

## HAMILTON FINANCE AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of Meeting

February 11, 2019

### Members Present:

Hamilton FinCom: Darcy Dale, Phil Stearns (Chair), and Nick Tensen

Hamilton Administration: Joe Domelowicz (Town Manager) and Marisa Batista  
(Finance Director)

Wenham FinCom: Alex Begin (Chair), Carrie Jelsma, David Molitano, Jim  
Purdy, and Mike Therrien.

Wenham Administration: Patty Moore (Finance Director/Treasurer Collector), Peter  
Lombardi (Town Administrator) arrived 8:06

This Hamilton Finance and Advisory Committee meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm.  
The Wenham Finance and Advisory Committee meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm.  
The meetings were called to order at the Wenham Town Hall, Wenham, MA.

### **Joint Department/Programs Budget Presentations**

#### **Joint Recreation.**

Sean Timmons distributed handouts including the spreadsheet of the Recreation Department's General Fund with the costs split between the two Towns. Mr. Timmons noted that nothing had drastically changed since FY19. Mr. Timmons highlighted new expenditures including the \$3,000 repair of ceiling fans in the Recreation Center. There was a slight increase in normal custodial service from \$6,800 to \$8,000 for the cleaning of the newly refurbished gym floor. The special fluid cleaning was in addition to the ongoing Sunday maintenance. The \$8,000 cost would be shared 50/50 within the Revolving Fund.

Other General Fund costs between the two Towns were for personnel. Salaries increased 4% for COLA and step for two full-time employees. The previous year, the administrative assistant was part time. The increase in hours was reflected in the increase in revenue, according to Sean Timmons. Nick Tensen said the operating cost was \$190,000 in addition to Workers' Comp and retirement with a real total of about \$225,000. Marisa Batista said there would be a 6% increase for health insurance. The increase was based on estimates but Wenham would be billed on the actuals after the bill was received.

The assessed valuation for the two-town split was 66/34. Sean Timmons noted that the spreadsheet showed a \$66,000 negative balance because the majority of revenue was

have major repairs for ten to fifteen years. Mr. Timmons noted that minimum wage would increase to \$15 an hour for lifeguards and counselors so prices would need to increase.

Discussion ensued regarding using retained earnings for future maintenance. A Revolving Fund could only be used for services provided. Marisa Batista explained that an audit would indicate that fees be lowered if a surplus existed. Joe Domelowicz suggested setting up an Enterprise Fund to be used for future maintenance costs. Both Town Meetings would need to approve the fund. A family membership currently cost \$180. Memberships accounted for 85% to 90% of usage. Sean Timmons said the resident-only pool was paying for itself. There were 25 to 30 lifeguards, which were 88% to 90% Hamilton and Wenham residents. The camp program employed almost 100% Hamilton or Wenham residents.

The \$8,000 maintenance cost included the opening and closing of the pool with FY18 being higher than FY17 because the fence was moved back to create more green space. Uniforms were provided for lifeguards and swim caps were provided for the swim team. The Board of Health inspected the pool every two to three weeks and was provided with relevant certifications. While the pool did not offer lifeguard training, Sean Timmons was working with the YMCA to provide reduced rate training for lifeguards. Cost for certification was \$300 to \$350. Mr. Timmons planned on keeping the pool open through Labor Day weekend this year but noted the difficulty finding lifeguards that typically went back to school or sports camps in late August.

#### Joint Library

Jan Dempsey presented a report. Ms. Dempsey discussed the changes in salaries to include one retirement with a hire at a lower rate, an increase for part-time librarians to reflect the minimum wage increase, and a 2% COLA for librarians as well as increases for moving up the wage matrix. There was a slight increase in the cost of library materials to keep up with State mandated expenditure requirements of 16% of the budget being spent on materials including electronic online resources. There were no increases for periodicals or newspapers. Technology costs included the fee paid to the Merrimack Valley Library Consortium. The fee itself did not increase but the e-content costs were separated out as part of the State materials requirement. The Consortium fee included all records, online catalogue, software, and connectivity to 36 other libraries. There was no increase in supplies, memberships, conferences, or travel.

Jan Dempsey explained programs. Website software cost \$500. The Friends of the Library provided the bulk of funding (\$15,000) for programming. The cost of heat and

utilities had increased in the actuals, so the proposed amount had been increased to reflect the change. Building and grounds maintenance were level funded. The volunteer IT position had been changed to a company with \$8,970 being paid out the budget and the other half being funded via State aid. \$24,000 was proposed for FY20 due to 15 computers, including public computers that needed specific safeguards. Computer replacement was done on a rotating basis. The elevator repair was a substantial cost paid for out of building and grounds, capital funds, State aid, and a Friends of the Library donation of \$10,000.

#### ECO (Retiree Benefits)

Marisa Batista explained that the Towns of Wenham and Hamilton shared an emergency center, which was no longer the case. The costs were related to life and health insurance and pension liability for retired workers. Ms. Batista estimated a 6% increase for health insurance but the bill to Wenham would be based on actuals. Wenham's share of the cost was \$24,361 as the older Inter Municipal Agreement noted a 10% administration fee as part of the program. Nine employees were retired currently with two future liabilities.

#### Energy Manager

The Energy Manager was part of an agreement between Hamilton, Wenham, and the School District. The Energy Manager was a Hamilton employee. The agreement stated that all three entities would agree on the number of hours the Energy Manager would work in January of each year. Marisa Batista said the cost cap was at \$5,000 this year with up to 143 hours for the year as not too many projects were proposed. The hourly rate was based on the wage grid with a 2% COLA and step increase. The employee had applied for and received \$250,000 in grant funding, worked with the Town Manager on the solar project, and work with the DPW for street lighting. The Energy Manager completed all annual reporting to the State for the Green Communities Program, which made the three entities eligible for grant funding. Joe Domelowicz said at half way through the year, the number of hours worked was not close to half of the proposed hours. The contribution by Wenham and the Schools for unemployment was zero for FY20. When the program started, a percentage was charged but it was agreed not to charge ahead of time unless the employee filed for unemployment. The provision was removed from the agreement.

#### Pleasant Pond

Peter Lombardi discussed the expenses including the summer staff of six lifeguards and six gatekeepers at \$21,000, which was found in several places within the budget. The budget included a proposal to increase the hourly rate to \$15 for FY20. Expenses (\$1,500) for utilities, medical supplies, and misc. were imbedded in the Police budget and

weekly water testing (\$1,500) was within the Board of Health budget. The sticker sales were split 50/50 between Hamilton and Wenham, which did not decline after the pool was opened. The previous summer 180 stickers had been sold. The share for expenses was 62% for Wenham and 38% for Hamilton. Revenue was placed in the General Fund.

#### Joint Permitting.

Jackie Breshnahan presented a spreadsheet for the Joint Permitting Program. Two full-time Wenham employees would experience a 2% COLA and 2% merit increases for FY20. The other two positions had a base salary and were eligible for a 2% COLA but the plumbing inspector was not included in the budget. Ms. Breshnahan explained that the plumbing inspector, who had been hired in 2001 was not paid equally to the newly hired electrical inspector. A small stipend was budgeted for a backup building inspector and assistant electrical and gas and plumbing inspectors.

Expenses increased significantly from the previous year. The \$15,000 was a plug number. The building inspector received a 2012 police administrator's car and maintenance had been considered within the budget. The Code Book library was out of date and needed replacement. A phone line for the building inspector and work cell phones for the other inspectors were discussed. Permitting software made cell phone accessibility critical, according to Jackie Breshnahan. Debate ensued if the inspectors should use their own phones or be given a Town phone at a cost of \$540 each. Ms. Breshnahan thought it was a good function as public records would be on the phones and access was required 24/7. The permitting software (\$18,000) would cover Wenham and Hamilton Building and Planning Departments as well as the Conservation Commission in Wenham with capacity for the Conservation Commission in Hamilton. Alex Begin said some of the increase from \$15,000 to \$28,000 was including the money in FY19 in the Hamilton Permitting budget into the Wenham FY20 budget.

The building inspector's vehicle was discussed. The 2012 vehicle was in good condition but as it was not an e-vehicle, points would be deducted from the Green Communities program. Public Works and Public Safety vehicles were exempt. Purchase of an e-vehicle and charging station was discussed. While the original acquisition would be covered through grant money, subsequent replacements might not. The building inspector position was incentivized by offering a vehicle versus paying for mileage. Alex Begin noted insurance costs.

The cloud-based software subscription costs were \$18,000. The purchase was paid for via the Community Compact Grant. Wenham was close to being live on the second or third week of March with Hamilton following a week later. The budget included a

clothing allowance (\$600) for outerwear with the Towns of Hamilton/Wenham names on it to alert residents that the employee was a Town official. Mileage was for the building inspector to attend School at UMASS in his own car. Actuals would be provided to Hamilton in accordance with the agreement. The agreement was based 50% on population and 50% on permit volume. The budget was \$159,117 with administration bringing the total to \$245,000. Hamilton's volume had increased during the previous year. An inconsistency between the population numbers for the Joint Building and the Joint Recreation Departments was noted.

**Other matters, as may not have been anticipated by the Chair (discussion only).**

**Adjournment**

Nick Tensen made motion to adjourn the Hamilton FinCom meeting.

Seconded by Phil Stearns.

Vote Unanimous to adjourn at 8:53 pm.

Motion made to adjourn the Wenham FinCom meeting.

Seconded.

Vote Unanimous to adjourn at 9:07 pm.

Prepared by:

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Marcie Ricker



Attest

03-07-19

Date