

FY22 Budget Hearing #3 Joint Meeting of FinCom & Selectmen January 28, 2021

Remote participants: FinCom: Chairman Rob Hannemann, Don Leopold, Susan Murphy, Bruce Golden, Vicki Divoll and Eric Glasgow. *Marshall Carroll was not present.* Selectmen: Chairman Rossi, James Malkin and Warren Doty. Others: Town Administrator Tim Carroll, Town Treasurer Melanie Becker, Town Accountant Ellen Biskis and Diana DeBlase. (13 participants)

At 5:03 PM Chairman Hannemann called the meeting to order.

Housing Committee Budget #185:

Tim Carroll said the new administrator we are hiring would be getting paid a higher grade than we had for this budget, 5 hours \$2,500.00 increase to this budget.

Mr. Carroll also pointed out that there is a 1.7% increase to Dukes County Regional Housing Authority (DCRHA) budget line. Chairman Rossi asked if housing committee budget has unexpended funds in the budget at this time. Mr. Carroll said yes, and we hope to start spending on new hire to get the Housing Committee active again. Mr. Carroll said we have \$6,000.00 there now.

Chairman Hannemann asked about DCRHA \$40,000.00 for administration. Tim Carroll said towns agreed that each would come up with central admin costs; our share is 10.75%.

Mr. Doty said Ann Wallace is our representative and could answer any questions you might have.

Town Offices / Building Maintenance Budget #192:

Mr. Carroll spoke to this budget. He noted 1.4% salaries increase due to COLA.

These were additional technology needs for remote working. Mr. Doty asked if we are still well served by Educomp. Mr. Carroll said they have been very helpful this past month. Mr. Carroll said he did have some concerns of the depth of their support moving forward. Mr. Carroll spoke of funding a part-time IT position and that he is working with West Tisbury and reached out to Aquinnah to share a person or service.

Chilmark Community Center (CCC) Budget #194:

Mr. Carroll said the Community Center water system well feeds CCC & Library and that this is a Public Water Source. Because it is a PWS we need to pay for monitoring quality. Bennett Environmental increase 4% and DEP monitoring compliance issues increase by \$1,300.00.

Mr. Carroll said the septic pumpout cost increased to all town systems. Mr. Carroll said the haulers are having to taking off island with an additional cost.

Ms. Murphy asked for update on generator at CCC. Mr. Carroll said we are renting a temporary generator now but that is ending soon. MEMA grant need data supporting we will know next 5 days. It's a large generator and we would replace with a larger with a battery backup for the solar panels.

Accountant Ms. Biskis said for budget line 5399 we have spent \$5,000.00 for the rental of generator.

Comfort Station Budget # 199:

Mr. Carroll said this budget is up 4.15% as the portable toilets are an additional cost. Mr. Carroll said we have added 1.4% COLA to the service line that goes out to bid.

With no further items on the agenda for discussion Mr. Carroll asked if we could work through some other items.

Mr. Doty said the bottom line for this new budget is very troubling. It shows an increase of \$750,000. If we go with this total we will need a very substantial override. Four departments are responsible for the lion's share of the increase: Public Safety \$143,000.00, Education \$226,000.00, Debt Service \$109,000.00 and Benefits \$232,000.00. We need to look carefully at each of these budgets. Mr. Doty suggested an option of using our "free cash" to put against the budget and lower the impact. Mr. Malkin said the more we can understand these big items it will help in making decisions.

Chairman Hannemann said schools alone are over 2.5% increase to budget very low turnover at faculty so they will continue to get higher each year.

Mr. Doty asked to discuss our debt service.

Town Treasurer Melanie Becker said our long term are going down the increase is Interest short-term for bond. Ms. Becker said David Eisenthal (our financial advisor) and she meet with Chuck Hodgkinson and Bill Rossi to get real figures on the Fire station and Tri Town Ambulance Building. Chairman Rossi said David recommend 3 separate borrowings. Chairman Rossi recommended the finance team consider the wishes of West Tisbury & Aquinnah on how we borrow for the Tri Town Ambulance headquarters. West Tisbury prefers a 30 yr. bond.

Mr. Doty said we hope to pass debt exclusion for any item attached to firehouse and EMS building. Treasurer Ms. Becker said debt service requires town meeting vote and to be on the ballot at ATE.

Employee benefits Budget # 910:

Treasurer Ms. Becker said this budget includes 10% increase for health insurance but when we meet next week it will be decreased likely to 5%.

Chairman Hannemann said this is an important element of budget.

Treasurer Ms. Becker said she would supply the FinCom & Selectmen the figure changes when she has them.

Mr. Doty said the TTA retirement assessment is a 50% increase, recommended getting an explanation. Mr. Carroll discussed figures coming from actuarial study with a 3 year cycle. Normal cost plus interest for OPEB keeps our AAA bond rating.

Mr. Carroll discussed contacting DOR to see if temporary borrowing is exempt.

Accountant Ms. Becker said at this time free cash balance is \$538,246.00.

Chairman Hannemann said warrant articles need to be addressed to see the budget full picture. Mr. Malkin said the layout we have used in past is helpful. Mr. Malkin said he will work with Harbormaster concerning the harbor department warrant articles and return. Mr. Malkin asked for information about Annual Town Meet date for 2021. Town Administrator Mr. Carroll said April 26 and Annual Town Election April 28. As for location we could look into utilizing the MVAG hall.

At 6:05 PM Chairman Hannemann asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Golden moved to adjourn, Ms. Murphy seconded. **SO VOTED: FinCom 6 Ayes 1 not present, Selectmen: 3 Ayes**

Minutes respectfully submitted by Diana DeBlase.

Approved 03/11/2021

Document list:

www.chilmarkma.gov budget page as updated 1/28/2021