

WEARE FINANCE COMMITTEE

JANUARY 8, 2019

1. The Weare Finance Committee met on Tuesday 8 January at 630pm at the Town Offices. All Committee members were present. Also present were Town Administrator Bolton, Finance Administrator Rouse, Library Director Michael Sullivan, and Selectman Chair Fred Hippler.
2. Business. The purpose of the meeting was to continue budget briefings for Town proposed warrant articles. Chairman Hippler briefed the Committee on proposed operating budgets and warrant articles involving all remaining departments, except police and highway which will be addressed at our 10 January meeting. Library Director Sullivan briefed the Committee on a warrant proposal to expand library hours.
 - a. Decorum/Structure. Chairman Davis reemphasized with all members the need to be respectful interacting with other committee members and other town/school representatives. She reiterated the need to allow school and town representatives the opportunity to present their information and then take questions in an orderly manner.
 - b. Town Operating Budget. The proposed budget for 2019 is \$6,196,300 which represents a 2.75% increase over the 2018 approved budget of \$6,030,414. The default budget is \$5,985,483 which represents a 0.7% decrease over 2018. Proposed individual department increases of 7.4% police, 7.3% fire, 5.7% highway, and 9.2% transfer station have been partially offset by reductions in health insurance, liability insurance, and capital outlay reductions with the completion of the ambulance lease. Committee members expressed specific concern over the actual versus proposed legal expenses and more specifics on past legal expenses. Additionally some members expressed concern over the continuing impact default budgets are having on negotiated contracts for services(e.g. dispatch, assessing, trash removal) and salaries.
 - c. Raise/Non Union Personnel (\$41.6K). If approved this article will provide a 3% raise to town workers in this category. Selectman based the number on a 2.8% social security cola this year.
 - d. DPW Worker \$1 Increase (\$26.8K). Article is an effort to boost public works wages to be comparable to area jurisdictions. This would be in addition to the 3% in the aforementioned para.
 - e. Fire Department Standby Pay (\$32.2K). Article would allow EMT/Firefighters to receive one hour pay for every four hours on call; personnel are not currently paid unless called in.
 - f. Full-Time EMT/Firefighters- Two (\$99.6K). Costs represent six months. This would be step one in transitioning to a hybrid model as discussed by Chief Vezina last week.

- g. Library Extending Hours (\$17.8K). Costs represent 8 months. This would extend hours into Friday. As proposed by the Library Director a part time position would be made full time which results in this and recurring budget costs.
- h. Bridge Improvement. (\$105K). Article to provide year 3 of four year program to reserve sufficient town funds to secure State funding support for 3 red bridge projects in town.
- i. PARC Fields Survey (\$19K). Article to provide feasibility survey for future development of Quaker and East Rd town properties for recreational development.
- j. Govt Bldg/Maint (\$66.5K). Article would provide funds to a capital reserve account to reroof the public safety complex. The Committee questioned what happened to the funding that was approved last year for the old town hall bell tower. Chairman Hippler updated the Committee that a contract for repairs to the bell tower was expected to be awarded in the spring.
- k. Fire Insurance Reimbursement. Approximately \$40K in insurance reimbursement on a ladder truck was placed in the general fund this year. Article would result in \$40K being removed from the unexpended fund balance and placed in a Capital Reserve Fund for Fire.
- l. Fireworks (\$6.5K). Annual article that lets voters decide whether to fund fireworks for the annual patriotic celebration in July.
- m. Additional articles concerning cemetery and conservation commission have zero tax impact, withdrawing funds from the town forest account or cemetery trust funds.

3. Administrative.

- a. Draft minutes for the 28 Nov and 18 Dec meetings were approved.
- b. Future school and town public hearings and deliberative session dates have been forwarded by separate email.
- c. Next Finance Committee meeting is Thursday 10 Jan 630 at the Town Offices to continue to receive proposed town budgets from highway and police.

4. Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 857pm.