



FINANCE COMMITTEE
Town of Grafton
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Approved minutes of the Finance Committee of March 12, 2016 on April 13, 2016

Agenda
 Finance Committee
 Public Meeting
 Conference Room F
 Saturday, March 12, 2016
 8:30 A.M.

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Public Meeting

The public meeting of the Finance Committee was called to order by Chairman Joel Schwendemann at 8:32 A.M.

Finance Committee

Present: Joel Schwendemann, Denise Nault, Roger(Skip) Currier, Heather McCue, Ed Prisby(8:34 P.M.), Sue Robbins.

Absent: Don Davison, Jennifer Dorazio, Lisa Brovelli Kelley.
 8:30 A.M.- 9:10 A.M.

Blackstone Valley Vocational Technical Regional School FY17 Budget

- Presentation by Dr. Michael Fitzpatrick and Grafton representative Anthony Yitts
 School Committee approved the budget on Thursday, March 09, 2016
- With the hope that BVT would enjoy 1.6% in State funding for FY17.
 Level funding is what we are receiving- about \$20 per student- technically zero funding
 Dr. Mike is concerned and talking to state representatives- optimistic that there will be some funds released throughout the fiscal year.
- Chapter 70 funding
 Pupil allocation- more of an increase in health benefits - a step in the new recommendations from the group that is looking at the new Chapter 70 funding.
 Outdated. Health, special education and post employment benefits- chapter 70 needs to be revamped
- Budget preparation advancing with a 3% increase
 BVT is one of the few districts with an increase in enrollment.
 Largest part of the conversation is Health benefits.
 Health benefits ate up a good part of the 3% increase
- Collective bargaining item: Harvard pilgrim, Fallon
 High deductible/ Low premium 50/50
 savings plans vs. reimbursable plans
 Strategies- standard plan
 The new program has been working towards this for 1.5 years.
 Brand new option within the Harvard Pilgrim plan
 Is an 11.9% budget for Health insurance.
 Denise Nault encouraged BVT to review GIC
- Reduced personnel
 Non- teaching staff was reduced in order to stay in the realm of the 3% increase

Union- custodians only for Blackstone

Capital equipment

State of the art training

0 requests to stay in the realm of the 3% increase for FY17

Grants applications for consideration

Governor is in the process of presenting programs in front of the legislature

- Concerns Pensions- non- educator

From the State- FY17 budget has \$100,000 in for FY17

Custodian and secretarial are MASS Retirement

Teachers are MTRS

Problem because the state never billed.

The employer needed to pay a certain % but they were not asked(billed) for it.

- Core skills-

Anthony Yitts stated that more applications are needed from Grafton students

4 or 5 students turn down the application on a yearly basis- currently 62 students from Grafton

- Joel Schwendemann commended Dr. Mike on the great job on the booklets presented.

Grafton School Department

Dr. Jay Cummings and all members of the School Committee are present to review the FY17 budget of the School Department

- Resources available

Override funding

Circuit breaker funded at 70%

Chapter 70

Entitlement grants

- Challenges

Grafton is considered a minimum aid district (\$20 per pupil from state)

State funding is not working for any community

Continued enrollment growth

- Stable funding

Jay is thankful for the override and stated the budget would be a complete mess if the override did not happen

State funding needed to stay stable

The override is in effect and now an unstable state funding formula has challenged the budget

That 1.25% growth has not happened due to the state funding challenges and continued unanticipated special needs challenges throughout the school year

4% of the budget is tied up for personnel increases and inflationary costs.

Anything above and beyond that will be used for growth

- Goals

Grafton continues to emulate the characteristics of great school districts- aspiring to provide high quality tools for all students

- FY17 funding

One counselor at the elementary level

Our Special Education program keeps kids within their home district

AP program is a state funded program and is solid right now with a 40% increase in students in the next year or 2

- Challenges

State funding

Chapter 70 additional \$20 per student- very low

Entitlement grant funding- low income, language- pays for salaries- will see these funds come in sometime this summer

Funds are not paired with the mandated requirements

- Enrollment

Enrollment is okay with the size of buildings

- Special Ed

Funding does not come close to the needs

Reality- a handful of students will be placed in private school settings - tuitions are absorbed for all students who live in town and have the need for special ed.

Most Mandates are state but must stay in sync with federal guidelines

There is an increase in number of spec ed students

10.2 FTEs is the low end of stable

- Creative and stretching - in the district- in many areas

Curriculum work is getting accomplished

Kids trump curriculum development

- School Choice- started 3 years ago

Currently 42 students- hopefully 60 students next year

This has provided the rainy day fund for the district- more will be used for next year.

No margins in this budget

- Circuit Breaker

approximately \$320,000.00 stays in this budget for emergency funding using \$150,000.00 for this year.

Extraordinary relief- can get back about \$150,000 in Feb 2017(small gamble)

- Capital

Approximately \$300,000 of School capital projects has been submitted to CIPC projects over \$10,000.00 are not funded through the school.

Maintenance/custodial projects are in the budget.

Nothing has been built in the budget for FY17 for capital if it does not get funded/recommended by CIPC South Grafton elementary school project in the amount of \$60,000.00 is a safety issue involving the preschool entrance

- Joel Schwendemann

CIPC and the FY17 list has not been finalized

Voiced his concerns over the capital needs for the Schools

Rank in State

This is a powerful visual to better understand the scope of what we are asking for vs. where we stand in district.

Jay stated that Grafton will not get to the “average” per student spending number in his lifetime

Reading would be the improvement

Reality check

what you do with the money is mind blowing.

It is insane to me to be in this position in the community to understand where we are in the State Ranking The School Department is a large piece of the Town’s budget and a shoe string budget is not sustainable.

- Daryl Rynning

The State Ranking does not mean that we have a bad school system- this scares people- we are rising up. Jay Cummings is masterful- focusing on a student centered.

The problem is not just the tax base. It is bigger than our little town.

- Discussion topics

Rank in State

Reading supports

Excellent staff

How to sustain the School’s budget needs following FY19 and the end of the override funds?

Increase in housing growth - 2 sides of the coin

Magnet school district consideration

Transportation

Fees collected

Grants

Remain stable- finals come out in the summer months

Grants that supplement the school budget are included in the per pupil expenditure figure -

8 minute break

10:50 AM.

- Skip Currier asked the Chair if he would have time to complete his thoughts on the school budget

Handling the school costs is a credit to the Town

Per pupil spending averages is a nebulous ranking:

It may not reflect the Town's contribution

Does not state the quality of education given when placed in a ranking.

The School is to be commended for its resourceful approach considering the revenue stream

Review of the following Budgets of Town Departments with the Assistant Town Administrator Doug Willardson:

- #510 Board of Health

Jay Gardiner from the Board of Health is present to discuss the improvement of the service delivery model for the daily office management for Grafton's Board of Health.

Nursing, environmental, health services – a need for much better customer service.

Not just for cost efficiencies- shared services makes sense for the community

Per capita for public health- Town Administrator is to be commended that he sees that need for purpose - proactive approach

A Grant is available to provide additional health support

What is the long term plan for further support for this office?

Receive information- it has not been fully vetted yet.

Small dollars to put someone in place to assist in the Board of Health office.

Assistant Town Administrator Doug Willardson stated that the Town understands that there is a grant and that there is a need to better support the Board of Health office

Jay says the \$16,000.00 will take care of the service plus the grant. Board of Health has not gotten to a critical point but explained that a seamless customer service currently does not exist.

Jay does not want it to be hit or miss service as call are funneled through the office.

Contractually all messages do not go through the regional offices but through the Town's office.

Grant is federal dollars

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The Board of Health thinks that there is a shortage on the office coverage and it can be covered for very short dollars.

The same goal will be the end result however a different approach is viewed by the Board and the Administration.

The Board of Health meets Monday evening and they will put a report together. Jay Gardiner stated that the request did not go through the proper channels.

There is a dollar cost for waiting.

For short dollars for public health services will be improved

The Right service delivery model will be established

- #630 Recreation review with Jennifer Andersen

Kristin Belanger, Chairman of the Recreation Commission is present with Recreation Director Jennifer Andersen to review the Recreation budget for FY16 and FY17

Silver Lake

This is the only Recreation program that runs into a deficit due to the cost to provide mandatory life guards and the snack bar positions.

The deficit is supported through other programs fees.

Closing the beach a week early is not unusual.

Silver Lake- parking issues- restrictive space

Total beach permit issued was 8,000 last year.

Future CPC funds may provide shade structure/grills creating possible rental space revenue.

New programs: Possible tennis and golf

Skiing pays for the bus to Ward Hill grades 3-6

Upper level grades may go to Wachusett Mountain(looking into it)

Sponsorship for programs -year long program-outlined for 3 levels not finalized to date.

Basketball all 4 courts need to be relined- Nelson needs cracks sealed

CIPC parameter fence at Ferry St. CPC will make their determination to fund this project.

\$55,000.00 of Recreational fees collected goes directly to the general fund for FY16.

- #122 Board of Selectmen

No change

- #123 Town Administrator

Moved Part time Human Resources Analyst to Human Resources/Temp line.

Professional and Technical has gone down-

There is a slush fund in there not specifically lined up for any particular expense

- #135 Town Accountant

The new Town Accountant will be appointed next week and her salary will be a little less than what was budgeted for . Leads/applicants from State.

Staffing requests and the funds for the Town Accountant are not

Keep it accurate. Doug says that we can move it in October Town Meeting

Town Administrator is looking at it as not adding new employees- etc.

Denise Nault suggested that the budget reflects accurately to what you need.

- #151 Legal

Reduced per current trends.

- # 153 Human Resources/Temporary Staff(\$4,000.00 is in the budget for Temporary Staff)

For FY16Salaries came out of the Town Administrator's budget

The remainder came out of the Treasurer/Collector's budget

The Full time came out of the Treasurer/Collector's budget

The part time staff stayed in the Treasurer/Collector's budget

Part time Human Resources Analyst moved from Town Administrator's Office.

Payroll and time & attendance system costs moved from the Treasurer/ Collector's office.

- #155 MIS/GIS

This fiscal year the School Dept transitioned to a new IT Director. He felt that the Town budget needed to be increased, but would need more data before he can develop a full budget. Next year we will have a fully developed IT budget.

- #156 Copiers

Increased slightly based on usage. We pay a base lease, plus additional for overages.

- #193 Municipal increased slightly

A \$5,000 increase was included for "as needed" repairs. This line runs low every year.

Complaint and liability issue- snow issue has been solved the problem-DPW will cut a walkway through for the Library.

Transition of the custodian schedule- it will be 20 hours per week.

- #195 Unclassified

Fallon is going up 5.4% and thinks that it is a good number for now

We already discussed the health insurance and pension. All other lines are stable.

- #196 Fuel/Gasoline

This budget was lowered due to the lower costs of gasoline. We wanted to strike a balance and not decrease it too much in case gas prices bounce back up in the next 16 months.

Relative to the Special Town Meeting and the Energy meeting for the aggregation. Honeywell has not been commissioned yet- needs figures-Doug will send onto the Finance Committee.

- #292 Animal Control

As mentioned in the answers to the questions posed at your 3/5 meeting, we are looking into sharing these services with neighboring communities.(possibly Northbridge) However this will cost more than we are currently paying, but we hope to provide better services.

- #296 Animal Inspector

Same as the above comments for Animal Control.

- #410 Engineering

Basically the same as last year

- #421 Sanitation

We have an option to renew our hauling contract this year. We will be bidding out the hauling so see if we can beat the current price. Our disposal contract ends 12/30/16. We have already received lower proposals for the disposal.

recycle litter concern

- #423 Snow & Ice Control

Same as last year

- #424 Street Lighting

- Budget is the same. We will be analyzing the possibility of purchasing the streetlights and switching to LED.

- #491 Cemeteries and Parks

\$5,000 increase in rentals for portable toilets. Increase from last year and was budgeted in grounds keeping supplies last year.

- #541 Council on Aging

Additional two 10 hour/week employees to cook meals. Meals will not have to sit out for hours before lunch. Priority of Board of Selectmen.

- #543 Veterans Services

\$5,000 less in Veterans' benefits based on trend.

- #710 Debt Service- Principals

Reviewed from Budget book

- #750 Debt Service-Interest

Reviewed from budget book

- Review of the List of open Warrant articles:

Current status of projects and current balances

Review of the List of open Warrant articles to be used for May 2016 Town Meeting

The list of warrant articles was received and approximately \$6,900 will be used from completed projects of warrant articles towards. future projects/expenditures

Reviewed the long term debt

Planning Board Budget

- The Planning Board's replacement for their Administrative Assistant is considered Office Manager.
- Office managers get paid 2% more than Administrative Assistants
- Intern position in Planning Board office is budgeted for \$4,000 .00.

Economic Development Commission

Finance Committee would like to read the goals of the EDC.

Members topics

Library Building and Planning Committee

Any outstanding bills:

Susan Fiacco

Motion: Skip Currier moved that the Finance Committee approve payment of the bills totaling \$45.25 to Susan Fiacco for the purchase of breakfast food/drink for the March 12, 2016 public meeting of the Finance Committee.

Seconded: Ed Prisby. All in favor. Motion carries.

Reivew of minutes**2016**

February 24, 2016, March 05, 2016,

2006

January 09, 2006, February 15, 2006, March 18, 2006, March 25, 2006, March 29, 2006, April 01, 2006, April 05, 2006, April 10, 2006, April 19, 2006, April 20, 2006, April 24, 2006, April 25, 2006, May 06, 2006, May 08, 2006

Motion: Denise Nault moved that the Finance Committee approve the minutes from 2006 as presented and the minutes of 2016 as presented.

Seconded: Sue Robbins. All in favor. Motion carries.

3 year Term Renewal of the Finance Committee 2016-2019

The following Finance Committee members will need to confirm if they will be renewing their term on the Finance Committee by the end of the April public hearings:

Lisa Brovelli Kelley

Denise Nault-not renewing

Ed Prisby

Review of upcoming meeting dates

The March 19, 2016 Meeting that has been posted will be cancelled since all budgets have been reviewed.

The next group of meeting dates will be to review the Warrants that will be prepared for the May 09, 2016 Town Meetings beginning Wednesday, April 13, 2016.

The Open Meeting Laws training will be held on Thursday, April 14, 2016.

The public hearing of the Finance Committee will begin at 8:00 P.M. since the majority of Finance Committee members will be attending the Open Meeting training at 6:30 P.M. that evening.

Adjournment

Motion: Denise Nault moved that the Finance Committee close its public meeting.

Seconded: Ed Prisby. All in favor. Motion carries.

The public meeting of the Finance Committee adjourned at 12:25 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan M. Fiacco