



FINANCE COMMITTEE

TOWN HALL BUILDING
8 PARK STREET

FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES, 04/17/18, 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 Kleiner, Corrigan, Smigel, Parrott, Johnson, Demastrie, Foster, Lefebvre, Tomkowicz and Cowie were present as well Town Accountant Beverly, Interim Town Administrator Cesan, and Board of Selectmen Chair Duval.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: April 3, 2018: *Motion made by Member Johnson to Table the Approval of Minutes for April 3, 2018 for review by Members, second by Member Lefebvre. Vote: unanimous.*

OLD BUSINESS: An explanation was given regarding previous votes needing to be ratified as recommended by Town Counsel. The Town Administrator budget was held for discussion to be voted on separately. The Veterans, Selectmen, Town Counsel, Town Report, Moderator, Finance Committee, Reserve Fund, and Parking Management budgets were not held for discussion. *Motion made by Member Lefebvre for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Veterans, Selectmen, Town Counsel, Town Report, Moderator, Finance Committee, Reserve Fund, and Parking Management budgets for approval, second by Member Johnson. Vote: unanimous.*

Town Administrator – Personal Expenses: The Board of Selectmen reviewed this budget line as requested and voted to have this budget remain the same. It was noted that the amount would allow the Board of Selectmen the flexibility to offer a salary appropriate to the skills and experience of the candidate. The hiring process was briefly outlined and it was pointed out that communities in Berkshire County are paying higher salaries to people with skills to move to the area. Concerns were expressed that candidates may look at the salary in the budget and have expectations. It was suggested that salary steps be put into a contract for receiving a positive review. Population and tax bases between communities were compared. The amount submitted was the ceiling for a salary. The amount for benefits added to the salary was considered. It was noted that the Town needs to have the opportunity to save money when filling positions. The ability of the Town of Adams to compete with other municipalities and the potential savings created with smart decisions made by a Town Administrator were noted as important. Higher skill levels will require higher salaries, but Boards and staff should be advocates for the community as well. A suggestion was made to have the Board of Selectmen come back to the Finance Committee to ask for more money if needed, but a request for more salary funds is note an unforeseen circumstance. It was noted that the position works four days a week for a large salary. The Interim Town Administrator currently works seven days a week. A suggestion was made to look at having a shared administrator with other communities. Having a Town Charter review was discussed. *Motion made by Member Johnson for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Town Administrator Personal Services budget for approval, second by Member Lefebvre. Voted in favor was Member Tomkowicz. Voted in opposition were Members Kleiner, Corrigan, Smigel, Parrott, Johnson, Demastrie, Foster, Lefebvre and Cowie. Motion failed.*

Motion made by Member Lefebvre for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Town Administrator Operating Expenses budget for approval, second by Member Cowie. Vote: unanimous.

Motion made by Member Lefebvre for the Finance committee to RECOMMEND the Town Administrator Capital Expenditure budget for approval, second by Member Johnson. Vote: unanimous.

NEW BUSINESS

FY2019 Budget Review

Building Inspector - Personal Services: The revenue generated by the Building Department was reviewed. It was noted that fifty percent of the responsibilities are permit related and the other fifty percent are zoning, which have no fees. The list of fees was mentioned. *Motion made by Member Johnson for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Building Inspector Personal Services budget for approval, second by Member Lefebvre. Vote: unanimous.*

Building Inspector - Operating Expenses: Members inquired about line item reductions, and it was explained that funds were shifted from one line to another where they were more appropriately placed, showing no change in overall amount. *Motion made by Member Johnson for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Building Inspector Operating Expenses budget for approval, second by Member Cowie. Vote: unanimous.*

Plumbing and Gas Inspector – 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 Plumbing and Gas Inspector Operating Expenses budget for approval, second by Member Lefebvre. Vote: unanimous.*

Electrical Inspector – 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 Electrical Inspector Operating Expenses budget for approval, second by Member Lefebvre. Vote: unanimous.*

Conservation Commission – Operating Expenses: Conservation Commission engineering applicant fees are split and deposited into a designated account. *Motion made by Member Johnson for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Conservation Commission Operating Expenses budget for approval, second by Member Lefebvre. Vote: unanimous.*

Planning Board – 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 Planning Board Operating Expenses budget for approval, second by Member Cowie. Vote: unanimous.*

Zoning Board – 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 Zoning Board Operating Expenses budget for approval, second by Member Cowie. Vote: unanimous.*

Weights & Measures – Operating Expenses: The funds are used to test the scales. The amount has stayed a flat fee for the past several years with no problems. *Motion made by Member Johnson for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Weights & Measures Operating Expenses budget for approval, second by Member Cowie. Vote: unanimous.*

Historical Commission – Operating Expenses: Members inquired of the Historical Commission have regular meetings with minutes filed with the Town Clerk.

Motion made by Member Lefebvre for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Historical Commission Operating Expenses Budget for approval, second by Member Cowie. Vote: unanimous.

Agricultural Commission – 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 Agricultural Commission Operating Expenses budget for approval, second by Member Lefebvre. Vote: unanimous.*

Board of Health - Operating Expenses: Some funds are used to remove garbage that is attracting vermin. The state requires reporting of infectious diseases so the VNA is contracted to do the reporting for the Town. The state pays directly for mosquito control and the Board of Health inspects for other types of pests. *Motion made by Member Johnson for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Board of Health Operating Expenses budget for approval, second by Member Lefebvre. Vote: unanimous.*

Library - Personal Services: An inquiry was made about the health insurance expended to date. It was noted that one person retired and a full time position was replaced by a part time person. The Library is requesting to fill it with a full time position. It was noted that the Library is doing well and finding ways to meet needs of community. The hours have been maintained with the smaller staff and patron levels were stable. A waiver for State Aid was explained, and the money is used by the Library for things not in the budget. Adult programs are paid for by state aid. The qualifications and process for receiving State Aid were reviewed. *Motion made by Member Lefebvre for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Library Personal Services budget for approval, second by Member Johnson. Vote: unanimous.*

Library – Operating Expenses: Building maintenance, inspections and annual elevator expenses were explained. Funds for unforeseeable expenses were discussed. Library maintenance oversight was clarified. It was noted that there is no budget line for building maintenance and issues have been brought to the Town Administrator and Accountant. The heating oil line was explained as leftover money to provide repairs to the building or the elevator. Committee Members explained it would be best to put it in the budget if needed rather than have it as a cushion. The invested money was noted as being earmarked for books, and only the interest may be used, not the principal. *Motion made by Member Johnson for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Library Operating Expenses for approval, second by Member Cowie. Vote: unanimous.*

Police - Personal Services: Workman's compensation was noted as going up 213% and departments have different classifications of workers. The overtime budget was reviewed. A comparison was made with the change in dispatch services and it was noted the arrangement was to save money. It was explained that overtime is part of the cost of running the department and has managed to stay within the operating budget. The regionalization of dispatch services, the promise for reserve officer positions and salaries, and dissolution of Civil Service by the former Town Administrator were explained. Only one reserve officer position was received, and staff is required to shuffle around shifts. Overtime is always a factor due to training and vacation time. Staffing of the Police Station with a Sergeant at the desk was outlined. Answering 911 calls was the only service lost. Budget management for overtime and the Temporary budget line were explained. An inquiry was made regarding budgeting for hazardous materials or situations.

The officers carry NARCAN®, an opiate overdose kit for citizens and officer safety for exposure. Training requirements were briefly outlined. *Motion made by Member Johnson for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Police Personal Services budget for approval, second by Member Corrigan. Vote: unanimous.*

Police – Operating Expenses: Communications have improved considerably due to new equipment. Future communication tower options will include Florida Mountain and will improve all Northern Berkshire communications. It was explained that communications will always have geographical dead spots. *Motion made by Member Johnson for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Police Operating Expenses budget for approval, second by Member Lefebvre. Vote: unanimous.*

Police - Capital Expenses: Fleet replacement was discussed and there was an agreement return to the rotation schedule. A 2012 Ford Explorer will be replaced this year. It was explained that all vehicles are outfitted uniformly for compatibility purposes. In the past low mileage was the reason for a vehicle not to be replaced. It was explained that mileage is not the only factor, and higher mileage vehicles may be used as an Animal Control or unmarked vehicle for training purposes. In the past some vehicles out of active service were given to the Wastewater Treatment Plant. The only vehicles out of active service currently are the Chief's vehicle and the Animal Control Officer (ACO) vehicle. The Lieutenant position was explained. The ACO agreement, hours and responsibilities were discussed at length. Concern was expressed about the ACO being paid to work in Adams while doing personal tasks out of town. Possible department retirements were discussed and coverage for the summer months was noted as being complicated. Officers were praised for being flexible to cover shifts last year. The staffing is now at half the personnel of the 1980's but officers are still answering a large call volume and providing the same level of service with half the staffing. *Motion made by Member Johnson for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Police Capital Expenses budget for approval, second by Member Cowie. Vote: unanimous.*

Police Station - Operating Expenses: An inquiry was made about regular ongoing maintenance. The 12-year water heater tank is 22 years old. The leaky roof was noted as approaching the life expectancy and will need to be replaced. It was explained that the former Town Administrator had engineering funds to address this. The incorrect installation of the roof was explained and the warranty has expired. A request was made for the Capital Improvement Committee to meet to create a plan for all departments. The former Town Administrator had given his Capital Improvement list to the Finance Committee last year for the next five years, and it was questioned whether it was being followed. A brief overview was given to the Committee Members about what Capital Plan does and the requirements of strategizing the needs, putting together materials for cost estimates, and going through ranking and funding to address it all. The Town Hall roof and C.T. Plunkett School projects from the former list were outlined. An inquiry was made whether the Town is managing one or two projects per year rather than letting them accumulate. A detailed plan will be assessed and created to work with the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee to prioritize projects with all other needs and to create a strategy for what gets funded for each of the Town's buildings. *Motion made by Member Johnson for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Police Station Operating Expenses budget for approval, second by Member Cowie. Vote: unanimous.*

Animal Control Officer - Personal Services: Concern was expressed that the Animal Control Officer being paid should be working here in Town during working hours for liability reasons. The job description of the Animal Control Officer was discussed and having shared services for this position were recommended. Members suggested a letter be sent to the Animal Control Officer to advise it has been noticed her business is being run on Town time. It was argued that being on call is not costing the Town additional funds, the Animal Control Officer is doing the job and flexibility is an important aspect to the job. The position does not have benefits and if a call comes in after hours, time off to compensate is given on another day. Training is also required. *Motion made by Member Johnson for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Animal Control Officer Personal Services budget for approval, second by Member Tomkowicz. Voted in opposition was Member Lefebvre. Voted in favor were Members Kleiner, Corrigan, Smigel, Parrott, Johnson, Demastrie, Foster, Tomkowicz and Cowie. Motion carried.*

Animal Control Officer - Operating Expenses: Veterinary expenses for in-house animals that need care or rabies testing were inquired about. Wild animals are handled by officers licensed by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The online links were given to Members and it was noted that the Animal Control Officer may be able to get the information through her resources. *Motion made by Member Johnson for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Animal Control Officer Operating Expenses budget for approval, second by Member Cowie. Vote: unanimous.*

Community Development - Personal Services: The Economic Development fund and Adams Suffrage Centennial Celebration Committee were clarified for Committee Members. The new position with benefits anticipated for Community Development would be a large portion of the fund. Marketing and engineering were discussed, and the need for an entry level Planner position was explained. It was noted that there is no staff with a background in land use management to advise the Planning and Zoning Boards, and the Conservation Commission. Community Development used to have three staff members funded by the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). The grant funds capital projects of high expense. The Visitors Center Parking Lot Improvement Project is forthcoming. Façade and signage improvement funding was discussed. A Business Recruitment and Retainage Program has not begun because there isn't enough staff. The facilitation and support the Community Development Department could provide for commercial and industrial properties were explained. It was noted that there isn't a sufficient Economic Development Program in place currently but Greylock Glen improvements will realize tax benefits. Further explanation was given that the Community Development office has been working on state, community, federal grants, and economic development with only two people in the office. It was pointed out that the Town needs a planner to create growth because two people are not enough to create growth to keep the tax rate down. *Motion made by Member Johnson for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Community Development Personal Expenses budget for approval, second by Member Lefebvre. Voted in opposition was Member Cowie. Voted in favor were Members Kleiner, Corrigan, Smigel, Parrott, Johnson, Demastrie, Foster, Lefebvre, and Tomkowicz. Motion carried.*

Community Development - Operating Expenses: The Greylock Glen project status was explained and potential interest by different parties was listed. The building will have a café and a letter of intent was discussed. The Department is working to make Adams a destination for visitors outside the community. The amphitheater was outlined as part of the plan. All environmental approval steps been completed. A site plan approval from the Planning Board and getting a local building permit are needed. There are no invasive plant species of concern.

Motion made by Member Johnson for the Finance Committee to RECOMMEND the Community Development Operating Expenses budget for approval, second by Member Cowie. Vote: unanimous.

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by Deborah J. Dunlap,
Recording Secretary

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Timothy Burdick", is written over a horizontal line.

Timothy Burdick, Chairman