



Town of Harvard
Finance Committee
Minutes for February 19, 2020

Location: Upper Town Hall Meeting Room - 13 Ayer Rd

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

Absent: Richard Fellows, Ray Marchica

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

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

Minutes for approval:

Minutes of Jan 29, 2020 - skipped

Minutes of Feb 5, 2020 - no presented

Minutes of Feb 12, 2020 approved on a John/Siko motion and approved unanimously.

Minutes of Feb 15, 2020 approved as amended on a Mark/John motion and approved unanimously.

Public Commentary: Bob O'shea - Old Littleton Rd. Came to speak for Parks and Rec Commission (P&R). He's not on it, but helps out. They have new software called CivicRec to help with field scheduling and accounting. Document 1: Chart from Bob showing actual expenses for P&R from the annual reports of 2007-2019. Bob asked if FinCom has oversight as to what happens with funds when they are transferred between departments, consensus was no. Bob had further finance questions and was referred to Lori Bolasevich for details.

Regular Business and update from Town Administrator:

Document 2: Email from Doug Thornton, chair of P&R dated Feb 16, 2020 stating that the Charlie Waite field irrigation should be fixed or the field will suffer during a hot a dry season.

Document 3: Email from Town Clerk Marlene Kenney dated Feb 17, 2020 informing us of the progress so far and left to do on historic record preservation. The work has been funded for 3 years, with 5-7 years of work remaining.

Document 4: Email from Fire Chief Rick Sicard dated Feb 19, 2020 replying to FinCom's inquiry if funding a half-time fire fighter position is a viable option. Answer was no.

Document 5: 2 emails from Dept of Public Works (DPW) Director Tim Kilhart dated Feb 19, 2020 explaining the importance of the SCADA system funding request.

Document 6: Actual Local Receipts - History dated Feb 18, 2020 showing that we're right on track at 50%.

Document 7: Identified Above Level Service Items.

Document 8: Projected shortfall for transfer station operating expenses before paper disposal cost increase. (\$57,718) Trash hauling costs are supposed to be covered by the sticker fee. One option is we could go to \$130 for the sticker. Curbside pickup is \$492/year which will be cheaper at some point. This will be up to the Select Board.

Document 9: Small Warrant Article recommendations and cuts.

Recommended to cut: Tree Trimming DPW's share \$20,000.

Tasers for Police Dept \$14,000.

Minute Assistant Services \$6,000.

Firefighter EMT \$65,663.

Field Maintenance for P&R \$15,000.

Boat House Ramp and bathroom design \$10,000.

Merit pay to remain for now, but if personnel has to be cut, cut this first.

Recommended funding: \$105,102. Recommended cuts \$130,663.

Document 10: General Fund 5 year Budgeted Revenue/Expense Projection dated Feb 5, 2020.

Deficit is \$699,553 adding \$105,102 from SWAs \$804,665, then add: \$6,648 from the recommended funding of certain above level service items, we're at a \$811,303 deficit.

Document 11: Fiscal 2021 Revenue Enhancement and Budget Reduction Items:

Level 1:

- Finance dept comfortable increasing Motor Vehicle Excise revenues from \$946k to \$956k, but not higher.
- Increase in interest income, \$40k Lindsay Ames our treasurer secured increased interest rates. Also increased in part because of the amount of balance we have in the bank.
- Increase trash hauler fees by \$1875 total to pay for the shared enforcement, outreach and education officer. We have not yet heard from Board of Health (BoH) about this.
- Increase in sticker and bag fees to cover \$57,718 increase in transfer station costs. This still does not include increased paper recycling costs.
- Charge field usage fees. \$15k Creating a revolving account to use for field maintenance.

Total of \$124,593. Reducing deficit to \$686,710.

Level 2:

- A Facilities Manager has been hired, savings of \$16,700.
- Earlier recommended cuts from document 9.
- FF/EMT - split between town levy and \$31,793 to ambulance.
- Ag request cut in half \$1,000.

- Tree warden increase request cut in half \$2,500.
- BoH purchase services increase request cut in half \$1,112

Deficit now at \$517,942.

John made a motion to recommend against funding the SWA for Historic Document preservation, and the \$9,000 for the Agricultural Commission. Jennifer disagrees with cutting the \$9k for Ag. Town Clerk can ask CPIC for the document preservation expense. Usually CPC funds but they have opted to pay for fire records this year.

VOTE: Unanimous to recommend not funding those two items. 5:0:0

Now at \$483,942 deficit.

Considering the deficit, we still need to give a number to the schools to cut. Levy increase is ~\$522k. Salaried school employees through union and contract total over \$450k. We still do not have a ratified contract, nor know any details about years 2 and 3. The town side budget has cut \$293,361 and added ~\$50k revenues.

A motion by Mark and seconded by John to ask the school to cut an equal amount with the town of ~\$274k.

VOTE: Unanimous 5:0:0

ACTION: Jennifer to inform Linda Dwight of the decision.

Budgeting will continue forward and will likely include an override recommendation to the Select Board. Mark states that he is categorically against an override.

Don says we may need to rely on them annually.

John suggests we minimize any override this year, and do in depth analysis next year. DPW, Police, Schools and try to avoid overrides in the future.

Any Raise and Appropriate (R&A) items we didn't recommend but the Select Board wants will need to be added to the override amount.

Liaison Reports: None

Future agenda items: Financial Projections worksheet. This goes in the book.

Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned at 9:21pm

Supporting documents (12 Total):

1. P&R expenses chart from Bob O'shea, 2007-2019.
2. Email from Doug Thornton, chair of P&R dated Feb 16, 2020.
3. Email from Town Clerk Marlene Kenney dated Feb 17, 2020.
4. Email from Fire Chief Rick Sicard dated Feb 19, 2020.
5. 2 emails from Dept of Public Works (DPW) Director Tim Kilhart dated Feb 19, 2020.
6. Actual Local Receipts - History dated Feb 18, 2020.
7. Identified Above Level Service Items.

8. Projected shortfall for transfer station operating expenses.
9. Small Warrant Article recommendations and cuts.
10. General Fund 5 year Budgeted Revenue/Expense Projection dated Feb 5, 2020.
11. Fiscal 2021 Revenue Enhancement and Budget Reduction Items.
12. Financial Projections draft.

Upcoming meetings:

Feb 26, 2020 7:00pm Upper Town Hall Meeting Room

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Finch