

Conway Finance Committee
Minutes
Monday Feb 11, 2013 7:00 PM
Town Office

Members Present: James Cabral, Jim Bosman, Andrea Llamas, Roy Cohen (Tanya Campbell and Robert Stone absent). Guest – Jan Warner.

Next Meetings

Monday February 25th, 7 PM Town Hall (Fin Com – Andrea likely will not attend)
Wednesday February 13th 6 PM Town Office (Parks and Rec Meeting)
Thursday February 14th 7:30 PM Grammar School (Conway Grammar School Budget Hearing)
Monday May 13th 7:30 PM Annual Town Meeting

Review/Approve Minutes

Approved the minutes of February 4 meeting. Jim will ask around to determine at what frequency Conway is being audited. Andrea explained that auditors don't look at everything, but they take a selection of documents to see if things are being done correctly. Auditors make recommendations on how to improve any areas that are found to be deficient. SB usually receives the audit in a special meeting with the auditor. It was agreed that Fin Com will request a copy of the coming audit report and ask to be present when the report is given.

Review/Discuss/Approve FY14 Budget Requests

Discussion of the pros and cons of various information technology solutions for the Town Offices and the impact of the soon to be completed fiberoptic broadband backbone.

OPEB – We're still trying to grasp the rationale for putting this money away. We have no trouble paying the annual costs now, so why do we have to put away all of this money? If we save the recommended total of \$2M, is the idea that the interest will pay for these costs? For a small town with a limited and stable number of staff, the costs are not going to sink us. Supposedly this will help the town's credit rating.

Mowing – budget and expense process for mowing has been overly complicated. Jan reported she could not figure out how Tom Spiro had done it in the past so her initial approach for FY14 is to consolidate it all into one department. There continues to be a difference of opinion on whether trust fund monies should be spent on mowing the rec fields. Cemetery trusts fund cemetery mowing.

School Roof Repair Debt – Per Jan, this is new, to pay off the balance of the Grammar School building envelop and roof construction, and has a 5-year term.

Technical Schools figure – Per Jan, does not (yet) include Smith Voc.

Board of Health sheet has a note about Escrow funds being used to fund a portion of their budget. Jim has expressed that past town audits and possibly the DLS review have indicated that the use of such escrow accounts should be discontinued. Andrea noted that the Selectboard has the authority to send a letter asking that any revenues from the Franklin Waste District not be held in escrow but be returned to the town and moving forward, that all such revenues be deposited to the general fund.

Voted unanimously to recommend the following budgets and amounts:

Moderator \$350
Selectboard \$9,000
Fin Com \$300

Legal \$10,000 (this was bundled with SB for FY13 but for FY14 will get its own Dept again)
Board of Registrars \$1,250
Elections \$3,400

Tabled recommendations on the following budgets and amounts pending further review:

Reserve Fund \$40K – Jim would like to have more time to see if this amount is still appropriate.

Town Audit \$13K – Jim checking on the interval and the amount.

Assessors \$44,742 – Need to understand why Assessors clerical decreasing.

Treasurer \$49,250 - Need to understand why Treasurer Wages account is going down. Is supposed to include both Jan and Lynn's time.

Collector \$16,060 – Same question with Treasurer.

Town Administrator \$92,835 – Salary/Wage account contains a placeholder of ~\$60K for Town Administrator salary and Jan is suggesting adding a 18 hour per week \$15/hr clerical resource to support the full-time Town Admin for a total of \$75,600. We need to understand from the SB if they want to add this clerical resource or not.

Town Clerk \$21,038 – She did not follow the instructions and went ahead and included a 2.5% salary increase so we need to get that backed out.

Jim will ask Jan if she will give us a salary and wage sheet for all employees so we can work on a COLA recommendation.

FY14 Budget Process

Andrea likely won't be here for the 25th (it is her birthday). She will start to compile the Revenue/Expense analysis but lots of the numbers might not be available yet. When we meet with Jan, she will be presenting the detail on all of the budgets that the Town Administrator would have handled (Town Office, Selectboard, Legal, etc.)

Review/Discuss Draft Financial Policies and Procedures

Jan indicated that additional sections on credit cards and trust funds are pending. Jim asked if this document be the place to put a Free Cash policy – folks indicated no, that would be a Fin Com policy. It was suggested that Selectboard might also want to have a Trust Fund policy to guide their decision-making. The Financial Policy manual outlines the Turnover process where misc. revenues that are collected are turned over on a regular (weekly basis), which was something that was a recommendation from the DLS financial review last year.

Special Town Meeting for \$100K Grant Match from CPA Funds for River Restoration/Flood Mitigation.

CPC voted to fund the River Restoration project grant match from CPC funds and requested an STM in March to vote on this.

Also, CPC voted to place an article on the RTM warrant to increase the surcharge to 3% and add the \$100K exemption, which would then also appear on the ballot.

Conflict of Interest Law Training

Jim reminded everyone to complete the State Ethics Commission's new conflict of interest law training program online by April 5, 2013. Be sure to print out a completion certificate to give to the Town Clerk. www.muniprogram.eth.state.ma.us

Meeting Adjourned at 9:00 PM.