

Town of Fairhaven

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Finance Committee

2019 MAR 11 A 11:11

Minutes of the meeting for <April 26, 2018> at the Jeffery W. Osuch BPW Administration Building, 5 Arsene St., Fairhaven, MA

FAIRHAVEN,
MASS.

Members in attendance:

Padraic Elliott, Robert A. Furtado, Kathi Carter, Lisa Plante in at 7:04 PM., Bernard F. Roderick, Tracey Diggins, Thomas Alden, Jessica Dwelly

Town of Fairhaven:

Mark Rees- Town Administrator

Wendy Graves- Collector/Treasurer/Finance Director

Doug Brady- Rogers School Committee

Nils Isaksen- Rogers School Committee Chairman

Todd Correia- Deputy Fire Chief

Michael Myers- Chief of Police

Vincent Furtado- BPW Superintendent

Meeting was covered by government access television.

Chairman Pat called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Announced that the meeting was being recorded by government access TV. Chairman has to be notified if anyone else present is recording the meeting by video or audio.

Motion made by Lisa to accept the minutes from April 9, 2018. Seconded by Bernie. Vote: Unanimous

- Chairman states the purpose on tonight's meeting is to close out the items we haven't recommended on the Warrant.
Those items include Articles 5, 8G, 10, 14G, 21C, 27.
- Article 5:
- Mr. Rees passes out information showing budget shortfalls for FY18 and information pertaining to the Pay & Classification Study and distribution.
 - The budget shortfalls are discussed first.

- Mr. Rees states the money for these items would come from Surplus Revenue & Free Cash.
- Planning & Economic Development- Salaries & Wages- is short \$7,600 to cover the temporary Town Planner and Bill Roth's buyout when he left.
- Police Department- Salaries & Wages- is short \$30,000 because of overtime caused by retirements and injured on duty cases.
- Fire Department- Salaries & Wages- is short \$20,000 because of turnover, retirements, and sick time.
Operating Expenses- is short \$15,000 because the Fire Dept. basement flooded and had to be repaired and mold remediated.
- Bristol County Agricultural High School is short \$1,106 because the actual assessment is not known until after the budget is set.
- Park Department- Operating Expenses- is short \$8,063 to pay for the nonprofit agency that protects the Piping Plovers that are on the Town Beach.
- Chairman asks if the Town is required to do this.
Mr. Furtado states the birds are Federally protected. They used to be on State property, so the State paid for it. Now they have migrated to Town property, and we are responsible for the cost. The same people are taking care of them.
- Chairman asks about the Fire Dept. basement flooding.
Deputy Chief Correia states the basement flooded, damaging the flooring material and causing the need for mold removal.
- Mr. Rees discusses the Pay & Classification Distribution:
 - Mr. Rees states the study was started before he took the job.
 - A State grant was used to complete the study.
 - Mr. Rees states the study was done in order to have internal equity and be competitive in the market place, hopefully cutting down on the employee turnover.
 - Mr. Rees states the Fin Com is being asked to recommend approval of the transfer of the money for the implementation of the plan, not approval of the plan itself.
 - Mr. Rees asks to committee to remember that the pay is based on the position and job, not the particular person in the job.
 - Mr. Rees runs through the presented paperwork explaining the comparisons that were done as well as all the factors that went into the rating system.
 - Jessica asks how the comparison towns were chosen.
Mr. Rees states town were chosen with similar demographics as well as using the MMA data base of towns.
 - Chairman asks what the Finance Committee is being asked to do.
Mr. Rees states we are being asked to modify the FY18 budget to include the adjustments recommended by the study.

- Chairman asks why we are going back to FY18.
- Mr. Rees states the money was placed in a reserve for this reason.
- Lisa asks if it will be added to the FY19 budget also. Lisa does not agree with going back to last year.
- Bernie states we just received this material and is not comfortable voting for it now. Asks why we are getting this at the last minute.
- Mr. Rees states the timing is the timing. Everyone worked hard to get this done now, and the committee knew this was being done and is just being asked to put the money in for it.
- Chairman is concerned about adding to the budget after trying to hold the line on large increases.
- Tom asks what the reason for the push is now.
Mr. Rees states unless we make adjustments for FY18 now, that reserve money will go away.
- Kathi asks how this will benefit the tax payers.
Mr. Rees states there will be fewer turnovers with staff.
- Tom asks if the departments have reviewed this.
Mr. Rees states yes.
- Tom asks the Police & Fire official in attendance how they feel about this.
Deputy Chief Correia states the call firefighters are nonunion and he hopes this will help in retaining and attracting them.
Police Chief Myers states his administrative assistant is underpaid.
- Mr. Furtado states he has 5 nonunion employees that have gone years without step increases because they are out of steps.
- Chairman states nonunion employees have received the COLA that union employees have received in the past.
- Bob states he feels steps shouldn't come just because you have been there so many years. Once a person is just doing the same job and not adding additional responsibilities, the COLA alone should come into play.
- Lisa questions where the \$7,000 increase in the Selectmen's office is going.
Mr. Rees passes out a sheet that shows how the money is disbursed to the departments.
- Jessica asks what determines the steps.
Mr. Rees states in the past it was time, going forward it would only be after a review.
- Lisa states the HR Director just got the job and will be getting a \$5,200 raise.
- Chairman asks Mr. Rees how this will be presented at Town Meeting.
Mr. Rees explains the wording.

- Lisa states the Animal Control Officer was just rehired and he is getting a substantial raise.
- Tracey states you have to look at the position and not the person in it.
- Chairman states that some numbers look reasonable.
- Jessica states Town Meeting voted last year knowing that \$150,000 was being put aside to fund these adjustments, and should be happy that the numbers came in lower.
- Lisa states additional jobs have been added making less work for people. States some of the towns in the comparables were in bad shape years ago when Fairhaven was doing ok.
- Tom asks Mr. Rees how the Revenue Projections look for this.
Mr. Rees states he studies the revenue projections to see what the Town can afford to pay, and they can pay for it.
Mr. Rees states the primary source of revenue is property taxes, and property taxes are recession proof.

9:33PM. Lisa motions to adjourn. Seconded by Tracey. Vote: Unanimous

Respectfully submitted by:

Robert A. Furtado
Finance Committee Secretary

accepted 6/18/2018

Robert A. Furtado

