

Town Council Finance Sub-committee Meeting Minutes

TRAINING ROOM

Falmouth Central Fire Station

March 10, 2016 – 5:00PM

Members Attendance: Caleb Hemphill, Karen Farber, Ned Kitchel

Others in Attendance: David Goldberg (Town Council), Claudia King (Town Council); Danielle Tracy (School Board)

Nathan Poore (Town Manager); Peter McHugh (Finance Director); Jay Reynolds (Public Works Director); Matt Gilbert (Community Programs Deputy Director); John Kilbride (Police Lieutenant); Ed Tolan (Police Chief); Howard Rice (Fire Chief); Ellen Planer (Town Clerk)

The meeting was called to order @ 5:05PM

- Approve the minutes of January 5, 2016 meeting
 - a. Councilor Farber requested an amendment to the minutes to reflect that there was a request for a plan to fund open space projects going forward.
 - b. Councilor Farber moved to approve the amended minutes, Councilor Kitchel seconded and the minutes were approved.
- Approve the minutes of February 8, 2016 meeting
 - a. Councilor Hemphill moved to approve the minutes and the minutes were approved.
- Town Manager Nathan Poore presented the Budget Book to the committee.
 - a. Following the presentation, councilors and town staff discussed specifics of the budget. The following are highlights of the discussion:
 - i. Councilor Farber requested that the senior center construction project be added to the budget variance explanation for capital spending.
 - ii. Councilor Farber requested a listing of road and sidewalk projects by location and year for the next 2 to 3 years.
 - iii. Councilor Farber asked about the job description for the new Senior Coordinator position. Nathan replied that the position was a placeholder and the job description would have to be approved by the Council once it has been decided on by the Senior Committee.
 - iv. There was a request to update the public works budget to reflect the latest \$70K estimate of FY16 savings due to the mild winter.
 - v. There was a discussion about why a tower truck was needed and whether it could be shared with other communities.
 - 1. Chief Rice explained the need for the truck and stated that it would be difficult to share this truck with other communities as all communities close enough to share with do not require a tower truck as they do not have the large commercial buildings Falmouth has.
 - vi. There was a discussion about the request for a bucket truck needed to maintain lighting, banners signs etc. on Route One and Route 100. Nathan replied that the amount was a placeholder and the staff will

look into potential opportunities to share the truck with other communities.

- vii. There was a discussion about the need for an all-wheel drive vehicle for Codes to facilitate access to construction sites and resolve issues with winter driving. The solution in this budget is to move the all-wheel drive Ford Explorer being retired by the Police Department to Codes. Nathan stated that the cost of ownership of that vehicle was equivalent to the Prius which will be traded in as part of the replacement of the Police vehicle.
- viii. Councilor Farber asked about the employee allocations between departments for the Cable TV Station Manager and the Sustainability Coordinator. The Cable TV Station Manager is allocated between Cable TV, Building Maintenance and IT and reflects the time he spends supporting each of those functions. The Sustainability Coordinator is allocated between Administration, Finance and the Ocean View/Natural Gas TIF and the allocation is based on her job duties.
- ix. There was discussion about staffing impacts of increased zoning and MDU development requests and whether there was a need for more resources. Nathan responded that there are no issues so far and future needs would be addressed as they arise.
- x. There was a discussion about in-house versus contract cleaning services and the fact that in-house staff provides much more than cleaning services. They provide facility management services, building construction, and facility maintenance and repair producing significant overall savings to the Town.
- xi. Councilor Farber requested a year-in-review report about the new Mason Motz Community Center discussing among other things, building utilization and operations. There was discussion about Adult Education programs and their budget needs.
- xii. There was a discussion about the Falmouth Memorial Library budget request and the two plans submitted for review. Plan B addressed the remaining wage equity issues and the group felt it was the preferred plan. This plan was amended to include \$1,500 for internet access which would no longer be provided free of charge by Time Warner.
- xiii. There was a discussion of alternatives for Open Space funding. Councilor Farber recommended an alternative where the net proceeds from the sale of the Town's Hadlock property could be an alternate funding source for open space since it was originally purchased as part of the open space project. Use of those proceeds would allow a reduction in the open space appropriation of \$100,000. There was a request to verify with Bob Shafto whether that land was purchased with a grant and whether that would impact the Town's ability to sell the property.

- Nathan presented a list of proposed budget changes for items that were finalized after the Budget Book was prepared. The proposed changes reduced the budget request by \$34,660.
- The Finance Committee then voted on finance committee budget recommendations.
 - a. Councilor Farber moved to reduce the budget appropriation for Open Space by \$100,000 with language in the budget approval order that conditions the

reduction on any net proceeds from the sale of the Hadlock property being reserved or used for open space programs.

- b. Councilor Farber also moved that the committee recommend the Library Budget Plan B with the addition of \$1,500 for internet access. In addition, Councilor Farber moved to accept the \$34,660 list of budget reductions as presented.
 - c. Councilor Kitchel seconded the motions and all were approved.
 - d. The impact of the committee's recommendation was to reduce the proposed mil rate increase from \$.10 to \$.04 (or 1.5%) for a proposed rate of \$3.04 which is equal to the FY2015 mil rate.
 - e. There was a request for staff to review the proposed budget with Councilors Anderson and McBrady to answer any questions or concerns they may have.
- Nathan then presented the Town Sewer Budget to the committee.
 - a. The budget contains a recommendation for a 8.5% sewer rate increase based on the proposed Mill Creek pump station project spending.
 - i. Councilor Farber asked about how sewer charges were arrived at and requested a follow-up explanation why rates were not based on metering versus fixed amounts.
 - b. There was a request to add an additional slide to the Budget presentation detailing the Mill Creek project and the proposed rate increase.
 - c. There was a request to include a slide showing sewer rates from 2005 through the proposed 2019 rate.
 - d. There was a request to include a letter in the next water billing cycle that explains the future increase in rates.
- Future Finance Committee schedule and agendas.
 - a. There was a request to correct the schedule to add the joint School and Town finance committee meeting on March 31st in Council Chambers at 6PM.
- Adjourn – Councilor Farber moved to adjourn, Councilor Kitchel seconded.
 - a. The meeting was adjourned at 7:35PM.

Respectfully submitted by Peter McHugh