

The Wilbraham Finance Committee
Meeting Minutes
Wilbraham Town Hall
Wednesday, January 22, 2020 - 6:30 p.m.

Present: Carolyn Brennan, Marc Ducey, Kevin Hanks, Mark Manolakis, Mike Mazzuca, and Tim Murphy

Absent: Kevin Corridan, Anna Levine and Todd Luzi

Also present: Nancy Johnson, Town Accountant; Tom Sullivan, Asst. Town Administrator for Budget and Finance; Tonya Basch, Assistant DPW Director/Engineer; Bill Sperrazza, Superintendent of Operations for Public Works; Vinnie Pafumi, Water Superintendent; Dave Graziano, Tree Warden

Call Meeting to Order

Meeting called to order at 6:30 p.m. Meeting was recorded by Wilbraham Public Access and the Assistant Town Accountant/Finance Committee Secretary. No one else recorded the meeting.

I. Open Forum

No discussion.

II. Approve Minutes

Motion: Accept the April 3, 2019 & September 11, 2019 minutes. Seconded, approved unanimously.

III. FY2021 Budget

- a. Tonya Basch presented the proposed FY2021 Budgets for the DPW, which consists of the Engineering, Highway, Waste Water, Water and Solid Waste departments.
 - She informed the committee of substantial funding they have secured over the last couple of years.
 - The Main Street Drainage project costs approximately \$1 million and they secured FEMA & MEMA Hazardous Mitigation grants that funded 75% of that project.
 - DPW staff was part of the team that secured the Volkswagen Emissions Settlement grant of \$304,000, which funded 75% of two dump trucks.
 - The DPW held three Municibid auctions of old equipment raising approximately \$52,000 for the General Fund's miscellaneous receipts.
 - They secured a \$20,000 Pre-disaster Mitigation grant that helps to update our Hazard Mitigation plan, which must be done to secure other grants. An up-to-date Hazard Mitigation plan allowed us to secure approximately \$2 million over the last eight to nine years toward the Woodland Dell project.
 - Over the last three years we have received just under \$10,000 in MIIA grants to pay for OSHA related protective equipment.
 - **The Engineering Department** - Expense budget reflects a proposed increase less than 1% with most lines level funded. There were only two lines with small increases:

- Dues/Memberships - \$400
 - Office Supplies - \$100
- **The Highway Department** - Expense budget also reflects a proposed increase less than 1%. The following line items were increased:
 - Overtime - \$20,000 for deer removal, which was previously handled by the Animal Control Officer, and tree related issues that DPW can handle instead of contracting out
 - Grounds and Building Maintenance - \$550 for increased cost of hazardous waste disposal
 - Equipment Rental - \$1,000 for the rental of a grinder to handle brush from the road
 - Heating fuel - \$500 to cover increased costs
 - Security - \$5,000 to cover increased cost of police detail
- **The Waste Water Enterprise Fund**
 - They have approximately \$71,000 of retained earnings and are proposing to use \$50,000 of that to offset the cost of the DPW building. The remaining \$21,000 will go back into revenue to offset operating expenses.
 - \$70,000 of the Fund Balance Reserved for Future Debt will be used to fund the debt service for Main Street Sewer project.
 - The following line items were increased:
 - Overtime - \$4,000 for monitoring I&I (infiltration and inflow)
 - Equipment Repair/Services - \$1,000 to cover increased costs
 - Fuel & Oil - \$1,000 to cover increased costs
 - Dues/Memberships - \$1,300 to cover increased costs
 - Printing/Copying - \$200 to cover increased costs
 - Contract Services - \$25,000 to cover our obligations to Springfield
 - Long Term Debt Principal and Interest were decreased by \$134,226 due to debt retirement
- **The Water Enterprise Fund** – The proposed budget does not include the final numbers for the purchase of water or debt service from the MWRA.
 - They have \$210,972 of Retained Earnings and are proposing to use it in FY21 as follows:

○ Offset costs of DPW building	\$50,000
○ Pump station improvements	\$35,972
○ Valve replacement on Grove Street	\$25,000
○ Water Service Truck	\$100,000
 - The following line items were increased:
 - Overtime - \$4,000 for mandated DEP pump station inspections
 - Grounds & Building Maintenance - \$30,000 for pump station improvements
 - Equipment Repairs/Services - \$5,000 to continue to purchase new meters & automatic readers which can be read with radio sensors
 - Heating Fuel - \$300 to cover increased costs
 - Telephone - \$500 to cover increased costs
 - Dues/Memberships - \$200 to cover increased costs
 - Contract Services - \$11,275 is a 3% estimate for the purchase of water from the MWRA

- MWRA Debt Service - \$13,259 is an estimate to cover our share of the debt
 - Water Installation line was decreased by \$10,000
- **The Solid Waste Enterprise Fund**
 - The \$32,222 of retained earnings will go back into revenue to use toward operating expenses
 - The following line items were increased:
 - Grounds and Building Maintenance - \$4,000 for chipping and disposal of the brush
 - Fuel & Oil - \$100 to cover increased costs
 - Contract Services - \$52,000 for cost increases in the disposal of recycling
 - The following line items were decreased:
 - Heating Fuel - \$500
 - Professional Services were decreased \$3,500
 - They are looking into options that will allow us to dispose of our recycling at a rate less than the \$93 a ton we are now paying
 - The bag prices are expected to remain the same
 - There was an increase in residents using the DRC, but the increase was mostly seniors who have a reduced rate
- The committee requested a brief update on the current year's snow budget. Bill Sperrazza reported that there had been a lot of overtime in December due to snow, but so far there have been fewer storms in January. We still have sufficient funds in the materials line for snow removal.
- b. Dave Graziano discussed the Tree Warden's FY2021 budget and explained the working relationship between himself and the other town departments.
 - Currently when there is a weather event that causes branches to come down on a town road, our DPW staff will move the debris to the side of the road and notify Dave. He will then reach out to Northern Tree Service to clean it up and chip the brush. Since the storms back in 2011, the maturity of trees in the town, and changing attitudes of the residents towards trees close to roads, electrical lines and homes; the scope of the work for the tree warden has changed significantly. To save money, he is hoping the DPW will get a chipper be able to work more closely with him to handle some of the work internally.
 - Dave did an inventory of dead and declining trees that need to be removed along some of the major roads in town. He ranked the risk presented by these tagged trees into three categories; high, medium and low. Based on 2019 rates, the estimated cost of removal is approximately \$78,000. The committee discussed the pros and cons of taking down all of the tagged trees at once or spreading it out over a number of years.
 - Bill wanted the committee to be aware of another ongoing tree maintenance issue that needs to be addressed. Due to the maturity of our trees we need to be trimming back the tree canopies. We have been getting complaints from the school bus drivers that their busses are scraping the low tree limbs. Also raising the canopies would allow more daylight onto our roads and extend the life of our pavements. Tonya would like her staff to examine the paving schedule and determine if the tree canopy pruning can be done by the highway department workers while they are already working on the road. They will track this approach to see if it is doable and saves money.
 - The general consensus is that the tree warden budget has been underfunded and needs to

be increased to cover ongoing tree issues. Currently the budget reflects the following line item increases:

- Professional Services - \$30,000 to pay for canopy raising and tree work
- Security - \$5,000 to cover growing cost of Police outside detail
- Tonya, Bill and Dave will get together to discuss restructuring the contract. They also want to research things such as, can the tree service limb the tree and leave the trunk to be cut down by our DPW workers, do the logs have value, etc. After they have completed their research they will have a better idea as to whether the tree removal project can be addressed in one year or needs to be spread out over three years.

IV. Other Business

a. Wilbraham Council on Aging Building - Update

There are no numbers on the costs of building a senior center behind town hall yet. That committee just met with the architect for the first time on 1/21/20. Tom will be attending their next meeting and should have more information after that meeting.

b. HWRSD – FY2020-2021 Budget

Currently Tom is building the budget and has used 2½ % over last year's budget for the school assessment number. Of course we will need to see the impact of the student population shift and meet with the Al Ganem and Howie Barber to review the school district's budget.

c. Special Town Meeting – Update

There will be a Special Town Meeting on Monday, March 9th for the residents to consider two articles:

1. To fund the replacement of the Wilbraham Middle School roof from the stabilization account. The town's portion will be approximately \$1.4 million.
2. An authorization to borrow \$136,000 to fund 30% of the purchase of two diesel trucks. The remaining 70% is being funded with the Volkswagen emission settlement grant. The authorization to borrow for the purchase of these trucks is being moved up from the May Town Meeting to the March Special Town Meeting so the DPW can order these trucks as soon all other state requirements are met.

Next meeting will be Wednesday, January 29, 2020 at 6:30.

Meeting adjourned 7:50 p.m.

Diane Hamakawa
Assistant Town Accountant/Finance Committee Secretary