March 30, 2022

Meeting of the Finance Committee Budget Meeting held on Wednesday, March 30, 2022 beginning at 6:00 p.m. in the Selectmen's Conference Room, Town Hall.

Members present: Maureen Downing, Chairman, Joan Cavallo, Richard Moskal, Matt Goncalves and Beverly Tokarz

Members excused: Anthony Alves and Susanne Boyea

Ms. Kimberly Collins was also present

First Order of Business: The Pledge of Allegiance

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Ms. Downing spoke about the budget. There were changes in the Level 2 Budget. She received an email regarding the mailing for the trash bills. It will be an extra $5,000. This year's mailings will be taken out of a Reserve Request from the Finance Committee at the April 20th meeting. There was no anticipation for the mailing in next year's budget. The $5,000 will be added to the Collector's budget for his postage line-item for FY'23. It will cover the postage for the mailing of the trash bills for next year.

The other email she received was from Ms. Collins. She was notified by the Debt Service that there is a principal paydown payment which will be due for the Radio Communications. That amount is $166,667.00. The total amount is $171,667. She is rounding the total to $172,000. Ms. Downing worked with Ms. Collins on this budget as she is very familiar with it and knows where there would be possible money and also would be aware of the Selectmen's wishes. A note in the budget is that the Grant Writer's position is $75,000. They will be taking the $75,000 and eliminating that position. They also took $35,000 from the Building Inspector's part-time position. They will also be taking from the Building Inspector's budget the amount of $10,000 in Other Professional Services because he was not utilizing that line item. She explained the amounts that he used in that account in prior years, which did not reach his requested amount. The DPW had put in a request for $80,000 for new positions. They were cut $30,000. The balance of $22,000 would come from the Levy Limit which would bring the Levy Limit down to $54,420. Unfortunately, it is not a comfortable number, but the Debt Services bill has to be paid. The Treasure was not aware of this payment, so it was not included in her requested budget calculation's. The only thing that would change on the sheet, except for line-item changes would be the Levy Limit total. That will not change the tax rate. Mr. Moskal asked about the Grant Writer position and Ms. Downing explained that they were looking for someone to write grants. The position was listed at $65,000 but it's actually $75,000. That position was taken away. The DPW is not aware of their cuts. Mr. Moskal will inform them of the changes. If Mr. Santos has any questions, he can notify Ms. Downing. Ms. Collins said that they are recommendations. The Selectmen and Finance Committee have to agree on the changes. The committee will take a vote tonight and will give the Selectmen the committee's recommendations on April 5th. She is requesting that Ms. Collins make sheets with the changes. Mr. Moskal asked what the total cuts were for the DPW. They requested $80,000 for new hires and were cut $30,000, leaving them with a total of $50,000. Ms. Collins did explain that the DPW did have increases in their budget in other line items. They had $80,000 in trash and $25,000 for sidewalks. If they really need funds for a

position, they can move money within their like items. The total General Fund Budget is $74,137,982. The Levy Capacity will be $64,420. (The prior figure mentioned was not correct).

The Warrants should be ready to review and vote on Articles on April 20th. There will also be several Reserve Fund Transfers at that meeting. A total of $100,000 is the total of Reserve Funds.

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Ms. Downing recapped as follows:

New total General Fund Budget of $74,137,989 and a new Levy Limit of $64,420.

Changes:

$5,000 Collector Trash Mailing

$167,000 Debt Service Payment Radio Communications Principal Paydown

Money came from: $22,000 from the Levy Limit; $75,000 from the Grant Position/Selectmen's Office; $35,000 Building Inspector part-time position, $10,000 from Building Inspector Other Professional Services; $30,000 DPW new positions, leaving them $50,000 for new positions.

Mr. Moskal asked about the additional $40,000 in the Selectmen's budget. Ms. Collins explained that it's the amount that had to be added to the budget over last year's budget in order to hire the new Town Administrator. It's an amount that is in addition to the salary. In the current budget there was a payout to the previous Town Administrator to get her through to her final day and then any payouts for vacation etc. That amount is $21,000. There is a difference from what the previous Town Administrator was paid and what the new Town Administrator is being paid. That amount is included in the detailed budget sheets. Ms. Collins explains the new additional money increases that is detailed on the budget sheets. Mr. Moskal had several questions, as did Mr. Goncalves regarding the budget process. Ms. Collins explained that in 2016, the Town went to Town Meeting and removed the Bylaw for the Personnel Policy. Prior to 2016 all new positions had to be approved at Town Meeting. Now it's included in a Personal Policy Manual. In the Policy Manual all the classifications for all positions are listed. The Selectmen have the authority to add or take away from the classifications. When the budget process was done this year, they gave everyone a deadline of October 15th to request positions from the Selectmen. The Board of Selectmen reviewed all the positions and approved certain positions to be added to the Classification Plan. They were added to the plan and the departments were told that if the Selectmen approved their position, they should include it in their budget requests. The procedure is that the department's request it, it is reviewed by the Town Administrator and Town Accountant and they made recommendations to say that the positions were approved, but there isn't money to fund all of them. This year the requests were over 1.6 million dollars over the Levy Limit. They made recommendations to fund some of the positions. The new positions are in the budget for funding because they were approved and now the departments are asking for funding. The Finance Committee has every right to look at the positions and not fund any of them and can recommend to take every one of them off the books. Ms. Downing said there were a few that were approved with funding. Ms. Collins said there was already funding in the budget to cover them. They were not new positions. They were reclassifications of old positions. The assistant Town Accountant was a LATOS employee, she is now and management employee. There was money in the budget to cover that. The Selectmen approved the position, it was funded and now going forward, they are requesting the funding to cover her again. Mr. Moskal asked about the HR position. Ms. Collins

said it was along the same situation. There is a part-time employee, there was funding in her budget to make that a full-time employee. She went to the Selectmen, they agreed to give her a full-time position. The only thing different is that she still has a part-time position as well as the full-time position. Currently, the part-time person is retiring, so she's looking to replace that person full-time and then has another part-time position on the books, with funding. In order to hire someone internally, you can't pay them less than they are already making. That's already been completed, so they can't be unhired. Capital will be voting on Monday. Ms. Downing asked when will the other numbers be filled in. Ms. Collins said Westover Golf Course came in at $769,603; Cable TV is $302,842; Landfill is $10,000; Sewer is $1,871,387. Cable TV, Westover Golf, Landfill and Sewer have no affect on the tax rate. The recommended number to Stabilization is 1 million dollars, but it is not definite. The Finance Committee usually puts in a recommendation for that. It's hard to make a recommendation if there is not a final of what's coming out for Capital. Free Cash and ARPA money and whatever balance is left from CARES money. Ms. Collins said the CARES money is gone. There could be money left from the school borrowing. She said that is not a viable option to use for the track and field. They are relying on ARPA and Free Cash. The soccer field will not be completed for at least a year. The project cannot be closed out until the soccer field is complete. It will be another year to complete the audit. At that point, the only way that money can be used is to transfer it to a new project, you borrow the money up front. At this point it doesn't make sense to borrow all that money above and beyond what is needed. It will be an authorization that is available. If you want to use that, the whole process has to be done again, for the track and field. Ms. Downing said as apposed to spending the money that the Selectmen decide from the ARPA funds. It doesn't have to be put out to the Town again, it's decided by the Selectmen. She feels that the community should have the chance to vote again on the project.

Moved by Ms. Cavallo, seconded by Mr. Moskal to concur with the Level 2 Budget at an amount of $74,137,989 and an Excess Levy capacity of $64,420
Vote: 4-0-1 in favor. Ms. Cavallo opposed

Ms. Downing will present the vote to the Board of Selectmen next Tuesday for their approval or changes, at 6:15 p.m.

Moved by Ms. Cavallo, seconded by Mr. Moskal to approve and sign the Finance Committee's Minutes of March 2, 2022 as written
Vote: 3-0-2 in favor. Mr. Moskal and Mr. Goncalves abstained

Moved by Ms. Cavallo, seconded by Mr. Moskal to approve and sign the Finance Committee's Minutes of March 16, 2022 as written
Vote: 4-0-1 in favor. Ms. Downing abstained

Moved by Ms. Cavallo, seconded by Mr. Moskal to adjourn the Finance Committee meeting at 6:52 p.m.
Vote: 5-0 in favor

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