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Town of Adams Massachusetts 01220-2087

FINANCE COMMITTEE

TOWN CLERK
ADAMS MASS.

TOWN HALL BUILDING
8 PARK STREET

CLERK

**FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES, 04/16/19, 6:30 p.m.
ADAMS TOWN HALL, 1ST FLOOR BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING ROOM**

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Chairman Burdick at 6:30 p.m. Members Corrigan, Kleiner, Parrott, Demastrie, Foster, Tomkowicz, Cowie, Lesure and Cushenette were present as well as Town Administrator Green, Board of Selectmen Chair Duval, Council on Aging Director Girgenti, and DPW Operations Supervisor Cota.

NEW BUSINESS

FY2020 Budget Review

Council on Aging: Personal Services, \$217,758. *Council on Aging Director Girgenti* advised that last year the position of Program Coordinator was approved but not filled, and this year it was taken back out of the budget. She advised there is a state formula grant that pays for some of the health insurance and other expenses. All positions are filled except one, which hopefully will be able to be advertised. It was explained that currently there are chair yoga classes being held at the Adams Memorial School building, issues with the building will be addressed through updates. It was noted that the Town has the funding to put in the heating system in the front foyer and gym, during the summer and fall. Originally the Council on Aging was proposed to move there once the updates are made but this will not happen until the next calendar year. It was explained that there have been so many requests to use the gymnasium that groups have had to be turned away. The Board of Selectmen is responsible to coordinate usage of the building for now. Brief discussion took place regarding the plan for the Adams Memorial School updates and use. The Fallon Car is working well, and there are seventeen volunteers driving over thirty-five people to specialists and medical facilities. There have been some donations for the use, but it costs about \$100 per trip for mileage reimbursement. The use of the vehicle is now open to Cheshire residents through an inter-municipal agreement, and it has been funded through grants. Partnership with the Youth Center for building use was briefly explained, and problems with the Youth Center building were touched on. ***Motion made by Member Tomkowicz to RECOMMEND the Council on Aging Personal Services budget in the amount of \$217,758 for approval, second by Member Demastrie. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.***

Operating Expenses: \$15,560 *Council on Aging Director Girgenti* explained that one van needs repairs. ***Motion made by Member Tomkowicz to RECOMMEND the Council on Aging Operating Expenses budget in the amount of \$15,560 for approval, second by Vice Chairman Cowie. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.***

Adams Visitors Center: Operating Expenses, \$15,850. *Council on Aging Director Girgenti* explained that trash expenses have significantly increased due to the many events held at the Visitors Center. The schedule and frequency of trash removal was reviewed ***Motion made by Vice Chairman Cowie to RECOMMEND the Adams Visitors Center Operating Expenses budget for approval, second by Member Demastrie. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.***

Wastewater Treatment: Operating Expenses, \$332,371. It was noted that the budget line for toiletries showed a large increase. It was explained that the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) has a lawn mower and two vehicles. It was explained that the John Deere Mower and Crown Victoria vehicle were both in poor condition. Batteries were noted as being for standby generators and backup equipment. A request was made to find out what year the sludge removal contract is at. Composting had been discussed but it was found to be cheaper to remove it. It was explained that a request was made for a new vehicle at \$35,000 and it is not in the budget. The vehicle is used to check pump stations and sporadically to get parts and plow in the winter. Discussion has taken place with DPW Operations Supervisor Cota and a vehicle may be able to transfer from the Highway Department to WWTP for use. If the vehicle cannot make it a long distance the DPW will lend one of the newer vehicles to go the long distance. It was noted that engineering costs went up due to Mass DEP regulations needing a specialized review, and the cost of chemicals and water treatment are where there are increases. VFDs were explained and some are being replaced. It was pointed out that the pipes were installed in 1971 when the plant was built, but otherwise the repairs are for normal wear and tear. *Finance Committee Members* noted that the former Town Administrator had significantly drained the Reserve Account to fix the WWTP and the Committee was told that Superintendent Rumbolt would come up with a plan for capital improvements. This list of items was explained as being for this year's budget and a more comprehensive list will be forthcoming. The quantity of wipes in the pipes has decreased to some degree and an outreach program for the neighborhoods was accomplished. It was pointed out that it is a manual process to physically remove the items from the machinery and dispose of them. The equipment has not been damaged because staff is taking care of it, but wipes are not the only items that get caught there. ***Motion made by Vice Chairman Cowie to RECOMMEND the Wastewater Treatment Plant Operations Expenses budget in the amount of \$332,371 for approval, second by Member Corrigan. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.***

Wastewater Treatment Plant Capital Requests: \$40,500. The requests were to rebuild the electrical equipment station, for a replacement of the last of the outdated VFDs, for a replacement pump and to replace rotted drainage pipes at the station. ***Motion made by Vice Chairman Cowie to RECOMMEND the Capital Request for the Wastewater Treatment Plant in the amount of \$40,500 for approval, second by Member Corrigan. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.***

Wastewater Collection: \$4,700. It was explained that this budget line is for all manholes and concrete items that the DPW does, and piping. ***Motion made by Vice Chairman Cowie to RECOMMEND the Wastewater Collection budget line in the amount of \$4,700 for approval, second by Member Tomkowicz. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.***

Department of Public Works

Tree Warden: Operating Expenses, \$16,000. An inquiry was made and it was clarified that the Town has been using Roundup week killer which is liquid based and targeted. The Town has a person license to apply the chemicals, and it is used mostly around fencing, ball fields, bike path and potentially by the flood control depending on Mass DEP recommendations. Vegetation removal at the flood chutes was briefly discussed and it was noted as complicated and time consuming. Spraying alerts that Pittsfield announce were explained as being for mosquitoes, which are required because the product is aerosol based. Damage caused by brush growing in the flood control area was discussed. ***Motion made by Vice Chairman Cowie to RECOMMEND the Tree Warden Operating Expenses budget of \$16,000 for approval, second by Member Demastrie. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.***

DPW Administration:

Personal Services: \$112,708. It was explained that the Town is budgeting a half year for the DPW Director and until then Town Administrator Green, Community Development Director Cesan and DPW Operations Supervisor Cota are all working together to cover the position. ***Motion made by Vice Chairman Cowie to RECOMMEND the DPW Administration Personal Services budget in the amount of \$112,708 for approval, second by Member Tomkowicz. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.***

Operating Expenses: \$3,200. The mail budget is for easement notices for Public Works projects and similar items. ***Motion made by Vice Chairman Cowie to RECOMMEND the DPW Administration Operating Expenses budget of \$3,200 for approval, second by Member Corrigan. Vote: unanimous.***

Highways:

Personal Services: \$1,389,629. It was explained that this budget includes staffing at the Wastewater Treatment Plant, Parks, Grounds, Cemeteries, and Seasonal Laborers. There are eleven CDL drivers and one person just has to take the physical driving test. ***Motion made by Member Tomkowicz to RECOMMEND the Highways Personal Services budget in the amount of \$1,389,629 for approval, second by Vice Chairman Cowie. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.***

Operating Expenses: \$76,450. Discussion took place about the status of Howland Avenue. The phases of the paving of Route 8 were reviewed and it was noted that the Town is working with Mass Highway District 1 to see what can be done with Howland Avenue. The tremendous amount of traffic traveling Route 8 was noted and requires the DPW to keep patching the potholes and exposed cobbles under the area by the Post Office. The road was reportedly paved around 1999, has served its lifetime and is now delaminating. *Finance Committee Members* inquired about road maintenance and snow removal swapping with MassDOT between Howland Avenue and Orchard Street, and clarification was requested. The DPW patched Howland Avenue with 142 ton of blacktop this winter to fix potholes. It was noted that it is exactly one mile from the tracks from Specialty Minerals to Bounti-Fare. When the agreement was made there were approximately thirty staff on the DPW to maintain it, and there are twelve staff now. The phases of the Route 8 Paving Improvement Project on Commercial Street were reviewed. It was noted that municipalities have to do the engineering to get on the regional list for projects to move forward. Adams is in competition with other communities for \$4 Million. \$300,000 to \$400,000 will be spent on engineering by the time the Commercial Street project is done. The full project will be approximately \$7.9 Million and will include full depth reconstruction of pavement, drainage, sidewalks and landscaping. Route 8 will be done in segments. Once Commercial Street is done the Town will shift focus on Route 8 North, which will be a very expensive project and go 60 mph with wider roadway. ***Motion made by Vice Chairman Cowie to RECOMMEND the Highways Operating Expenses budget in the amount of \$76,450 for approval, second by Member Tomkowicz. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.***

Snow & Ice Control: \$246,000. It was clarified that the majority of this budget is for salt. The salt contract through Northern Berkshire Group Purchasing was briefly explained, and salt is \$72 per ton. The salt shed roof was fixed from wind damage. Some building repairs were done a couple years ago as the wood portion of the structure is rotted and decaying. ***Motion made by Vice Chairman Cowie to RECOMMEND the Snow and Ice Control budget in the amount of \$246,000 for approval, second by Member Tomkowicz. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.***

Flood Control: \$600. There were no questions regarding this budget. *Motion made by Member Tomkowicz to RECOMMEND the Flood Control budget in the amount of \$600 for approval, second by Member Corrigan. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.*

DPW Garage/Equipment Maintenance:

Operating Expenses: \$185,500. The Vactor Truck repair is for the 2006 truck to get the rear end rebuilt. The DPW is still utilizing it to maintain sewers but cannot use the vacuum part. *Town Administrator Green* expressed that he is impressed with the condition of the fleet and the DPW Garage, as well as what is accomplished with a very small crew. He pointed out that some very smart decisions have been made and the DPW are excellent stewards of the public dollar. An inquiry was made about the use of pickups as sanders, and it was explained that this is an incredibly hilly community, and the sander body is stainless steel which is lighter, creating a more nimble way to do a better job with fewer passes. *Member Corrigan* expressed his opinion that the Town doesn't need as many trucks as it has, and that it could do without another. It was explained that another truck is going offline and the Town will be down to five trucks after that, and be down by two at that point. It was explained that the vehicles are used for blacktop and gravel hauling, and snow removal as well. If the vehicles are not there the Town will have to acquire rentals. Light, medium and heavy use of vehicles was explained in detail. Committee Members inquired whether to look at replacing vehicles at a certain mileage, which is essentially already done but the vehicles are repurposed as much as possible before disposing of them. The Finance Committee Members were given the opportunity to visit the garage to ask questions. *Motion made by Vice Chairman Cowie to RECOMMEND the DPW Garage/Equipment Maintenance Operating Expenses budget in the amount of \$185,500 for approval, second by Member Tomkowicz. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.*

Capital Expenses: \$109,000. There were no questions regarding this budget line. *Motion made by Vice Chairman Cowie to RECOMMEND the DPW Garage/Equipment Maintenance Capital Expenses budget in the amount of \$109,000 for approval, second by Member Tomkowicz. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.*

Transfer Station:

Personal Services \$11,244. An inquiry was made regarding how much money the transfer station has generated over the last year, and the data will be forwarded to the Finance Committee. The Town will be assessing permit fees. *Motion made by Member Tomkowicz to RECOMMEND the Transfer Station Personal Services budget in the amount of \$11,244 for approval, second by Vice Chairman Cowie. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.*

Operating Expenses: \$59,455. Design of the Transfer Station was briefly reviewed. Leasing equipment expenses were clarified as the trash compactor. The bin is from allied waste. *Motion made by Vice Chairman Cowie to RECOMMEND the Transfer Station Operating Expenses budget in the amount of \$59,544 for approval, second by Member Tomkowicz. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.*

Cemeteries, Parks & Grounds:

Operating Expenses: \$43,675. There were no questions regarding this budget line. *Motion made by Vice Chairman Cowie to RECOMMEND the Cemeteries, Parks & Grounds Operating Expenses budget in the amount of \$43,675 for approval, second by Member Tomkowicz. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.*

Capital Expenses: \$98,850 This request was explained as being for a grave defroster, new United States Flags for Park Street, a replacement lawn mower, Weed & Feed fertilizer for Renfrew Field and matching funds to obtain a grant to revamp the Town Common to house the Susan B. Anthony statue. The funds would only be used if the grant is received. Work is being done with an engineer to design the space and put estimates together. *Motion made by Member Tomkowicz to RECOMMEND the Capital Expenses budget request for \$98,850 for approval, second by Vice Chairman Cowie. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.*

Recreation: \$15,000. This budget line is to help fund the youth program in the summer at Russell Field and the Youth Center for Adams youths to attend tuition free. *Motion made by Member Tomkowicz to RECOMMEND the Recreation budget line in the amount of \$15,000 for approval, second by Vice Chairman Cowie. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.*

Celebrations – Seasonal: \$1,800. Member Corrigan suggested getting a small bucket truck to put up decorations as it is unsafe for staff putting them up with ladders as cars go around them. He recommended purchasing a truck at a low expense from a business in New York. It was explained that a local community got one from that business and almost immediately had to replace it. Additionally there is a storage issue for any additional equipment. Once a DPW Director is hired they will be requested to research it. It was suggested to lease a truck for the times needed to put up decorations but it was explained that renting would be better than leasing. *Motion made by Member Tomkowicz to RECOMMEND the Celebrations budget line in the amount of \$1,800 for approval, second by Vice Chairman Cowie. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.*

Public Buildings/Property Maintenance:

Registry of Deeds: \$1,050. There were no questions regarding this budget line. *Motion made by Vice Chairman Cowie to RECOMMEND the Public Buildings/Property Maintenance, Registry of Deeds budget line in the amount of \$1,050 for approval, second by Member Tomkowicz. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.*

Town Hall: \$26,675. The Town Hall roof replacement is in progress. *Finance Committee Members* inquired about other capital projects and it was noted that there is a potential grant for the Town Hall boiler for this year, and next project to look at is the Police Station roof. It was explained that projects discussed in the past have not been dropped but the Town is trying to catch up. There may not be one project every year but the Town is moving forward with the Capital Plan. *Motion made by Vice Chairman Cowie to RECOMMEND the Public Buildings/Property Maintenance, Town Hall budget line in the amount of \$26,675 for approval, second by Member Tomkowicz. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.*

Public Buildings and Property Maintenance:

Personal Services, \$57,215. There were no questions regarding this line item. *Motion made by Vice Chairman Cowie to RECOMMEND the Public Buildings and Property Maintenance, Personal Services budget line in the amount of \$57,215 for approval, second by Member Tomkowicz. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.*

Operating Expenses: \$142,800. The electricity portion was explained as being for all town buildings and the solar field by the landfill is online. *Motion made by Vice Chairman Cowie to RECOMMEND the Public Buildings and Property Maintenance, Operating Expenses budget line in the amount of \$142,800 for approval, second by Member Tomkowicz. Vote unanimous. Motion passed.*

Community Center:

Operating Expenses \$400. Lights being left on and exterior pole lights being non-functioning were briefly discussed. *Motion made by Member Tomkowicz to RECOMMEND the Community Center Operating Expenses budget in the amount of \$400 for approval, second by Vice Chairman Cowie. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.*

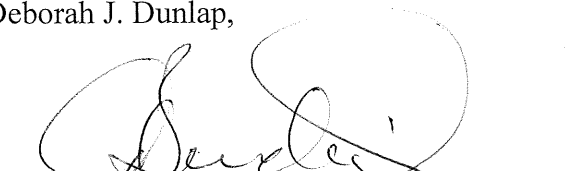
Adams Memorial: Operating Expenses, \$40,300. Finance Committee Members inquired about the boiler in the building. A grant has been awarded and will be updated in the portion the Town anticipates using. A developer will provide their own for the classroom wing. The certificate for the elevator is in order, as is the Certificate of Occupancy. *Motion made by Member Tomkowicz to RECOMMEND the Adams Memorial Operating Expenses budget in the amount of \$40,300 for approval, second by Vice Chairman Cowie. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.*

It was explained that the Senior Planner position is in Economic Development. Concern was expressed about contracted holidays adjusting for additional days off, and a request was made to renegotiate the Clerical Union contract so employees work more than two days on Thanksgiving week. It was explained that not all of the staff is in the Clerical Union. A brief discussion took place about the Prudential Committee adding positions on the Fire Department and the resulting increased cost to water bills. It was noted that there will be a public meeting to discuss this Monday at 6:30 p.m. at the fire station.

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by Deborah J. Dunlap,
Recording Secretary



Timothy Burdick, Chairman