

JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE AND BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING

March 9, 2016

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**Meeting Date:** March 9, 2016

**Called to Order:** 6:00 PM

**Location:** 1 Avenue A, Turners Falls MA

**Finance Committee Members Present:** John Hanold, Michael Naughton, Fred Bowman and Patricia Pruitt. Greg Garrison and Chris Menegoni were absent

**Selectmen Present:** Michael Nelson and Chris Boutwell. Rich Kuklewicz was absent.

**Others Present:** Town Administrator Frank Abbondanzio and Town Accountant Carolyn Olsen

**Minutes**

Finance Committee Moved:

To approve the minutes of March 2, 2016.

Vote: 4 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

**STM Article to Supplement the Fiscal Year 2012 Reserve Fund**

The Reserve Fund has a current balance of \$12,000. The Special Town Meeting before the Annual Town Meeting is an opportunity to obtain additional funding for the balance of Fiscal Year 2016.

Finance Committee Moved:

To submit a Special Article requesting a supplemental appropriation of \$8,000 for the Fiscal Year 2016 Reserve Fund budget.

Vote: 4 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

**Fiscal Year 2017 Schedules I and II**

The items for discussion are the recommended salaries for the Town Clerk, Treasurer/Tax Collector, Tree Warden, and the recommended ranges for Extra Clerical, Election Workers, Summer Highway, Parks & Recreation, and the Police Lieutenant.

- Requested changes from the Fiscal Year 2016 recommended amounts are:
  - An increase of \$520 for each Selectman, from \$1,500 to \$2,040 per year. This was previously approved by the Finance Committee.
  - The Treasurer/Tax Collector has requested a 2% increase (\$1,338) as a cost of living adjustment (COLA). The Treasurer/Tax Collector is currently at the top step of Grade G.
  - The Town Clerk has requested a step increase to step 9 of Grade G, with no COLA at this time.
  - The Tree Warden has requested a \$200 increase to \$1,500.
  - The requests for hourly rates have mostly been increased to reflect changes to the state minimum wage where the Fiscal Year 2016 range minimum will be below the state minimum wage for July 1, 2016.
  - There is a \$2 per hour increase requested for both the bottom and top of the range for Extra Clerical.
  - There is a \$2 increase in the minimum and a \$3 increase in the maximum for Election Workers.

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- There is a \$2 increase in the minimum and a \$1 increase in the maximum for Summer Highway.
- Jon Dobosz, Director of Parks & Recreation has shared a legal opinion that towns are not required to meet state minimum wage requirements. As a result, the Parks and Recreation Commission will be discussing the impact of the state minimum wage increases and the potential impact on the viability of the summer program. Because this decision has not yet been made, the requested and recommended wages for this category for Fiscal Year 2017 is shown with no increase to the previous \$9.00 minimum. If the Commission decides to use the state minimum wage, this schedule can still be used.
- The position of Police Lieutenant has been added with the pay range approved by the Personnel Board. The range is “G+8.5” and represents an hourly rate based on an 8.5 increase of Grade G, with weekly hours of 37.69.
- Regarding COLA adjustments, the Selectmen are just starting union contract negotiations, so no COLAs have been granted to union employees and no COLAs are recommended for non-union employees at this time.
- The presented schedules show recommendations of increasing the stipend for the Selectmen, no COLA for the Treasurer/Tax Collector, a step increase for the Town Clerk, a \$200 increase for the Tree Warden, increases to the hourly ranges as noted above, and the addition of the Police Lieutenant at the range approved by the Personnel Board.

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend Schedules I and II as presented.

Vote: 4 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Selectmen Moved:

To recommend Schedules I and II as presented, which show no increase for the Treasurer, a step increase for the Town Clerk.

Vote: 2 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

**Fiscal Year 2017 Budget**

- The packet includes a list of the Town Administrator’s recommendations for the Fiscal Year 2017 budget for informational purposes, but the discussion of those will be presented next week. The only additional employee Mr. Abbondanzio recommends is the additional building maintenance employee.
- Mr. Abbondanzio noted that he made some decisions that may not agree with decisions of the Capital Improvements Committee or the Finance Committee.
- The IT Administrator has submitted a grant which, if completely approved, would include the cost of a new phone system and software for permits for the building and health departments, eliminating the need for those special articles. If not funded by the grant, these items are likely to be deferred to the Fall Special Town Meeting as they are not time-critical, and there are not yet final recommendations or amounts.
- Library Director Linda Hickman has just e-mailed revisions of special article requests for the Library. Ms. Hickman is pulling the request for painting and increasing the requests for roofs.

- There was a general discussion repeating the issues with town buildings. We need a plan that identifies all of the building needs, prioritizes them within a time frame, and has reasonable cost estimates. Additionally, someone needs to be responsible for seeing that the plan is implemented and not forgotten about.
- Mr. Naughton is going to want to hear justification for putting money into the OPEB trust fund when there are so many other needs.
- Mr. Hanold notes a series of appropriations to various reserve accounts that are good financial practices, but asks how we see our ability to pay for these as well as our current needs.
- Mr. Hanold asked about a new \$50,000 item for Shea HVAC needs. Mr. Abbondanzio said there's a \$75,000 grant that expires in April. When engineering work was done, it was insufficient to get any bids. The new group taking over the Shea has determined they can get the right system installed for \$125,000. The town has made a commitment to the Shea group to take care of some issues and this is their highest priority. This would keep the venting on top of the roof, but roof work is not included in this project.
- The GMRSD requests include 2 items above and 2 items below the capital threshold. We need to decide which are time sensitive and need to be done and which can be deferred or eliminated. Mr. Hanold thinks the leaking pipes need attention, but cosmetic fixes to pillars are not required. Mr. Naughton asked if delaying repairs to the pillars could lead to falling debris or bigger repair needs later on.
- The Sheffield parking lot request was discussed. The need appears to be for only for a few hours a day; does it make sense to add a new parking area just for this?
- Mr. Abbondanzio asked if the stage work could be done under a state school building assistance program. Mr. Hanold said the town should not stay passive, but make sure the GMRSD apply for any grants or state assistance. The town needs to make it clear whether school or town is responsible to make the application for assistance happen. Mr. Naughton said that the Building Inspector should be involved to make sure nothing is done to the detriment of the building.
- The Selectmen have approved and are recommending the Police Lieutenant position, but have not made a decision on the proposed WPCF reorganization.
- The Selectmen have not made any decisions on the requests for additional DPW staffing.

**Topics not anticipated within in the 48 hour posting requirements**

- Mr. Hanold spoke to Karen Tonelli regarding the appellate tax board case. Erving has a court date in April, and whatever happens with Erving is likely to impact cases in other towns. Some progress is being made and our appraiser, shared with Erving, has a good reputation.

**Next Meetings:**

- March 16<sup>th</sup> – Use of Reserves, Town Administrator Budget Recommendations
- March 23<sup>rd</sup> – CIC, DPW Building Committee
- March 30<sup>th</sup> – Vote all appropriations and funding sources
- April 6<sup>th</sup> – Draft Finance Committee Report, Special Articles
- April 13<sup>th</sup> – Revise Finance Committee Report and Policy Actions
- April 20<sup>th</sup> – last chance for changes to recommendations, approve report

**Future Items:**

- Discuss how to handle process for the appropriation for WPCF Capital Stabilization Fund, use of revenues from solid waste process.
- Financial Policy regarding annual appropriations to Town General Stabilization Fund/OPEB Trust Fund
- Revisit and rework affordable assessment concept to include both school districts.
- Still waiting on resolution (if any) on staffing to do minutes for various boards and committees- asked about by Mr. Golrick.

**Meeting adjourned at 7:35 PM**

**List of Documents and Exhibits:**

- Minutes of March 2nd
- Schedules I & II
- Detail of Town Administrator Budget Recommendations

**SCHEDULE I  
Elected Officials**

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>FY15 ACTUAL</u>	<u>FY16 BUDGET</u>	<u>FY17 REQUEST</u>	<u>FY17 RECOMMEND</u>
<b>MODERATOR</b>	340	340	340	340
<b>BOARD OF SELECTMEN</b>				
Chairman	1,500	1,500	2,040	2,040
Second/Third Members	1,500	1,500	2,040	2,040
<b>BOARD OF ASSESSOR</b>				
Chairman	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500
Second/Third Members	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500
<b>TREASURER/COLLECTOR</b>	66,270	68,271*	<b>69,609**</b>	<b>68,271</b>
*G-10				
**2% increase				
<b>TOWN CLERK</b>	63,697	65,620*	<b>66,933**</b>	<b>66,933</b>
*G-8				
**G-9 (no cola yet)				
<b>BOARD OF REGISTRARS</b>				
Town Clerk	800	800	800	800
<b>TREE WARDEN</b>	1,300	1,300	1,500	1,500
<b>BOARD OF HEALTH</b>				
Chairman	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500
Second/Third Members	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500

**SCHEDULE II  
Appointed Officials**

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>FY15 ACTUAL</u>	<u>FY16 BUDGET</u>	<u>FY17 REQUEST</u>	<u>FY17 RECOMMEND</u>
<b>ANNUAL STIPENDS</b>				
<b>BOARD OF REGISTRARS (3)</b>	500	500	500	500
<b>EMERGENCY MGMT DIRECTOR</b>	5,490	5,490	5,490	5,490
<b>BURIAL AGENT</b>	670	zero	zero	zero
<b>ANIMAL INSPECTOR</b>	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500
<b>BARN INSPECTOR</b>	500	1,000	1,000	1,000

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**SCHEDULE II  
Appointed Officials**

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>FY15 ACTUAL</u>	<u>FY16 BUDGET</u>	<u>FY17 REQUEST</u>	<u>FY17 RECOMMEND</u>
<b><u>ANNUAL STIPENDS</u></b>				
IT ADMINISTRATOR	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
FOREST WARDEN	1,631	1,631	1,631	1,631
<b><u>RATES PER INSPECTION</u></b>				
ASST. BUILDING INSPECTOR	27.06	27.50	27.50	27.50
GAS INSPECTOR	27.06	27.50	27.50	27.50
PLUMBING INSPECTOR	27.06	27.50	27.50	27.50
ELECTRICAL INSPECTOR	27.06	27.50	27.50	27.50
<b><u>HOURLY RATES</u></b>				
	<u>Ranges/hr.</u>	<u>Ranges/hr.</u>	<u>Ranges/hr.</u>	<u>Ranges/hr.</u>
EXTRA CLERICAL	8.00-10.00	8.00-10.00	10.00-12.00	10.00-12.00
ELECTION WORKERS	8.00-10.00	8.00-10.00	10.00-13.00	10.00-13.00
SUMMER HIGHWAY	8.00-12.00	8.00-12.00	10.00-13.00	10.00-13.00
SNOW PLOW DRIVERS	15.00-25.00	15.00-25.00	15.00-25.00	15.00-25.00
PART TIME POLICE OFFICERS	14.50-17.00	14.50-17.00	14.50-17.00	14.50-17.00
PART TIME DISPATCHERS	13.00-15.00	17.00-19.00	17.00-19.00	17.00-19.00
PARKS & RECREATION	9.00-25.63	9.00-25.63	9.00-20.00	9.00-20.00

Minimum wage to \$11 on 1/1/17

**NON-UNION EMPLOYEES NOT SHOWN ABOVE**

<u>SALARIED</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Range FY2016</u>		<u>Range FY2017</u>	
		<u>Start</u>	<u>End</u>	<u>Start</u>	<u>End</u>
TOWN ADMINISTRATOR	J	85,737	105,515	85,737	105,515
TOWN ACCOUNTANT	G	55,746	68,271	55,746	68,271
CHIEF OF POLICE	I	77,943	95,922	77,943	95,922
DPW SUPERINTENDENT	H	70,858	87,202	70,858	87,202
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH	G	55,746	68,271	55,746	68,271
LIBRARY DIRECTOR	G	55,746	68,271	55,746	68,271
WPCF SUPERINTENDENT	H	70,858	87,202	70,858	87,202
<b><u>HOURLY</u></b>					
SELECTMEN'S SECRETARY	E	20.72	25.50	20.72	25.50
POLICE LIEUTENANT	G+8.5			34.78	37.68

**Informational Only: Fiscal Year 2017 budgeted wages with 0% COLA**

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR	103,446	DIRECTOR OF HEALTH	68,271
TOWN ACCOUNTANT	68,271	LIBRARY DIRECTOR	61,533
CHIEF OF POLICE*	103,241	WPCF SUPERINTENDENT	87,202
DPW SUPERINTENDENT	83,817	SELECTMEN'S SECRETARY	25.50
*includes add'l 20% educational incentive pay		POLICE LIEUTENANT	34.78