



## **TOWN OF HOPEDALE**

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### **Finance Committee**

#### **April 6, 2022, Meeting Minutes 7:00 pm, via Zoom**

##### **Attendees:**

###### *Present:*

E. Callahan, S. Capuzziello, C. Hodgens, I. Michelson, C. Strapponi, K. Wilson

###### *Absent:*

D. Comastra, D. Madigan, P. Maloney

The Finance Committee meeting was opened at 7:02 pm by Chris Hodgens.

##### **Votes:**

The minutes of March 30, 2022 were presented. All voted in favor.

##### **Events:**

1. The Committee welcomed Stephen Capuzziello, Jr. to the group after his recent appointment. He shared his background, his recent move to Hopedale and professional experience at Hasbro.
2. Parks Department Budget Request FY23  
Mike Reynolds presented on behalf of the Parks Commissioners with Chris Hodgens sharing the face sheet submitted earlier in the budget cycle. A significant portion of the request centered around maintenance in various areas: Trees (predominantly located in the town park and close to the playground), weed control for Hopedale Pond as an invasive species is problematic and maintenance of equipment and structures. The maintenance items are not necessarily capital in terms of dollar amount but are items that require regular upkeep and would be a capital purchase if replaced. The Committee discussed having the Parks Department submit a capital request list for visibility and future planning. A discussion regarding grant opportunities followed. The Open Space Plan must be further ahead in the process to submit grant applications. Once that happens there will be options as the Town will be considered eligible (July 15, 2022 was referenced as a date for completion). Often times grants will require matching funds. The tennis courts and their poor condition were discussed. Mike referenced quotations received in the range of \$80,000 to \$100,000 for a "fix/paint/net set" job. To really refurbish the courts and bring them up to current standards would require demolition and rebuilding at an approximate cost of \$500,000. Trying to get some general maintenance on the courts at this point has not been successful as vendors will

not work on asphalt courts. The conversation concluded with a review of programs that generate revenue, use of a revolving account and summer programs.

3. Highway Department Budget Request FY23

Chris Nadeau, Highway Superintendent, reviewed the department's request with Chris Hodgins sharing the face sheet submitted earlier in the budget cycle. Items of note were the department's new responsibility for traffic lights as it has been transferred from the Town Hall's accounts, requesting replacement stop signs with flashing lights, and a significant request for engineering for Adin Street and Route 16. He commented on the poor condition of Adin Street and the sidewalks. A capital request of a truck for \$223,000 was included on the face sheet. The Committee discussed bond rates and interest as compared to BAN rates. Diana Schindler will investigate financing options and update the Committee in a future meeting. The February 9, 2022 Finance Committee meeting proposed the amount of 5% for salary increases for non-represented employees was discussed.

4. Future Department Meetings

The Finance Committee will continue meeting with department heads to offer an opportunity to discuss their budget proposals in detail. April 13, 2022 at 7:00pm is reserved for the Board of Health. April 20, 2022 at 7:00pm is reserved for the Council on Aging and Library.

5. Anticipated Reserve Transfer Request

Tim Watson contacted Chris Hodgins to advise of a necessary emergency repair requiring the use of reserve funds to address a situation with the water tower on Steel Road. More information will be available at the next meeting.

6. Assigned Tasks

- a. The Committee will review the workbook shared tonight for formula validation
- b. Ian Michelson and Ken Wilson will continue work with Diana Schindler on stipend policy
- c. Chris Hodgins will work with Diana Schindler on the evolution of the workbook

The Chair called the meeting to Adjournment at 8:36pm.

Respectfully submitted,

*Elizabeth S. Callahan*

Recording Secretary  
Hopedale Finance Committee