



TOWN OF HOPEDALE

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Finance Committee

October 22nd, 2020 Meeting Minutes 6:00 pm, via Zoom

Attendees:

Finance Committee

Present:

E. Callahan, D. Comastra, C. Hodgens, K. Hopkins, D. Madigan, P. Maloney, C. Strapponi

Absent:

D. Piatt

Additional People Present:

Diana Schindler, Town Administrator

Michael Milanoski, Grafton & Upton Railroad

The meeting was opened at 6:09 pm by Christopher Hodgens. The start of the meeting was slightly delayed to confirm the meeting was being broadcast live by Hopedale Cable.

Votes:

1. Meeting minutes for October 7, 2020 were presented. All voted in favor with Elizabeth Callahan abstaining.
2. Meeting minutes for October 14, 2020 were presented. All voted in favor.
3. The FY '21 Budget was reviewed in detail and proposed for acceptance as presented. All voted in favor.

Events:

1. The FY'21 Budget was reviewed in detail. Specific lines discussed as follows:
 - a. The approved \$160,000 overlay request amount that was voted by the Board of Assessors in their meeting was included in the budget detail; it was clarified that this is an increase from \$70,000 as presented at Town Meeting in July 2020
 - b. A summary sheet showing the changes to the budget from the July 2020 Annual Town Meeting was presented and discussed
 - c. A question was raised on the amount budgeted for elections as a special meeting will be held in December; Diana Schindler referred to grant money available to assist with election expenses
 - d. Changes to the Board of Health budget were made to move funds from various lines into the salary line to cover the cost of health agent services

- e. The prospect of applying for and receiving a waiver for the library was discussed; approximately \$3,000 is in question when determining state requirements. Diana Schindler commented that given the budget situation for the Town, budget difficulties for the State in general and challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic a waiver request will likely be granted.
 - f. Health Insurance savings have been added into the budget. The Committee discussed headcount and qualifying events and their impact on health insurance costs.
 - g. The potential revenue of \$32,500 for burnable bulk items was discussed. Diana Schindler indicated it is not necessarily an apples-to-apples comparison as we are charged tonnage for the service and may cost more or less than the \$25 fee charged to residents. The fee of \$25 was discussed and may be on the low side as compared to rates charged by other communities.
 - h. Diana Schindler reviewed the indirect costs for health insurance for the Water and Sewer accounts and indicated those will be offset on the state recap sheet and added into the general fund.
 - i. The discussion wrapped up with agreement of the top sheet, budget detail and summary sheets to be available for residents to review. These documents will be a part of the printed matter available for handout at the meeting. It will be made available electronically on the Town's website for residents to review prior to the Special Town Meeting.
2. The letter from the Hopedale Foundation was shared with the Committee. The Foundation has made an offer of \$50,000 per year for a total of \$750,000 total towards the purchase of land in relation to the Right of First Refusal.
 3. Michael Milanoski requested to address the Finance Committee. He shared his views on the report generated by the Finance Committee.
 4. A reminder of the upcoming Special Town Meeting was shared: October 24, 2020 at 1:00pm on the Community House Lawn. Residents were encouraged to attend.

The Finance Committee will meet on a date to be announced.

The Chair called the meeting to Adjournment at 7:27 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth S. Callahan

Recording Secretary
Hopedale Finance Committee