

oMarch 21, 2016
7:25 pm

Finance Committee members present: Paula Consolo, Karen Blom, Ben Murray, Cynthia Caporaso, Bill Knittle (arrived late)

Others: Selectboard Member Dena Wilmore, Town Administrator Andrea Llamas, Selectboard Member Kevin Fox arrived 8:05 pm.

Special Town Meeting warrant

Discussion about Community Development Block Grant for bridge on Clesson Brook Road. Need to begin the process now so that we don't lose any funding.

Karen moved that we support Articles 1, 2, and 3; Ben seconded. Unanimously approved.

Karen moved to accept minutes from March 19 with one change; Cynthia seconded. Unanimously approved.

Dena brought these 3 concerns for Finance Committee discussion:

1. Discussed the override that the town needs this year. Should we raise the levy higher than we absolutely need to so that we can build free cash and save for next year?
2. Reserve Fund is low this year, only \$20,000 when it used to be \$30,000. Should we raise it?
3. Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) (Line 98) expense. This line is for retirees health expense, which the federal government has said we are underfunding. Town pays 50% of a retiree's health benefits. Andrea would like to put \$5,000 in this account as a goodwill gesture that we are addressing a perceived shortfall in our savings for retiree health account. Funding this is not required, but she thinks it might be helpful to have done this when we apply for grant funding.

Also discussed fact that Board's clerk has been hired for \$2,500, although she has been hurt and has not been able to work.

Dena leaves 8:27 pm.

Kevin and Andrea leave for private discussion. 8:27 pm.

Discuss whether an override should be based on what we need or if we should make the override higher than we need. We agreed that we prefer an override that is based on what we need, understanding that we would fully fund line items that are underfunded.

Decided to push Reserve Fund to \$30,000 from \$20,000.

Keven and Andrea return to meeting.

Public Works. Leave the full-time employee in the budget.

Buckland Public Library budget. No list of programs given. Lower budget by \$500 with the recommendation that a list of programs and plans for future programming and technology be given to us next year. Finance Committee is in agreement but not in consensus.

OPEB. Drop this (line 98) to \$1,000 and put the other \$4,000 in General Stabilization (line 106).

Schedule for capital expenses for vehicles that are now under cover in the new garage should shift. Andrea will look at this for next year.

Mohawk Schools. Should the override be on schools? town? or divided between both? The Finance Committee does not have consensus on this. We need to figure out what we will cut if the override doesn't pass and the school budget does.

Next meeting April 4 at 7 pm at Town Hall.

Meeting April 11 at 7 pm Buckland Public Library.

Meeting adjourned 10:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Paula Consolo