



**Town of Harvard**  
**Finance Committee**  
Minutes for January 22, 2020

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**Location:** Upper Town Hall Meeting Room - 13 Ayer Rd

**Present:** Don Ludwig (chair), John Seeley, Mark Buell, Jennifer Finch

**Absent:** Richard Fellows, Ray Marchica, Siko Sikochi

**Others:** Tim Bragan - Town Administrator

Don Ludwig (chair) called the meeting to order at 7pm

**Minutes for approval:**

Minutes of Dec 18, 2019 - approved as amended (4:0) on a motion from Mark/John.

Minutes of Jan 4, 2020 pending - Jennifer to follow up.

Minutes of Jan 8, 2020 pending as well.

Minutes of Jan 15, 2020 - approved as amended (4:0) on a motion from Mark/John.

**Public Commentary:** None

**Town Administrator's report:** Tim Bragan reports:

- Document 1: The first cherry sheet estimates came out today, this shows about \$10k more in revenue and and \$11k in lower expenses.
- Document 2: Benefits eligible staff counts
  - 217 Benefits eligible staff, 111 in Mass Teachers Retirement System (MTRS,) 54 in Worcester Regional Retirement System (WRRS,) 7 in MTRS at less than 1040 hours a year but more than 20 hours a week.
  - WRRS - our estimate was \$963k, currently projected at \$1M - will know final numbers soon.
  - There is a 4-7% increase in premium over \$3,396,413.
  - We have not heard yet from the American Federation of County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) regarding the DPW contract.
- Document 3: School budget questions and answers.
  - Don will ask again for an excel copy with formulas.
- Document 4: Job posting for School Part-time School Business Manager
- Document 5: Job description for School Business Coordinator.
- We may have found a candidate for Facilities Manager.

**Liaison Reports:** None

**Other business:**

The Department of Public Works (DPW) and the Parks and Recreation Commission (P&R) were invited to discuss their budgets.

Tim Kilhart of DPW reports:

- The Select Board (SB) has not decided yet on giving trash bags to seniors yet. This will impact their budget by ~\$5k.
- The first 6 months of SMART/PAYT is on target for revenue and cost projections, currently showing a profit with the grant reimbursement, the grant is only for 2 years. Tim K to send a copy of his report to the committee.
  - 1339 dump stickers sold this year, 1 less than last year.
  - There has been about a 260 ton decrease in trash, which is about 45%.
  - 10 ton decrease in glass but glass is cheaper to make than to recycle.
  - Co-mingled recycling is about the same.
  - Paper was not weighed before, but is now (see below)
  - St. Benedicts left as a customer, they were the biggest user, besides the town, with at least 2 truck loads a week.
  - The next 18 months of the program is hard to predict.
- Curbside is still an option eventually, but we are locked in for the full 2 years, then we can reevaluate. The Select Board and Board of Health will have to weigh in. Municipal trash would still need to be hauled.
- We are now paying for paper recycling, it was free and now it is \$60/ton. Through the end of this FY this will be an estimated \$12k in unanticipated expenses. We are at the mercy of the market rates.
  - We will need to add about \$23,000 to DPW budget for next year for paper recycling.
- We receive roughly \$70/ton for scrap metal, which is up. We had about 178,000lbs last year.
- We are in the 2nd year of a 3 year contract for hauling at a fixed price, prices will go up after the contract ends.
  - May need to examine sticker pricing.
- Some of the dumpsters we have are over 20 years old and will need eventual replacement.

This year the DPW did work with P&R, including lining all fields several times, and liming fields. In the spring they would like to rent a spreader again and apply fertilizer. Next fall would be the time to overseed and aerate. The new tractor requested has aerator and seeding unit.

Waite field's broken irrigation controller was examined, animals had made it a home. After those repairs were completed, the power to the unit was examined and found to be broken somewhere. It is

not in conduit, and as such it will be more expensive to run a new line. Tim K will get a quote from an electrician.

Doug Thornton was present for P&R as chair.

- Tim Bragan asks if the new \$15k budget line item requested should go to P&R or DPW, as happened at the last Special Town Meeting (STM). While Doug seemed to have no preference, it would create more work for Tim Kilhart and his preference was to keep that money in the P&R budget. They both agreed to continue to work together.
- Doug stated that P&R is hoping to collect user fees for field usage, as well as increasing swim lesson prices and maybe kayak rack costs. The boat kiosk could also potentially be a revenue source.
- The new CivicRec software purchased last year is in use for the Ski program currently, Bob O'shea is heading the CivicRec project.
- The 10% increase asked for beach expenses is to cover beach house maintenance and repairs, as well as to cover increasing costs.

The committee discussed setting a Debt Policy for the town. It would help us retain our AAA rating from S&P.

- Don or John to ask Siko or Ray to find our management score and what we need to do to be at "very strong"
- After some edits, including adding a goal of being below 10% debt by FY30, John will send out updated wording.

Don asks that we keep a list of over level-budget items we need to discuss and rate. He will send out a sheet of our cumulative adds.

Rating sheet seems fine, but we may need to tweak it over time.

**Future agenda items:**

- Meeting with School dept on Jan 29th.
- Meeting with the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) on Feb 5th.

**Adjournment:**

Meeting adjourned at 8:42pm

**Supporting documents (5 Total):**

1. Cherry sheet estimate dated 1/22/2020
2. Benefits eligible staff counts
3. School budget questions and answers.
4. Job posting for School Part-time School Business Manager
5. Job description for School Business Coordinator.

**Upcoming meetings:**

Jan 29, 2020 7pm Upper Town Hall Meeting Room

Feb 5, 2020 7pm Upper Town Hall Meeting Room

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Finch