

**Finance Committee
Acushnet, Massachusetts
Minutes of Meeting
April 13, 2022
7:30**

ATTENDANCE: Chair Michael Boucher, Peter Benoit, Eric Chew, Robert Ferreira, and Eric McGlynn

ABSENT: Vice-Chair Robert St. Jean, Susan Delgado, and Jacqueline Stanley

OTHERS PRESENT: Jamie Kelley, Interim Town Administrator

Mr. Ferreira made a motion, seconded by Mr. Benoit, to open the meeting. The **vote** was **unanimous for**.

Dr. Boucher advised tonight they would finish voting on the budgets that had been held last week, as well as the Articles. Their first order of business would be to take action on some Reserve Fund Transfers.

Reserve Fund Transfers

1. Police Department - \$9,093.10

Dr. Boucher advised he had spoken to Chief Richmond in regards to this. This is for when residents come in to get fingerprinted for their license to carry. The other machine they have is in the lock up area.

Mr. McGlynn made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ferreira, to approve this Transfer. The **vote** was **unanimous for**.

2. Historical Commission – Buildings & Grounds - \$2,400.00

Mr. Kelley explained the Historical Commission originally embarked on this project thinking it was a volunteer project. The wood was donated, but it was the wrong wood. The craftsman then got the right wood and built the bench. The bench goes around an ancient pump which had to be disassembled and then reassembled without being damaged. He then put everything back together. He was of the assumption he was going to be paid, and the Historical Commission thought it was a donation which was why they hadn't run it by anyone. Mr. Kelley said he had talked to the vendor a couple of times, but he would not reduce the amount. He has talked to the individuals involved and told them not to let something like this happen again to miscommunication. He recommends paying this through the Reserve Fund.

Mr. Ferreira made a motion, seconded by Mr. McGlynn, to approve this Transfer. The **vote** was **unanimous for**.

3. Town Clerk – Salaries-Temporary-0101161/512000 – \$3,229.00

There was a shortage of office staff from mid-September through January due to a medical injury and surgery. This required staff to cover additional hours.

Mr. Chew made a motion, seconded by Mr. Benoit, to approve this Transfer. The **vote** was **unanimous for**.

4. Town Clerk - 1101192/585512 – \$500.00

This is to purchase labels, forms, etc. for the archiving of records. The CPC account was mistakenly zeroed out prior to the project completion.

Mr. Benoit made a motion, seconded by Mr. McGlynn, to approve this Transfer. The **vote was unanimous for.**

FY23 Budget & Article deliberation

Mr. Kelley advised as the Committee knew, they had to cut an additional \$150,000 because of a change in the revenue estimates. They also found \$3,000 in differences that came in. He will run through the cuts again. Items were changed in the following budgets: Town Accountant, GASB Valuation, Longevity; Technology, Software Maintenance; Miscellaneous, Compensated Balances; Treasurer/Collector, Salaries; Fire Department, Salaries-Fire Chief, Salaries-Call Firefighters, Salaries-Part time EMT; Police Department, Salaries-Dispatch; SeMass, Recycling; Forestry; and Health and Dental. Mr. Kelley said that these changes resulted in a budget that is \$33,320,718. Their revenue is \$33,405,091. They have approximately \$80,000 for a cushion.

Review of the budgets that had been held then began. Mr. McGlynn made a motion, seconded by Mr. Benoit, to approve the Police Department budget with a salary total of \$2,298,500, an expense total of \$361,510, and a department total of \$2,660,010. The **vote was unanimous for.**

Mr. Kelley said the total figure for Acushnet Schools is \$15,842,118. That includes Tuition, Acushnet Public Schools, Bristol Aggie, and the debt payments. It also includes the \$75,000 the School allowed them to cut from the prepayment of the tuition. Mr. Chew made a motion, seconded by Mr. Benoit, to approve the Old Colony budget as stated at \$2,282,455. The **vote was unanimous for.**

Mr. Chew made a motion, seconded by Mr. Benoit, to approve the Acushnet School Department budget at \$15,842,118. The **vote was unanimous for.**

Mr. Benoit made a motion, seconded by Mr. Chew, to approve the Department of Public Works budget at \$952,807. The **vote was unanimous for.**

Mr. Benoit made a motion, seconded by Mr. Chew, to approve the Library Department budget at \$287,779. The **vote was unanimous for.**

Mr. Benoit made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ferreira, to approve the Department of Public Works-Water Division Department budget. The **vote was unanimous for.**

Mr. McGlynn made a motion, seconded by Mr. Benoit, to approve the Department of Public Works-Sewer Division Department budget at \$799,979. The **vote was unanimous for.**

Mr. Kelley then began the review of the Warrant.

Article 1 is the Article to accept the Town reports.

Article 2 is a placeholder for an amount of money for the Snow removal budget. It is presently \$86,000, but Mr. Kelley will get the Committee the final figure when all the bills come in.

Article 3 is also a placeholder for past years bills. If nothing comes in, this Article will be removed.

Mr. Kelley said the next section is the consent agenda. He will be meeting with the Town Clerk and the Moderator. Unless someone objects to one of the Articles, there is only one vote for the entire consent agenda. It consists of the following Articles:

- PEG Access and Cable Related Fund
- Authorizes the Board of Selectmen to apply for state and federal grants
- Allows them to receive Chapter 90 money for their road projects and improvements
- Authorizes the Treasurer to borrow money
- Authorizes the members of the Cemetery Board to perform work in the cemeteries and to determine the compensation to be paid to the members.
- Authorizes the members of the Recreation Commission to perform work in the park and to determine the compensation to be paid to the members.
- Allows the Board of Library Trustees to sell for \$1 the discarded books and periodicals of the Acushnet Public Library to the Friends of the Acushnet Public Library.
- Authorization and the spending limit amounts of the following Revolving Funds:

Recycling	\$10,000
Conservation	\$ 2,500
Parks and Recreation	\$12,500
Council on Aging	\$30,000
Public Library	\$ 6,000

Mr. Kelley advised the next six Articles were for Reserve Accounts. Article 12 is for \$200,000 for the establishment of a Health Insurance Stabilization Fund. This will help to mitigate the impact of a large increase in Health Insurance costs. Article 13 is for \$50,000 for the establishment of an Accrued Liabilities for Compensated Absences Fund. This is when employees leave the employment of the Town and are due funds under the collective bargaining agreements. The line item in the Operating Budget will be able to be phased out.

Article 14 proposes \$50,000 for the establishment of a Stormwater Management Operations and MS4 compliance Fund. Article 15 is for \$160,000 for the General Stabilization Fund. Mr. Kelley said the Town should have a minimum of 4% and combined with the Overlay Surplus, no more than a maximum of 15% of their projected revenues. Right now they are at approximately 10.05%. Article 16 is for \$250,000 for the Capital Expense Stabilization Fund. Article 17 is for the OPEB Trust Fund. Mr. Kelley was recommending \$400,000.

The next section of the Warrant was the Operating budget and Capital Improvement budget. Mr. Kelley said that he set it up slightly differently from how it has been in the past. There is now an expense total, a salary total, and a department total; also included is the previous year's departmental request, and the Finance Committee recommendation. He noted the changes made are also in there. Article 19 is the Golf Club Enterprise Fund. Article 20 is the Sewer Enterprise Fund.

Article 21, the capital items were then discussed. Mr. Kelley said the Committee has seen the items listed in black. Items listed in red propose using CPC funds. Article 22 is for \$8,000 for software for the Board of Assessors, and Article 24 is for \$20,000 to fund an Elders Community Services Program. Most of the other capital items are coming out of Free Cash for a total of \$1,639,900. There is an Article in red that may be removed. The Golf Committee wanted to talk to CPC about some funds for a parking lot or trails, but if the groups don't get together by the time this is printed, the Article will be removed.

Mr. Kelley said Article 25 is the article for the Mullin Rule. It allows a Board or Committee member to vote on a hearing if they have missed a meeting, but are able to view the video and/or read the minutes and any other materials presented. This is for hearings that are continued for more than one meeting.

Mr. McGlynn made a motion, seconded by Mr. Benoit, to approve Article 1 through Article 25 as presented with the caveat that if it is necessary any Article may be removed and the balance of the Articles will be renumbered if required. The **vote** was **unanimous for**.

The next section was Zoning and General Bylaw Amendments.

Mr. Kelley advised Article 26 was a moratorium on the siting of large-scale ground mounted solar arrays. This would be for 180 days to allow the Boards involved to amend the bylaw so that green installations do not have negative impact on the environment.

Mr. Ferreira made a motion, seconded by Mr. Benoit, to approve Article 26. The **vote** was **unanimous for**.

Article 27 was to amend the zoning map by rezoning a parcel of land from Residential A to the Residential Village. Mr. Kelley stated that this will fix what he would call a jog in the zoning map.

After discussion, Mr. McGlynn made a motion, seconded by Mr. Benoit, to approve Article 27. The **vote** was **unanimous for**.

Article 28 is an update of the Stormwater Management Bylaw. This was asked to be put forward by the Stormwater Agent, Conservation, and the Town Planner. They will put an explanation together to present to Town Meeting.

Mr. McGlynn made a motion, seconded by Mr. Chew, to approve Article 28. The **vote** was **unanimous for**.

Article 29 is a citizens petition. It is a change proposed by a certain group of citizens to the Soil Conservation Bylaw.

Mr. Benoit made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ferreira, to take no position on Article 29. The **vote** was **unanimous for**.

Meeting Minutes

Mr. McGlynn made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ferreira, to approve the Minutes from the March 2, 2022, meeting. The **vote** was **unanimous for**.

Mr. McGlynn made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ferreira, to approve the Minutes from the March 9, 2022, meeting. The **vote** was **unanimous for**.

Old Business

Mr. Kelley thanked the Committee. He said it had been a pleasure to work with such a professional group.

New Business

Dr. Boucher said they had started this process back in January. It had been difficult without a Town Administrator in place, but everyone stepped up and it had been a good collaborative effort. Everything came together when Mr. Kelley came on board. He has been a great addition and asset to the Town. Dr. Boucher also thanked the Town Accountant, Ms. Forgue, for all her hard work and effort and wished her well in her next endeavor. He noted the Committee was still down one member and if there was anyone in Town that may have an interest in serving on the Finance Committee to contact the Board of Selectmen.

Next meeting date

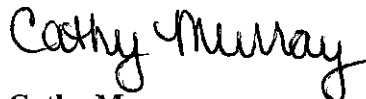
The next meeting date is to be determined.

Adjourn

Mr. McGlynn then made a motion, seconded by Mr. Chew, to adjourn the meeting. The **vote** was **unanimous for**.

8:52– MEETING ADJOURNED.

Respectfully submitted,



Cathy Murray