June 16 2021

Meeting of the Finance Committee held on Wednesday, June 16, 2021, beginning at 6:00 p.m. in the Selectmen's Conference Room, Town Hall.

Members present: Anthony Alves, Acting Chairman, Maureen Downing, Susanne Boyea, Joan Cavallo, Richard Moskal, Nicole Parker, Christopher Ganhao and Beverly Tokarz

Members excused: Eric Gregoire

Kimberly Collins and Ellie Villano were also present

First Order of Business: The Pledge of Allegiance

At this time the committee met with Eric Segundo, Veterans Agent to discuss his Interdepartmental Transfer.

Mr. Alves informed the committee that the transfer request is for $55,000. Mr. Segundo explained that the Civil War Monument was hit and knocked down. The driver's insurance had a $5,000 coverage. The Town will have to provide for the repairs. The transfer is to cover the cost. The estimates that he received was in the vicinity $55,000. Ms. Villano said that they have to use a licensed conservator because it's a historic monument. The monument is 154 years old. Ms. Villano explained that the monument is in 6 different pieces. When it broke it was at each connection? There is damage to some of the pieces. It hit soft ground, which was fortunate. A crane had to be brought in to lift the pieces and put them on a pallet. Mr. Moskal said that $5,000 is very low for insurance coverage. That is the lowest coverage in MA. The average is $100,000. At the Capital meeting it was stated that if they went through litigation, the price would be more costly and would take a few years to be resolved. The money is available because Veterans Services didn't use all of his budget as a result of COVID from the case load that was reduced because of the extra employment insurance, and then there were 5 deaths. He was able to do an Interdepartmental Transfer of funds within his budget. The two estimates that they received were $48,000 and $58,500. This repair will have to go out to bid.

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Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Ms. Boyea to approve $ 55,000 in Interdepartmental Transfer requests for the Veterans Services department.
Vote: 8-0 in favor

Ms. Villano explained the Selectmen's Department transfer in the amount of $11,500 from Negotiation Services to Auto and Liability Insurance and Public Officials. Ms. Villano said that this is precautionary for deductibles. There is little to nothing left in the insurance line items. There are two policies that she pays for, that renew in June. If a claim comes in, she has to pay the deductible and wouldn't have money to pay that. Ms. Collins said the line items total into one department, so it doesn't matter what line item the money comes out of.

Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Mr. Ganhao to approve $11,500 in Interdepartmental Transfers for the Board of Selectmen.
Vote: 8-0 in favor

Ms. Collins explained the Clerical Salaries and Conferences for the Town Accountants department in the amount of $500. Ms. Collins said that during COVID, she couldn't attend many of her conferences. She did take an MCPPO Training, which cost more than what the conferences would have cost. She had extra money in the clerical department so she moved the money from Salaries to Conference and Travel.

Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Ms. Cavallo to approve the $500 Interdepartmental Transfer for the Town Accountant.
Vote: 8-0 in favor

Ms. Collins prepared the Fringe Benefits request for billing for the trash fees. There were inserts that needed to be sent. The DPW needed 3 inserts at $4,000 and the postage was $5,000. There was extra money in Fringe Benefits this year due to the one-month holiday in health insurance, so the $9,000 was taken out of the Fringe Benefits line item. This is a DPW billing which is being coved by the Collector. The billing is being done out of the Town Hall. Ms. Parker asked where the revenue will be going? Ms. Collins said it will be going into the General Fund.

Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Ms. Boyea to approve the Interdepartmental Transfer of $8,939 for multiple departmental needs.
Vote: 8-0 in favor

The IT Department is requesting $30,500. Mr. Blanchard would like to move monies from Purchase of Services in the amount of $3,500; Service Contracts, in the amount of $17,000 and Materials and Supplies in the amount of $10,000 into a Computer Technician line item for $3,500 and Replacement Equipment line item for $27,000. Mr. Blanchard provided background for the request. Mr. Moskal said that Mr. Blanchard references the School and Senior Center. The Senior Center has a line item in their budget to address some technology. Mr. Alves read the letter from Mr. Blanchard as follows:

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I apologize for not initially including a narrative explaining my end-of-year transfer requests.

The COVID-13 pandemic required us to completely changes the Information Technology department's focus in FY21 and purchase many items we normally would no have. Fortunately, the CARES Act funded the equipment such as laptops for remote access/learning and video conferencing. The fact that many employees were working from home or had shortened hours, as well as an attempt to utilize more electronic communications vs. paper, allowed us to spend considerably less on "Materials and Supplies". The money saved from these factors is where funding for the transfer requests is coming from.

The first request of $3500 into the payroll section of the IT Department budget is just for safety purposes. Based on my personal budget spreadsheet, I am not certain how many pay periods are left before the end of the fiscal year. Therefore, I am transferring enough money to cover one additional week of payroll. If this is determined not to be required, the request can be cancelled.

The second transfer of $27,000 into "Replacement Equipment" will be used to cover the current line-item shortfall (once current invoices are entered) in addition to purchasing fiber optic networking equipment for inter-building communications. This equipment is necessary due to the expansion of the Town's fiber network to the new senior center, school and school central office. These buildings will be demanding considerably more bandwidth than we currently use. The new

equipment will support as much as 40X more bandwidth between buildings. Additionally, the existing head-end fiber switch is 10 years old and considered End-of-Life (EOL). Considering the age of the equipment, it is suggested that we preemptively replace the equipment before hardware failure occurs and takes down the entire network WAN for multiple days while waiting on replacement equipment.

Feel free to reach out to me if you have any additional questions or concerns.

Ms. Downing said that the Town is required to supply the line from the initial setup to the new buildings. That was not included and could not be submitted to MSBA for the school. It was only from the school internally that they could submit a request and she's assuming that the senior center worked the same way. Ms. Villano said there was an Article at Town Meeting to cover what the anticipated costs were. For the senior center, the fiber was cut from the old building and new fiber was purchased for the new center. The fiber to the new school and administration building has to start at the broad band connection at the safety complex and run to the new school buildings. All this money is for the fiber installation. Ms. Villano and Mr. Alves discussed service contacts and what equipment and lease agreements they cover.

Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Ms. Boyea to approve $30,500 in Interdepartmental Transfers for the IT Department.
Vote: 8-0 in favor

At this time the committee met with Police Chief Valadas to discuss his Interdepartmental Transfers. His request totals $43,533.25, coming from a variety of line items and going into the Overtime Training and Ammunition line items. The Chief provided a background summary to explain his requests. Chief Valadas said that there are amendments to the accountant numbers, but all the descriptions are the same. The Chief explained the transfers from line items such as rentals, other professional services, conference and travel, dues and memberships repair and maintenance which have a minimal amount of money in them. He explained that his two overtime accounts for both regular and training overtime and the Special Police expense account, are in the negative. The primary cause for the negative balances is the $120,964 that was cut from the FY20 budget. The depleted accounts have been substantially replenished by the Town Meeting approval of a Police Department $120,000 article request. The transfer of remaining funds in other accounts is necessary to fund the remaining FY21 expenses. He explained how he has to maintain minimum people on shifts. When there are arrests, officers are called in and overtime begins for that situation. That is one example. He tries to limit the overtime for training. With shortages in the department, he doesn't have the ability to swap and without the COVID money they would have never been able to staff the shifts and emergencies. He explained his sergeant situation with retirements etc., state unfunded mandates for training. He will still have vacancies.

Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Ms. Boyea to approve $43,533,25 in Interdepartmental Transfers for the Police Department
Vote: 8-0 in favor

There is a request from the Town Clerk to transfer $3,922.06 from Elections and Registrations to the Town Clerk account to pay for preserving town records, Volume 2, dated 1831-1882. The transfer will help to preserve town records that will be lost. The ink on the pages is chipping off

and the pages are tearing. There are no grants that Ms. Batista can apply for. The surplus in the Elections accounts is due to COVID supplies, mail-ins etc.

Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Ms. Cavallo to approve $3,9922.06 in Interdepartmental Transfers for the Town Clerk's Office.
Vote: 8-0 in favor

The Fire Department is requesting the transfer of $92,577 from Firefighters Salaries and EMT-Paramedic Salaries accounts to General Expense, All Other Repairs and Maintenance, Additional Other Equipment, Ambulance Account for Additional All Other Equipment and Ambulance Account for Vehicle Repairs and Maintenance. In his background explanation the excess amounts that he's transferring from is due to vacant firefighter positions as well as a firefighter on military employment for most of the fiscal year. Mr. Alves said that the discussion at the Capital meeting, explained the Additional All Other Equipment is for replacing the Life Pac 15 Monitors. The current monitors are becoming dated. The vendor that services them noted that they will no longer to be serviced. The new machines are Version 4 instead of Version 2 which does more in monitoring. There is a discount on the new versions because they will be replaced with a newer Version 4. The $13,000 request is to purchase a second Jaws of Life machine.

Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Ms. Boyea to approve $92,577 in Interdepartmental Transfers for the Fire Department.
Vote: 8-0 in favor

Mr. Mike Hill, Manager of LCTV is requesting $10,000 be moved from Purchased and Contractual Services into Capital Outlay. The background he submitted makes note that he is over expended by $5,000 for equipment that needs to be replaced and a Portable Production System was purchased.

Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Ms. Moskal to approve $10,000 in Interdepartmental Transfers for LCTV.
Vote: 8-0 in favor

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Ms. Downing updated the committee on the Harris Brook Elementary School. She passed around photos of the school. They are on-point and on time, on target money wise. Tours may be scheduled for committees, Town Hall departments. They will let us know. Ms. Villano said there was a tour two weeks ago. The teachers from the two schools were invited as well as Ms. Villano. She said the school is very impressive. The technology and workmanship are wonderful. There are break-out areas in hallways, there are smartboards technology in every room. The stage, cafeteria and the gym are all one huge long room that can be sub-divided. That area was built for community in mind. That whole section can be locked off from the school to accommodate residents, parents etc. It's safe with entry locks and bullet proof windows in the front entrance. Chapin Street School will start to be demolished in July.

Liaison Assignments: Members were provided a listing of departments that they will be assigned to. Contact information of committee members will also be provided to departments. Ms. Tokarz will prepare the listing and inform the members when it goes out to the departments.

Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Ms. Boyea to approve and sign the Finance Committee Minutes of April 12, 2021
Vote: 8-0 in favor

Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Ms. Cavallo to approve and sign the Finance Committee Minutes of April 21, 2021 as written.
Vote: 6-0-2 in favor. Ms. Parker and Mr. Ganhao abstained

Mr. Alves informed the committee that this was the last scheduled meeting, unless there is an emergency transfer that needs to be dealt with. The next meeting is scheduled on Wednesday, September 15, 2021.

Moved by Ms. Downing, seconded by Mr. Moskal to adjourn the Finance Committee meeting at 7:10 p.m.
Vote: 8-0 in favor

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