

Meeting Date: February 9, 2011

Called to Order: 6:00 PM

Finance Committee Members Present: Lynn Reynolds, Rob Allen, John Hanold, and Andrew Killeen

Selectmen Present: Pat Allen (arrived at 6:25 PM), Chris Boutwell (left at 6:35 PM) and Mark Fairbrother

Others Present: Carolyn Olsen (Town Accountant)

Minutes

Finance Committee Moved:

To approve the minutes of January 26, 2011.

Vote: 4 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Board of Selectmen Moved:

To approve the minutes of January 26, 2011.

Vote: 2 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Initial Special Article Requests

Known or anticipated requests:

1. DPW Leases - \$54,055
2. DPW Discretionary Fund - \$100,000
3. Police Discretionary Fund - \$20,000
4. Computer Discretionary Fund - \$8,200
5. Transfer to Town Stabilization Fund - \$160,000 from Free Cash
6. DPW Summer Help - \$5,000
7. DPW Radios - \$8,000

There was a discussion about whether the DPW Summer Help and DPW Radio requests should be special articles or included in the operating budget.

- Ms. Reynolds noted that as special articles, these items don't add to the base budget. Ms. Reynolds's sense is that having these as special articles makes sense and adds to the transparency of the process.
- Mr. Allen is ambivalent about the request. It's reacting to a directive for a level services budget, but he is afraid that if this comes forward other departments will come forward with articles that would otherwise be included in their budget and could lead to an a la carte budget process. The Finance Committee rather than Town Meeting is supposed to be focusing on that level of detail.
- Mr. Killeen feels that summer help is an operating expense.
- Mr. Fairbrother does not think these should be special articles.
- Mr. Hanold is inclined to suggest that the DPW resubmit their budget and include these two expenditures.

Finance Committee Moved:

That the DPW Special Article Requests for summer help and radios be added to the DPW operating budget request, with the radios as Capital Outlay.

Vote: 4 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Board of Selectmen Moved:

That the DPW Special Article Requests for summer help and radios be added to the DPW operating budget request, with the radios as Capital Outlay.

Vote: 2 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

- Current budget has place holder of 172,255 from stabilization for special articles.
- One change from last year is that the police cruiser is now in the operating budget.
- DPW is asking for \$100,000 for discretionary fund, which is an increase of \$25,000.
- The agenda showed funding of all special article requests from taxation, because discussion of how much stabilization to use has not yet occurred.
- The total cost of known special articles is approximately equal to the amount of stabilization funds used last year for special articles.
- One way to keep the Stabilization Fund healthy is to transfer some of this year's free cash to Stabilization.
- Mr. Killeen asked if there was an appetite to move towards funding the entire operating budget from taxation (including special articles, not using any stabilization).
- At the next meeting, the committees will decide how much stabilization should be used for the Fiscal Year 2012 budget, as well as how much Free Cash should be transferred to the Town Stabilization Fund.

General Fiscal Year 2012 Budget

- Mr. Hanold has asked the Franklin County Technical School for preliminary budget and assessment amounts, but has not yet received information.
- Mr. Killeen feels that the Finance Committee should present a balanced budget for Fiscal Year 2012, including all special articles, without using Stabilization.
- The next budget file will included all listed special article requests, add the DPW requests for summer help and radios to their department budget, and adjust state charges and the non-lottery state aid to the Governor's budget amounts.

Gill-Montague Regional School District

- Mr. Hanold distributed two sections of the Gill-Montague Level 4 District Review for general information.
- Ms. Allen reported on related topics in the School Committee meeting on 8 February.

List of Documents and Exhibits

- Capital Project/Special Article Request forms for:

JOINT MEETING OF FINANCE COMMITTEE AND BOARD OF SELECTMEN

February 9, 2011

Page 3 of 3

- DPW Leases - \$54,055
- DPW Discretionary Fund - \$100,000
- DPW Summer Help - \$5,000
- DPW Radios - \$8,000
- Draft Schedules I and II (Wages for non-union employees) for Fiscal Year 2012
- Gill-Montague Regional School District's Level 4 District Review pages 22-27 and pages 44-50

Next Meeting

February 16, 2011: Mr. Abbondanzio's report on the 10% budget cut scenario
Use of Stabilization for Fiscal Year 2012
Transfer of Free Cash to Stabilization
Schedules I and II for Fiscal Year 2012

Adjourned 7:25 PM

Respectfully Submitted,
Carolyn Olsen