

FINANCE COMMITTEE AND SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES
UPSTAIRS MEETING ROOM, 1 AVENUE A, TURNERS FALLS, MA
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 13, 2021

Page 1 of 3

#1 Meeting Opened

The Chair opened the meeting at 6:00 PM by virtual attendance via ZOOM Meeting

- **Finance Committee members (remotely):** Jen Audley, John Hanold, Greg Garrison, Fred Bowman, Chris Menegoni, Franca Wisnewski, and Jennifer Waryas
- **Selectboard Members (remotely):** Chris Boutwell and Michael Nelson
- **Absent Member:** Rich Kuklewicz (SB)

Others participating remotely: Town Administrator Steve Ellis, Town Accountant Carolyn Olsen, Treasurer Eileen Seymour (6:30) and Airport Manager Bryan Camden
The Chair announced that the meeting was being recorded by MCTV and Carolyn Olsen for the Town of Montague via Zoom. Remote participation for both members and the public was provided by Zoom. The link to the Zoom recording is <https://vimeo.com/500297653>.

#2 Approve Meeting Minutes

Finance Committee moved: To accept the draft minutes of January 6, 2021 without further corrections.

Vote: Audley –Aye, Hanold-Aye, Garrison-Aye, Bowman-Aye, Menegoni-Aye, Waryas – Aye, Wisnewski - Aye

#3 Reserve Fund Transfer: \$10,000 to #001-5-946-5740-0 General Insurance

The Selectboard has endorsed this request, which covers a late bill for liability insurance at the Railroad Salvage site, and for insurance changes for the new DPW Garage. It will leave us a small contingency for future costs.

Finance Committee moved: To approve the funds transfer.

Vote: Audley –Aye, Hanold-Aye, Garrison-Aye, Bowman-Aye, Menegoni-Aye, Waryas – Aye, Wisnewski - Aye

There is a chance that CARES Act funds may cover the \$6,000 transferred from the Reserve Fund earlier in FY21 for entry monitoring services.

#4 Review of FY22 Budget Requests

- General Insurance Dept. 946). Mr. Ellis indicated that he would like to revise this budget and so discussion was deferred to a later date.

FINANCE COMMITTEE AND SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES
UPSTAIRS MEETING ROOM, 1 AVENUE A, TURNERS FALLS, MA
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 13, 2021

Page 2 of 3

- Reserve Fund (Dept. 132.) The budget was reviewed and approved. There is a chance that CARES Act funds may cover \$6,000 transferred earlier in FY21 for entry monitoring services.
- Town Accountant (Dept. 135). The budget was reviewed and approved.
- Shared Costs (Dept. 159). The budget was reviewed and approved, after upward revision to add multi-language capabilities to the Code Red cost.
- Treasurer (Dept. 145). The budget was reviewed and approved, recognizing that a small revision may be submitted after Ms. Seymour completes her evaluation of needs after a retirement. She noted that she has succeeded in streamlining some tasks and re-financed some debt in recent months.
- Debt (Depts. 700 and 661-700). Ms. Seymour presented a sheet summarizing the bonding that is contained in these departments. Mr. Ellis pointed out that the necessity for substantial investment in the Water Pollution Control Facility has caused the debt expense for the Sewer to rise to 32% of the Sewer's operating budget, while the changed profile of ratepayers places more of the cost on residential users. The budgets were reviewed and approved.

#5 Discussion – Proposed Purchase of Pioneer Aviation

(Including funding options and financial consequences)

Bryan Camden answered questions from the Committee on his preparation for public information meetings on Thursday January 21 and Saturday January 23. Emphasis was placed on the substantial harm to airport operations if the purchase is not made, and the substantial expansion of the airport's staff and operating expense if the purchase does occur.

#6 Proposed FY22 Budget Calendar

- Ms. Audley showed the current budget cycle schedule, and recommended that the Committee not meet on January 20, in light of it being a holiday week, Inauguration Day, and there being two public information meetings later in the week for the airport purchase. The recommendation was accepted.
- Mr. Ellis announced that the Special Town Meeting is set for February 25 by remote access, with a dry-run a week earlier to ensure that attendance and voting arrangements work properly. Optical Technologies Inc. will handle those arrangements and we expect CARES Act funds will cover their cost.

#7 Updates from Town Accountant and Town Administrator

- Mr. Ellis reported that the Public Works Garage construction project is winding down about \$1.4 million less than the \$11,146,000 amount forecasted. The lower figure also included several enhancements – salt shed, fuel service, etc. – beyond the original scope of work. Once all costs are settled and the final bonding is done there will be a rescission of borrowing authority early in FY22.

FINANCE COMMITTEE AND SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES
UPSTAIRS MEETING ROOM, 1 AVENUE A, TURNERS FALLS, MA
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 13, 2021

Page 3 of 3

- The Selectboard will discuss alternative ways of meeting Montague's Information Technology needs in an abbreviated meeting January 19. Greg Garrison will participate in the discussion.
- Cannabis tax revenue, which was not specifically budgeted in FY21, is running at \$82 K year to date, after a start-up period. Meals tax receipts, on the other hand, have dropped off with the end of outdoor dining for the winter and continued restrictions under COVID guidelines. It is still likely to approach the budgeted level of \$30,000.
- Ms. Olsen had no topics to share.

#8 Topics not anticipated and Suggestions for Future Agendas

No late-appearing topics were raised.

Upcoming Meeting Topics:

January 20: NO MEETING

January 27: begin votes on STM warrant

March 3: GMRSD & FCTS in coming weeks.

Ms. Audley will invite department heads to meet with us.

#9 Adjournment

Finance Committee Moved: To adjourn at 7:57 PM

Vote: Audley –Aye, Hanold-Aye, Garrison-Aye, Bowman-Aye, Menegoni-Aye,
Wisnewski-Aye, Waryas –Aye

The Selectboard adjourned at this time as well.

Respectfully submitted by John Hanold

List of Documents and Exhibits:

- Reserve Fund Transfer Request
- FY22 Budget Requests
- Pioneer Aviation Purchase Information