



## **TOWN OF HOPEDALE**

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### ***Finance Committee***

#### **March 23, 2022, Meeting Minutes 7:00 pm, via Zoom**

##### **Attendees:**

###### *Present:*

E. Callahan, C. Hodgens, D. Madigan, P. Maloney, I. Michelson, C. Strapponi

###### *Absent:*

D. Comastra, D. Piatt, K. Wilson

The Finance Committee meeting was opened at 7:01 pm by Chris Hodgens.

##### **Votes:**

1. The minutes of March 16, 2022 were presented. All voted in favor.
2. Special Town Meeting Articles 1-7. See below for details.

##### **Events:**

1. Article 1 – Favorable – All voted in favor.  
The Select Board requested funds for vehicles and software. Diana Schindler confirmed \$655,000 is the current certified free cash amount. The Committee discussed the request for vehicles in detail. A hybrid option is not available for the Fire Chief's vehicle (Chevrolet Tahoe) and the Ford Explorer was deemed an inappropriate size for the needs of the department. The Finance Committee requested a copy of the fuel report by department for review. An additional item, electronic permitting software is included in this motion. Grand total for all items: \$166,121
2. Article 2 – Favorable – All voted in favor.  
The amount of \$100,000 from free cash to cover current and anticipate legal invoices is requested by the Select Board. A spreadsheet detailing invoices was shared with the committee and can be made available to the public for their review should questions arise.
3. Article 3 – Favorable – All voted in favor.  
Transfers are requested by the Select Board from operating accounts for county retirement to cover overages in Worker's Compensation and Liability totaling \$15,000.
4. Article 4 – Favorable – All voted in favor.  
\$31,750 requested for transfer from salary line in the Town Accountant's office to Professional/Technical line to cover an outsourced contract. Since the departure of the Accounting Assistant earlier in the fiscal year the contractor has been providing additional services.
5. Article 5 – HOLD

This article is to settle the collective bargaining agreement for the clerical union. An estimate of approximately \$10,000 was offered by Diana Schindler. The Committee elected to table this item until tomorrow evening's meeting.

6. Article 6 – Favorable – All voted in favor.

The collective bargaining covered by this article is not prepared for vote. Motion calls to be passed over at this time.

7. Article 7 – Favorable – All voted in favor.

The amount of \$7,000 is requested by the Board of Water and Sewer Commissioners for the purposes of settling a collective bargaining agreement from their retained earnings account.

Articles 5 and 8-12 will be addressed in a Finance Committee meeting to be held on March 24, 2022 at the conclusion of the information session in preparation of Special Town Meeting.

The Committee had a general discussion about articles 8-12 and reviewed a memorandum from December 2021 from Ed Burt, Chair of the Water and Sewer Commission. It was confirmed the full purchase price of the total acquisition will still be covered by private donors and the Hopedale Foundation. Any purchase less than the total amount will not be covered. A discussion was held regarding the roll back taxes and the zero benefit to the Town as well as the proposed gift and its location (body of water across Route 140 made up of multiple parcels with three towns).

The Committee will convene at 6:00pm on Thursday March 24, 2022 via Zoom to hear a presentation by Attorney Peter Durning, the Hopedale Conservation Commission and the Water and Sewer Commission. At the conclusion of the information session the Finance Committee will rejoin on a separate Zoom link to complete the recommendations of all remaining articles.

The Chair called the meeting to Adjournment at 8:14pm.

Respectfully submitted,

*Elizabeth S. Callahan*

Recording Secretary  
Hopedale Finance Committee