



Town of Harvard
Finance Committee
Minutes for February 26, 2020

Location: Upper Town Hall Meeting Room - 13 Ayer Rd

Present: Don Ludwig (chair), John Seeley, Mark Buell, Richard Fellows, Jennifer Finch, Ray Marchica

Absent: Siko Sikochi

Others: Tim Bragan - Town Administrator, Marie Sobalvarro - Assistant Town Administrator/HR Director

Don Ludwig (chair) called the meeting to order at 7:00pm

Minutes for approval:

Minutes of Jan 29, 2020 approved as amended. Others not presented.

Public Commentary: SusanMary Rediginer - Ayer Road. The School Committee is proposing using more of Devens fund to offset the school budget. Final numbers have not been decided but one suggestion is funding any budget increase over 2.5% with Devens until the Devens balance reaches \$450k for reserves. \$274k brings the school budget down to under 2.5% increase.

General business and Town Administrator's report:

Document 1: Email from Board of Health (BoH) dated Feb 26, 2020 stating that they are withdrawing their funding request for the Enforcement, Education and Outreach officer. Increasing hauling fees was deemed not feasible.

Document 2: Email from Superintendent Linda Dwight dated Feb 26, 2020 including a list of cuts proposed and additional funding sources coming from Devens.

Document 3: Identified Above Level Service items, need to remember to remove \$1875. Tim to update.

VOTE: On a motion from Don and seconded by John, the committee voted 6:0:0 to approve this document as amended and send it to the Select Board.

Document 4: Actual Local Receipts - History dated Feb 18, 2020, with above \$1875 to be removed.

VOTE: On a motion by Mark and seconded by Dick, the committee voted 6:0:0 to accept the Total Local Receipts budgeted for FY21 of \$1,704,709.

Document 5: General Fund - 5 year Budgeted Revenue/Expense Projection dated Feb 21, 2020.

VOTE: On a motion by Jennifer and seconded by Don, the committee voted 6:0 to accept the estimated Budgeted State Cherry Sheet Revenue estimate of \$3,900,000.

Document 6: General Fund by Category dated Feb 21, 2020. 2018-2021.

Document 7: Mass TaxPayers Foundation (MTF) article “First Look: Tough Choices Ahead in Fiscal 2021” dated Jan 15, 2020 addressing state budget concerns. Revenues are \$880M off. Education changes have been approved but no dedicated funding sources for them have.

Document 8: MTF article “Update: Tax Revenue Growth Slows” dated Dec 4, 2019.

Document 9: Mass.gov press release “January Revenue Collections Total \$2.959 Billion” dated Feb 5, 2020.

Document 10: Boston Globe article “State faces \$900 million budget gap, watchdog warns” dated Jan 15, 2020.

Document 11: State House News Service Press Release “Senate Republicans Seek MBTA Pension Fund Review” dated Feb 20, 2020.

Document 12: Cherry Sheet Estimates for FY2020 for Harvard.

Document 13: Wrong sheet provided, was supposed to be Cherry Sheet Estimate showing the Governor's budget proposal for Fy2021 - Harvard. Showing about \$10k increase in revenue and about \$25k in additional Chapter 70 aid. Tim used the \$3.9M as our Cherry Sheet Revenue, but the state's deficit is concerning. Jennifer added that she wasn't comfortable including the Chapter 70 aid increase of \$25k since it is not fully funded at the state level yet.

Document 14: Draft letter to the Select Board from FinCom dated Feb 26, 2020 regarding “FY 2021 Finance Committee Budget Recommendations”. Some small edits.

Document 15: FY21 CPIC Capital Projects Approved at 1/6/20 meeting.

VOTE: On a motion from Jennifer seconded by Mark, FinCom voted 5:0:1 with Mark abstaining to support the Capital Stabilization Fund (CSF) funded items on the CPIC plan:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------|
| ● Police Cruiser | \$ 45,950 |
| ● Middle School Ramp ad-ons | \$ 230,000 |
| ● Repair Town Roads | \$ 225,000 |
| ● Ayer Road Engineering study | \$ 75,000 |
| ● Dump Truck/Plow | \$ 65,000 |
| ● Tractor for fields | \$ 49,000 |
| ● Restore war monument | \$ 32,000 |
| ● Economic Impact Study | \$ 37,000 |

- DPW Building study \$ 40,000
- Cronin Auditorium Final Phase \$ 50,000
- TBS Locker/Shower study \$ 20,000
- TBS Air Conditioning \$ 150,000

VOTE: On a motion by Dick and seconded by John, the committee voted not to support the debt funding of Hildreth House phase 2 of \$4.3M. 5:1:0.

VOTE: On a motion by John and seconded by Mark, the committee voted not to support the debt funding of the Hapgood Library (Old Library) Roof replacement of \$1.3M. 5:0:1 with Jennifer abstaining.

VOTE: On a motion by Dick and seconded by John, the committee voted to support the debt funding of the middle school ramp of \$660,000. 5:1:0.

Document 16: History of attempted budget overrides in Harvard 1990-2011.

A \$300k override would be around \$150/year for the average property tax bill in Harvard. We will need to decide on an override number and type by the end of March. The last successful override was a general override of \$200k in 2009. We have to be ready to make cuts or propose another override.

Tim Kilhart is looking into separate paper recycling for cardboard, and may have one vendor interested.

Document 17: MA Division of Local Services "Proposition 2 ½ Ballot Questions Requirements and Procedures" August 2017.

Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned at 9:01pm

Supporting documents (17 Total):

1. Email from Board of Health (BoH) dated Feb 26, 2020.
2. Email from Superintendent Linda Dwight dated Feb 26, 2020.
3. Identified Above Level Service items.
4. Actual Local Receipts - History dated Feb 18, 2020.
5. General Fund - 5 year Budgeted Revenue/Expense Projection dated Feb 21, 2020.
6. General Fund by Category dated Feb 21, 2020.
7. Mass TaxPayers Foundation (MTF) article "First Look: Tough Choices Ahead in Fiscal 2021" dated Jan 15, 2020.
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9. Mass.gov press release "January Revenue Collections Total \$2.959 Billion" dated Feb 5, 2020.
10. Boston Globe article "State faces \$900 million budget gap, watchdog warns" dated Jan 15, 2020.
11. State House News Service Press Release "Senate Republicans Seek MBTA Pension Fund Review" dated Feb 20, 2020.
12. Cherry Sheet Estimates for FY2020 for Harvard.
13. Wrong sheet, was supposed to be Cherry Sheet Estimates for FY2021 for Harvard.
14. Draft letter to the Select Board from FinCom dated Feb 26, 2020 regarding FY 2021 Finance Committee Budget Recommendations.

15. FY21 CPIC Capital Projects Approved at 1/6/20 meeting.
16. History of attempted budget overrides in Harvard 1990-2011.
17. MA Division of Local Services "Proposition 2 ½ Ballot Questions Requirements and Procedures" August 2017.

Upcoming meetings:

Feb 29, 2020 9:00am Upper Town Hall Meeting Room.

Mar 11, 2020 7:00pm Upper Town Hall Meeting Room.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Finch