

**Whately Finance Committee Meeting**  
**Town Offices**  
**Open Session via Zoom**  
**April 20, 2021**  
**6:00 p.m.**

Finance Committee Attendees: Paul Antaya, Dan Kennedy, Bob Fydenkevez, Jim Kirkendall, Fred Baron, Tom Mahar, and Patricia Devine; Also present via Zoom was Town Administrator Brian Domina and Administrative Assistant, Amy Schrader.

The meeting was opened at 6:01 pm by the Chairperson Paul Antaya.

**Discuss and vote approve meeting minutes of April 6, 2021.**

James Kirkendall (Finance Committee) stated that Fred was listed twice in the meeting minutes roll call section. A motion was made to approve the meeting minutes as amended. Motion was seconded. All in favor. Roll call vote: Tom – yes, Jim – yes, Fred – yes, Paul – yes, Bob- yes, Patricia – yes, and Dan -yes.

**Review and discuss recommendations of the Personnel Committee**

The Finance Committee reviewed and discussed the Personnel Committee recommendations with specific attention to the proposed wage/salary adjustments and 2% COLA increase.

Thomas Mahar (Finance Committee Rep.) stated that the Personnel Committee compared surrounding town's cost of living adjustments and reviewed the Consumer Price Index report. After reviewing these documents, the Personnel Committee voted to recommend a 2% COLA. Joyce Palmer-Fortune (Selectboard Rep.) discussed the FY22 salary increase recommendations with specific attention to the Assistant Assessor, Fire Chief, and Highway/Building Superintendent positions. The Committee had a brief discussion regarding the Personnel Committee's data collection efforts, monetary value of town positions, Personnel Committee responsibilities/role, future of the Personnel Committee, and the potential need for professional assistance. The Finance Committee proposed the idea of having the appropriate Department Heads handle a specific budget amount for raises. Patricia Devine (Finance Committee) suggested that the Finance Committee separates the COLA adjustment from the wage/salary recommendations.

The Finance Committee decided to table the Personnel Committee re-organization discussion for a future meeting.

After much discussion, a motion was made to accept the Personnel Committee's 2% COLA recommendation. Motion was seconded. All in favor. Roll call vote: Dan – yes, Patricia – yes, Paul – yes, Jim – yes, Tom – yes, Bob – yes, and Fred – yes.

A motion was made to accept the Personnel Committee's salary adjustment recommendations. Motion was seconded. All in favor. Roll call vote: Dan – yes, Patricia – yes, Paul – yes, Jim – yes, Tom – yes, Bob – yes, and Fred – yes.

**Review and discuss recommendations of the Capital Improvement Planning Committee and**  
**Review and discuss miscellaneous spending articles and possible transfers to stabilization accounts**

The Finance Committee reviewed and discussed recommendations of the Capital Improvement Planning Committee. The FY22 budget review tool was used to prioritize projects. Brian reviewed the Capital Improvement projects with specific attention to the Library's lift project, Town Offices natural gas generator, public safety telecommunications equipment, new snowplow, WES new oven purchase, WES carpet replacement, WES reconstruction/resurface parking lot and driveway, Police station exterior/interior repairs, cemetery gates, reduced tax rate, 250<sup>th</sup> Committee, Town Offices crack sealing, police reform expenses, and transfer of funds to stabilization. The Committee inquired what the free cash balance was from last year? Brian stated that he would check on that number and get back to the Committee. In previous years, the Finance Committee has tried to leave the free cash amount at around \$200,000. The Committee questioned the total cost of the Whately Elementary School oven purchase? Brian stated that this is the amount that the school requested and does not foresee the School requesting more. The Committee inquired if the cemetery gate purchases could be funded by CPA? Brian stated that he would check on that. The cemetery gate purchases will be revisited in FY23 budget season. The Committee discussed the free cash increase from FY21 to FY22 with specific attention to local receipts, unspent budget proceeds, and miscellaneous revenues. Brian stated that the American Rescue Funds is estimated to be around \$450,000. Restrictions on how the American Rescue funds can be spent are unknown at this time.

Fred Baron (Finance Committee) suggested that the WES reconstruction/resurface parking lot and driveway project funds be divided over the next two years: half this year and half next year. Dan Kennedy suggested creating a town buildings stabilization account. Fred Orloski (Selectboard) stated that the WES sidewalk reconstruction could be incorporated in the Complete Streets project. The Finance Committee discussed funding challenges/delays for the sidewalks, potential project costs, and re-organization of town funds. Brian discussed the Town's vehicle stabilization account with specific attention to updating the police cruisers.

The Finance Committee unanimously agreed to reduce the tax levy by \$200,000.

A motion was made to split the WES reconstruction/resurface parking lot and driveway cost of \$90,000.00, between FY22 - \$45,000 from free cash and FY23 - \$45,000 TBD. Motion was seconded. All in favor. Roll call vote: Patricia – yes, Paul – yes, Bob – yes, Fred – yes, Dan – yes, Jim – yes, and Tom – yes.

A motion was made to transfer \$20,000 to the town's vehicle stabilization account from free cash. Motion was seconded. All in favor. Roll call vote: Patricia – yes, Bob – yes, Paul – yes, Dan – yes, Tom – yes, Jim – yes, and Patricia – yes.

A motion was made to create a building stabilization account and transfer \$25,000 of free cash, not to be used for routine maintenance. Motion was seconded. All in favor. Roll call vote: Patricia – yes, Bob – yes, Paul – yes, Dan – yes, Tom – yes, Jim – yes, and Patricia – yes.

A motion was made to vote on the Capital items excluding the WES driveway and cemetery gates. Motion was seconded. All in favor. Roll call vote: Tom – yes, Paul – yes, Jim – yes, Patricia – yes, Dan – yes, Fred – yes, and Bob yes.

Fred Baron (Finance Committee) stated that the 250<sup>th</sup> Committee is going strong and there is a motor parade scheduled for April 24, 2021 at 3:00 pm. Fred Baron thanked Fire Chief, John Hannum, for his work organizing the motor parade.

### **Review and discuss fiscal year 2022 operating budgets**

The Finance Committee reviewed FY22 operating budgets with specific attention to the general operating budget, cultural recreational services, public health, public safety, public works, insurance/benefits, unclassified, schools, debt, and the Water Department's enterprise fund. The Committee inquired what the status of Tri-Town's beach budget? Brian stated that he would reach-out to the Tri-Town Beach Commissioners for FY22 budget. Brian is going to reach out to the schools about whether any of the payments are compensable by the CARES Act. Brian stated that the Water Department's enterprise fund expenses amount is inflated due to the potential water hook-up fee for the Water Merger project. The Committee will officially vote on the FY22 operating budget at their May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021 meeting. Brian discussed his additional staff memorandum with specific attention to volunteer board/committee staffing needs, town growth, town position titles, potential funding options, and potential economic development. The Finance Committee requested that a job description be presented to review/discuss. Paul Antaya (Finance Committee Chair) inquired whether there is a job description for the Selectboard? Brian stated that he would find that out and get back to the Committee. Fred Orloski (Selectboard) stated that there is a handbook available on-line that states the roles/responsibilities of various Boards/Committees.

### **Objectives for next meeting**

Paul Antaya (Finance Committee Chair) requested that the Town should be able to track its spending and make that information accessible to taxpayers. Paul would like to further discuss this request at a future Finance Committee meeting.

### **Items not anticipated within forty-eight (48) hours of the meeting**

none

The meeting was adjourned at 7:52pm.

Respectfully submitted,

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Brian Domina, Town Administrator

Next meeting – May 4, 2021

### **Document List on File in the Selectboard Office**