

Town of Harvard
Finance Committee
Minutes for January 26, 2022

The Finance Committee Regular Meeting was held virtually in accordance with the Governor's Executive Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L.c.30A. S.20.

Present: Jennifer Finch(chair), Michael Derse, Ethan Pride, Eric Ward , Carolyn Luescher, Richard Fellows

Not Present: Don Ludwig, Charles Oliver

Others: Tim Bragan (Town Administrator), Marie Sobalvarro (Assistant Town Administrator), John Osborn (Harvard Press), Joan Eliyesil (Harvard Press) , James Babu (Police Department), Will Stevenson (, Chief Sicard (Fire Department), Jason Cotting (Ambulance), Jared Mullane (Finance Director)

Public Commentary: None

Motion: Approved a request for reserve fund transfer for a playground slide.

1. Chief Sicard answered questions regarding the need for a new role for a full-time fire fighter
 - a. Currently there is a shared position between Fire fighter and EMT.
 - b. Word load has increased 13% increase in fire permits and 25% increase in inspections. Some inspections are not being done, for example dumpster permits.
 - c. Would like the fire fighter role to be full time.
2. Jason Cotting reported on the need for a full-time person for Ambulance
 - a. Current fire fighter/EMT Lt Perry training officer, operations supervisor, designated sections patrol officer, supply and equipment officer, and responds to calls.
 - b. When possible 3 volunteers staff daytime calls for Ambulance.
 - c. Occasionally a call cannot be staffed and must be attended to by a neighboring town.
3. Two full time positions to respond to both fire fighter and EMT emergencies.
 - a. 23% increase in emergency call volume for both fire and ambulance.
 - b. Neither role is entry level.
 - c. One role should also be capable of project management to ensure necessary licenses and certifications are maintained for Harvard Fire and Ambulance Service.
4. Introduced to Chief Babu.
 - a. He shared with us that the new cruiser has been built and painted.
 - b. The next step before delivery is to outfit the new cruiser with electronics.
 - c. The Harvard Police Department is fully staffed.
5. Benefits budget reviewed by Marie Sobalvarro
 - a. Projected to be \$1.241 million for fiscal 2023
 - b. Switching to Blue Cross Blue Shield from Fallon.
6. Communication center – regional dispatch are shared costs with several local communities.
7. Technology
 - a. Two grants –
 - i. Mass Community - Server upgrade
 - ii. Mass Cyber security training
 - iii. Classes for end users - \$107 per course at New Horizons
 - b. Water department billing software could be consolidated with other software
 - i. Only 100 to 200 users
 - ii. Value of consolidation would not be worth the cost of the other software
 - c. Land Use Board has a need for Adobe DC and Dropbox
8. Finance
 - a. Munis “cross walking” all the old accounts into a new account
 - b. From 3 to 8 segments
 - i. Expanding all the characters within the segments
 - ii. Can now use a fiscal year to manage grants.
 - c. Running reports will reduce labor costs for Jared, the school department finance Ingrid, and schedule A reports.
9. Needs another 2 employees assistant town clerk with 15% receptionist duties and a full time accounting position.
 - a. Backlog of vender data entry 14,000 in the software that need to be reviewed to comply with state, local, and federal requirements back to 1999.
 - b. Reconciliation needs to be done more frequently.
 - c. Mike Derse suggested an internship to help with the backlog.

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10. Jared two reserve fund transfer requests for reclaiming funds from uncashed checks and for software
 - a. Reviewed the process of reclaiming funds from uncashed checks which could potentially be \$28,000 in revenue returned to the Town of Harvard.
 - b. Transfer request - needs money for advertising in the newspaper the uncashed checks. \$480 and then \$300
 - c. Second transfer request of \$389 DepreciationWorks or software that calculates fixed assets and calculates depreciation.
 - d. Will vote on the transfer requests next meeting on 2/2/22.
11. Parks and Recreation had a reserve fund transfer request of \$10,419.16 for slide was approved unanimously.
12. Tim Bragan reviewed the historical data on State Aid. The State funding for education to the town of Harvard has dramatically decreased over the last 10 years.
13. Tim Bragan reviewed the Cherry Sheet

Upcoming meetings: Feb 2, 2022 - 7pm - Zoom link will be available on the agenda when posted.

Respectfully submitted,
Carolynn Luescher