



FINANCE COMMITTEE

**TOWN HALL BUILDING
8 PARK STREET**

**FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES, 04/10/18, 6:00 p.m.
ADAMS TOWN HALL, 1ST FL. BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING ROOM**

Call to Order: Meeting was called to order by Chairman Burdick at 6:00 p.m. Members Corrigan, Smigel, Parrott, Johnson, Demastrie, Foster, Lefebvre, Tomkowicz and Cowie were present. Also in attendance were Board of Selectmen Member Duval, Town Accountant Beverly, Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent Rumbolt, DPW Foreman Cota, DPW Chief Mechanic Schaffrick, and Council on Aging Director Girgenti.

FY2019 Budget Review: The department budgets were reviewed individually.

Wastewater Treatment Plant - Operating Expenses: It was explained that the increase was due to noncompliance from last year. Record supplies were explained. *Motion made by Member Johnson for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Wastewater Treatment Plant Operating Expenses Budget for approval, second by Member Parrott. Vote: unanimous.*

Wastewater Treatment Plant Capital Expenses: Problems incurred from wipes being flushed were explained and new equipment is expected to reduce the problem. With the "muffin monster" in operation buckets of wipes are removed every day from the pipes. Equipment that is expected to break in the near future was estimated to be approximately \$80,000 in expenses. A request was made for the Finance Committee to receive a plan for updating equipment going forward since the last update was 2005 and it has taken five years to come up to compliance. *Motion made by Member Lefebvre for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Wastewater Treatment Plant Capital Expenses budget for approval, second by Member Tomkowicz. Vote: unanimous.*

Council on Aging – Personal Services: The total budget was outlined. A large increase over last year was noted as being for a Part Time Coordinator to assist with the proposed move to the Memorial School Building and to create Senior Center programming. Facility use requests were explained and a Program Coordinator would be able to accommodate questions or building needs. An inquiry was made about plans for the Visitors Center. It was noted that there is interest in the office spaces upstairs and with the Municipal Modernization Act the Town can set up revolving funds to become a revenue neutral site. The Council on Aging participates in as many grants as possible. An acquired car from Fallon Health Care worth \$30,000 was noted and an additional gift of \$3,000 was received to defray future costs on inspections, and repairs, tires. \$98,000 on salaries was explained and the Council on Aging has switched to Part Time Van Drivers and Per Diem staff. *Motion made by Member Tomkowicz for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Council on Aging Personal Services budget for approval, second by Member Cowie. Vote: unanimous.*

Council on Aging - Operating Expenses: An inquiry was made about the heat and it was noted that the stairwell is hot, while it is cool in other areas of the building. Heating and cooling technicians have not had to come in for repairs but it will be an issue in the future. *Motion made by Member Demastrie for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Council on Aging Operating Expenses budget for approval, second by Member Lefebvre. Vote: unanimous.*

Adams Visitors Center - Operating Expenses: Repair and maintenance of the building was discussed and it was outlined that the budget was for the elevator fund, rugs and cleaning services and miscellaneous maintenance. A request was made to increase funds for trash removal. Custodial services were discussed and a formerly contracted service was discontinued by the last Town Administrator. The need on weekends and during events for additional custodial support was noted but due to budget cuts had been eliminated. The reduced funds have been offset by grants. Due to the eliminated contract it was intended that the custodian would be able to pick up the extra needs but due to workload constraints has not been able to fill the full need so Director Girgenti and a senior worker vacuum and takes care of the trash. *Motion made by Member Demastrie for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Adams Visitors Center Operating Expenses budget for approval, second by Member Lefebvre. Vote: unanimous.*

Department of Public Works Administration: An inquiry was made about the increase in health insurance costs. A clarification was made. *Motion made by Member Johnson for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Department of Public Works Administration budget for approval, second by Member Cowie. Vote: unanimous.*

Department of Public Works - Operating Expenses: There were no questions or discussion on this budget line item. *Motion made by Member Lefebvre for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Department of Public Works Operating Expenses budget for approval, second by Member Corrigan. Vote: unanimous.*

Department of Public Works Garage and Equipment Maintenance: It was noted that the original budget of Trash removal was reduced to \$200 by the former Town Administrator so it was put back to where it needed to be. *Motion made by Member Corrigan for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Department of Public Works Garage and Equipment Maintenance budget for approval, second by Member Demastrie. Vote: unanimous.*

Department of Public Works Capital Expenses – An explanation was given that this amount is for a Pickup Truck, a sander and to outfit a single axle dump truck. A request was made for the DPW to create a fleet replacement plan similar to the Police Department to be able to be on a schedule. Plow costs for a single axle pickup and a sander were listed. Committee Members recommended reuse of equipment from discarded vehicles. Stainless steel sanders were noted as lasting longer. An inquiry was made if MIIA Insurance would cover damage for the fleet. It was noted that when a new vehicle is added the cost goes up due to cost of replacement. Committee Members inquired if the Town has shopped around for better insurance rates, and it was pointed out that there are no better insurance rates than MIIA. The Town received \$13,000 in dividends from using MIIA insurance because they give money back when there is an excess. *Motion made by Member Cowie for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Department of Public Works Capital Expenses budget for approval, second by Member Johnson. Vote: unanimous.*

Highways – Personal Services: Clarification was made on staffing and overtime. Pretreatment of roads and Liquid calcium and rock salt use was discussed. Committee Members inquired about adding back staff cut in the past few years. A Skilled Laborer position is in the budget. Staff is drawn from the Wastewater Treatment Plant when available to plow and manage sidewalk snow removal. An increase in Seasonal Workers was explained and it was noted that the DPW Director is the Tree Warden of the Town. *Motion made by Member Johnson for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Department of Public Works Highways Personal Services budget for approval, second by Member Lefebvre. Vote: unanimous.*

Department of Public Works Highways - Operating Expenses: Committee Members asked about manhole repairs and street paving. It was noted that manholes are done every year and over seventy were completed last year. A street paving list has been put together for this year. Resurfacing was completed and now milling and sidewalks must be done. Chapter 90 funds for this purpose were outlined. Board of Selectmen Chair Duval update the Committee that the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is identifying streets and the shape they are in and a list will be coming forward to the Board of Selectmen for approval. It will need to be bid and contracted. A clarification was made that the Excise Tax goes into the General Revenue fund, not Chapter 90. ***Motion made by Member Johnson for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Department of Public Works Highways Operating Expenses budget for approval, second by Member Cowie. Vote: unanimous.***

Snow & Ice Control: It was explained that the Town will likely have to ask for a Reserve Fund transfer before the end of the year for snow and ice removal. An explanation was given that this fund is not increased because once increased the Town may never decrease it by state law. A couple years ago there was extra money that was put into Free Cash but it is impossible to know in advance what will be needed. The yearly cost for the material is an impact and the hope is that the cost does not dramatically increase. ***Motion made by Member Cowie for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Snow & Ice Control budget for approval, second by Member Johnson. Vote: unanimous.***

Flood Control: A request was made for flood chutes to be cleaned out. It was explained that this costs an enormous amount of money because the Corps of Engineers have dumped the responsibility onto the Town. Concern about potential impact from another large storm was expressed. It was noted that in the past there was discussion about setting up a fund to encumber money for flood control cleanout. It was explained that due to the number of responsibilities flood control chutes become a lower priority but Stormwater Management MS4 is forthcoming. Stormwater runoff going into the river is a financial concern. There is a map of all the channels and determination will be made as to ownership prior to clean-out since some homeowners own parts of the chutes. A concern was expressed that an estimate may be over \$200,000. The Town may have to deal with it over next year or two as the structure goes back to 1950's, walls are collapsing and water is going under parking lots. A recommendation was made to put funds in place to help defray the costs or do engineering over a few years. It was pointed out that if \$10,000 was put into an account for flood chutes \$10,000 must be taken from somewhere else and cut. The Board of Selectmen could start looking into putting aside funds on a yearly basis but would like to know the history and total responsibility first. ***Motion made by Member Cowie for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Flood Control budget for approval, second by Member Johnson. Vote: unanimous.***

Transfer Station – Personal Services: Praise of the Transfer Station Attendant was given, and it was noted that that position will receive a \$.50 increase. ***Motion made by Member Johnson for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Transfer Station Personal Services budget for approval, second by Member Cowie; Vote: unanimous.***

Transfer Station - Operating Expenses: It was noted the Town needs to find a future place to transfer waste because one place is being shut down. Northern Berkshire Solid Waste District (NBSWD) is already aware of it and handling it. Costs are not expected to go up significantly this year. The number of Transfer Station permits sold was reviewed and it the fund is paying for a Porta Potty, initial electricity, and the fund is \$12,000 ahead. In the past the Town was losing money and worked with NBSWD closely to create this setup. The assessment for the Northern Berkshire Solid Waste District did not go up, but the former Town Administrator did not put in enough in the budget.

The Town is paying the last amount out of the revolving fund. Solid Waste Advisory Committee Member Bruce Shepley advised costs are being addressed and there is a possibility of readjusting the starter fee of \$25. There is an anticipated bidding process for new contracts for hauling. Brush takes a lot of DPW time and it may be possible to eliminate it and look at composting. Bulk waste collection and other incorporated services were noted as being successful. A possibility of local tree services operating on site to handle brush was noted. An increase in bulk waste collections may be able to eventually provide an ongoing collection. ***Motion made by Member Johnson for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Transfer Station Operating Expenses budget for approval, second by Member Lefebvre. Vote: unanimous.***

Tree Warden: There were no questions or discussion on this budget line item. ***Motion made by Member Cowie for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Tree Warden budget for approval, second by Member Johnson. Vote: unanimous.***

Cemeteries, Parks & Grounds – Operating Expenses: Cemetery Commissioner Bruce Shepley updated that there will be a meeting regarding the garage at Bellevue Cemetery and future discussions with EDM Engineering to discuss three options of repairs or replacement of the building. The options were outlined. Current building usage was explained and it was pointed out that some areas are not used and unsafe to work in. Structural concerns were discussed and an update will be given to the Interim Town Administrator and Department of Public Works. Recent destruction of the back end of Bellevue Cemetery was questioned. \$7,600 expended was for tree care at the Maple street cemetery. The trees were noted as being in poor shape, and some still standing have cables at the top to keep the trees together. Many are old and dying so the expense for care and replacement will continue. ***Motion made by Member Johnson for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Cemeteries, Parks & Grounds Operating Expenses budget for approval, second by Member Cowie. Vote: unanimous.***

Cemeteries, Parks & Grounds – Capital Request: There were no questions or discussion on this budget line item. ***Motion made by Member Johnson for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Cemeteries, Parks & Grounds Capital Request budget for approval, second by Member Cowie. Vote: unanimous.***

Recreation – Capital Expenses: \$15,000 is the annual amount for the summer Parks Program. ***Motion made by Member Johnson for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Recreation Capital Expenses budget for approval, second by Member Cowie. Vote: unanimous.***

Wastewater Collection: There were no questions or discussion on this budget line item. ***Motion made by Member Johnson for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Wastewater Collection budget for approval, second by Member Parrott. Vote: unanimous.***

Public Buildings/Property Maintenance: There were no questions or discussion on this budget line item. ***Motion made by Member Johnson for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Public Buildings/Property Maintenance budget for approval, second by Member Cowie. Vote: unanimous.***

Public Buildings – Personal Services: A suggestion was made to put up solar panels at Town Hall. Currently it is not necessary as the solar field is utilized to pay for Town Hall electricity. Committee Members discussed the \$100,000 that was appropriated for the Town Hall roof. It was explained that engineering was done and plans are going out to bid so the work is expected to happen this year. If there is enough money remaining the clock tower will be repaired. ***Motion made by Member Johnson for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Public Buildings Personal Services Budget for approval, second by Member Cowie. Vote: unanimous.***

Public Buildings – Property Maintenance: A request for a purchase of a Gator™ utility vehicle for maintenance of the Ashuwillticook Trail and Greylock Glen use was briefly discussed. The C.T. Plunkett School renovation was explained and a list is being generated with the School District. It was noted that the Town will be in control of these projects and is working in conjunction with the School District. The roof repair will be determined by engineers for what needs to be done. It was pointed out that the Town is using its resources to help the School District fix the building. *Motion made by Member Johnson for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Public Buildings Property Maintenance budget for approval, second by Member Cowie. Vote: unanimous.*

Town Hall – Operating Expenses: There were no questions or discussion on this budget line item. *Motion made by Member Johnson for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Town Hall Operating Expenses budget for approval, second by Member Parrott. Vote unanimous.*

Adams Memorial – Operating Expenses: A Request for Proposals (RFP) for the building will be initiated and there is a party interested in the building. An inquiry was made about having voting and Town Meeting back at the Memorial School. It was noted that it would be dependent upon the grant, and the Fall elections may be too soon. Moving the location for voting will be a decision made with the Town Clerk's input. Potential reuse of the school was discussed and the intent is for the building to be revenue neutral. Mixed use possibilities were discussed. The back wall of the gym was assessed by structural engineers and deemed structurally sound. *Motion made by Member Demastrie for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Adams Memorial Operating Expense budget for approval, second by Member Cowie. Vote: unanimous.*

East Street Community Center – Operating Expenses: There were no questions or discussion on this budget line item. *Motion made by Member Johnson for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the East Street Community Center Operating Expenses budget for approval, second by Member Cowie. Vote: unanimous.*

Registry of Deeds: There were no questions or discussion on this budget line item. *Motion made by Member Lefebvre for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Registry of Deeds Operating Expenses budget for approval, second by Member Johnson. Vote: unanimous.*

Adjournment: *Motion made by Member Cowie to adjourn the meeting, second by Member Johnson. Vote: unanimous.*

The meeting adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by Deborah J. Dunlap,
Recording Secretary



Timothy Burdick, Chairman