that there will be to many more bills that will be submitted. This money will come out of Free Cash.

The vote will be taken prior to Town Meeting in case more bills are added.

Article 2: Transfer from Free Cash money to fund the Overtime expenses incurred by the Police Department. At this time the amount is $100,000. It could increase.

The vote will be taken prior to Town Meeting in case the amount changes.

Article 3: Transfer money from Free Cash to cover the deficit in the DPW Trash Fees. Bills have not been sent out to date. Ms. Collins spoke with DLS. If there is enough money in other funds, they won't need this Article. Unanticipated free holiday from Fringe Benefits from this fiscal year, should be enough to cover any costs. It's her understanding that within the next few weeks, the bills will go out to the residents and they have 30 days to pay it. No action will be taken on this Article.

Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Ms. Cavallo to concur with taking no action on Article 3 in the Special Town Meeting.

Mr. Alves, yes; Ms. Boyea, yes; Ms. Cavallo, yes; Ms. Downing, yes; Mr. Ganhao, yes; Mr. Moskal, yes; Ms. Parker, yes; Ms. Tokarz, yes; Mr. Gregoire, yes. Vote: 9-0 in favor

Article 4: No action taken on Article 4

Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Mr. Moskal to concur with taking no action on Article 4, Special Town Meeting

Mr. Alves, yes; Ms. Boyea, yes; Ms. Cavallo, yes; Ms. Downing, yes; Mr. Ganhao, yes; Mr. Moskal, yes; Ms. Parker, yes; Ms. Tokarz, yes; Mr. Gregoire, yes. Vote: 9-0 in favor

Article 5: This Article has to do with keeping a listing of fixed assets for internal control that are at a certain threshold and for accounting purposes; the threshold of assets that are of a certain value. The fixed assets were at $1,000 and $5,000. The Town Accountant is requesting that the threshold be increased to $10,000 for internal control fixed assets and $20,000 for accounting purposes for vehicles, machinery, equipment.

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Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Ms. Cavallo to approve Article 5 as written in the Special Town Meeting.

Mr. Alves asked what the volume of fixed assets are under $10,000. Ms. Villano doesn't have the exact number. There is not a lot under $10,000, most of the assets are well beyond that amount. For insurance purposes there is a listing, the Town Accountant would have that information.

Mr. Alves, no; Ms. Boyea, yes; Ms. Cavallo, yes; Ms. Downing, yes; Mr. Ganhao, yes; Mr. Moskal, yes; Ms. Parker, yes; Ms. Tokarz, yes; Mr. Gregoire, yes. Vote: 8-1 in favor.

Article 6: There is a Systems Maintenance Service Plan for the new radio equipment. It is a 10-year plan. A contact can't be entered into for more than three years without Town Meeting approval. The first three years are under warranty from 3 to 9 years the amount is $81,714.19. Mr. Moskal asked why 10 years. Ms. Villano answered that it's the life expectancy of the equipment.

Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Mr. Alves to approve Article 6, not to exceed a 10-year contact for purposes of a support system for the operation of the radio system.

Mr. Alves, yes; Ms. Boyea, yes; Ms. Cavallo, yes; Ms. Downing, yes; Mr. Ganhao, yes; Mr. Moskal, yes; Ms. Parker, yes; Ms. Tokarz, yes; Mr. Gregoire, yes. Vote: 9-0 in favor

Article 17: To see if the Town will vote to amend the Zoning Bylaws of the Town of Ludlow by changing from **Residence B** to **Business B,** a parcel of land owned by Jamie & Richard Jacobs, located at 193 Center Street (Assessors Map # 12D, Parcel 53) as printed in the Warrant.

Mr. Gregoire said that everyone should have received the background that the Planner had provided. The Planning Board recommended approval of the Article 5-0 at their February 11th Public Hearing and there were no abutters that called in to disapprove of the Article. The ownership is the only thing that changed in the Article, when it was presented last year. There was a process that just closed.

Moved by Mr. Alves, seconded by Ms. Cavallo to approve Article 17

Mr. Alves, yes; Ms. Boyea, yes; Ms. Cavallo, yes; Ms. Downing, yes; Mr. Ganhao, yes; Mr. Moskal, yes; Ms. Parker, yes; Ms. Tokarz, yes; Mr. Gregoire, yes. Vote: 9-0 in favor

Article 7: To see if the Town will vote to amend the General Bylaws by adding the following chapter for the plastic bag prohibition.

Businesses could give out paper bags. Mr. Alves said the exact Article was brought up at Town Meeting and voted down. He said that in certain studies, there is no real reduction in the plastic bag. He doesn't see plastic bags flying around the Town. Certain areas of the country stores will

charge for the bags and the towns will get a percentage. Ms. Downing said that she saw a program on recycling and how people save their water bottles, cans etc. The percentage that gets recycled due to different laws in different states is 3-5% which is extremely low. When a bylaw is put in effect like this one, it tends to make the residents relax more. She doesn't think that the regulations will change the patterns of habits. Mr. Alves also spoke about single use. Bags are being reused. It was defeated last year; he doesn't know why they are bringing it back this year. Mr. Gregoire said plastic bags are going by the wayside. Paper bags are more prevalent. He sees a lot of trash from plastic bags and there is something that can be done to reduce them. Ms. Cavallo asked if the Town does pass this bylaw, what will happen to individuals passing out supplements in Town from the newspaper. Mr. Gregoire said those projects would have to stop. Ms. Parker said that she saw a program on television and stated that most of the plastic comes from commercial fishing boats. If we can do something to ban the bags, she feels it's a step forward in the right direction, stopping all the waste. Ms. Boyea said plastic bags are used in the house, but it's not being allowed to be littered. There are communities that ban the single use bags but still give out the heavier handled plastic bags. Ms. Tokarz read the Article stating what types of bags are permissible and what bags are not.

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Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Mr. Moskal to approve Article 7, Single Use Plastic Bag Prohibition

Mr. Alves, no; Ms. Boyea, yes; Ms. Cavallo, yes; Ms. Downing, yes; Mr. Ganhao, yes; Mr. Moskal, yes; Ms. Parker, yes; Ms. Tokarz, yes; Mr. Gregoire, yes. Vote: 8-1 in favor.

Article 3: Budget Article

Mr. Gregoire said that the committee would disapprove the stated figure and approve the figure based upon the Finance Committee recommendations taken for FY"22. The committee already made recommendations by departments. For this Article, the committee would disapprove the number listed in the Warrant and the approval would be contingent upon amendments to the budget Mr. Ganhao would have to abstain from the motion, because he was not present at the meeting, when this Article was discussed.

Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Mr. Alves to disapprove Article 3 budget at $74,348,111 and instead approve the budget with the Finance Committee recommended amendments for the following departments: Human Resources, $130,037; Police Department, $3,931,042; Department of Public Works, $3,394,402; Recreation Commission, $337,235.

Mr. Alves, yes; Ms. Boyea, yea; Ms. Cavallo, yes; Ms. Downing, yes; Mr. Ganhao, abstained; Mr. Moskal, yes; Ms. Parker, yes; Ms. Tokarz, yes; Mr. Gregoire, yes. Vote: 8-0-1 in favor. Mr. Ganhao abstained.

Mr. Gregoire has a meeting with the Board of Selectmen next Tuesday to discuss this Article.

There will be a meeting with the Finance Committee prior to Town Meeting on May 10th. Ms. Tokarz will schedule a meeting at 7:00 p.m. in the High School Cafeteria. If that is not a possibility, then the committee will meet at Town Hall at 6:30 p.m.

There will be no regular meeting on May 5th.

Hold Articles 1 and 2 in the Special Town Meeting.

Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Ms. Cavallo to adjourn the Finance Committee Meeting at 7:46 p.m.

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Mr. Alves, yes; Ms. Boyea, yes; Ms. Cavallo, Ms. Downing, yes; Mr. Gamhao, yes; Mr. Moskal, yes; Ms. Parker, yes; Ms. Tokarz, yes; Mr. Gregoire, yes. Vote: 9=0 in favor

Ludlow Finance Committee