

Conway Finance Committee
Minutes
Monday April 1, 2013 7:00 PM
Town Office

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

Next Meetings

Monday April 8th 7 pm Fin Com Meeting but Andrea can't attend. (Jan and Craig joint hearing with SB 30 minutes to discuss technology plan)

Monday April 15 Likely Fin Com Meeting

Thursday April 18 Warrant Articles Deadline

Monday April 22 – Likely date for final joint meeting with SB to finalize warrant.

Monday May 13th 7:30 PM Annual Town Meeting

Frontier Regional School Budgets

Jim reported on phone call received from Skip, the chair of Deerfield Fin Com. Three concerns of his were: 5% budget increase is out of line, should be closer to 2.5%; wants full disclosure explanation for the \$2M in “off-budget” expenses; concerned that we should have known about this years ago. James suggested cutting the athletics. Roy suggested cutting the transportation. Jim suggested that it isn't our role to identify how the school should control spending, but we would ask for a reduction and they would have to figure out how to meet the target.

Jim moved that we not recommend the FRS budget James seconded. Discussion is you can't have budget increases when the enrollment is declining. Andrea suggested we recommend a long-term planning effort be initiated after town meeting, with the other towns, Fin Coms and Selectboards. Andrea pointed out that you don't want to cut the programming, you want to cut the fixed costs, such as building costs, and reduce the number of buildings. Get out of the Whately admin building and use some vacant space in a grammar school. Move 6th graders to Frontier and consolidate the grammar schools into somewhere. Towns have 2.5% limit. Any department that comes in with more than 2.5% increase hurts other departments. We will do a letter to FRS, cc'ing other towns, SB's and Fin Com's. We vote unanimously to not support it at 4.9%. In letter we will ask school to bring the budget increase down and we will also propose initiation of long-term planning effort with district-wide involvement. Voted unanimously to generate the letter (Jim will draft and send around a letter). We will calculate a number to put on Article 2 to represent a 2.5% increase. Letter to Superintendent, CC all four towns SB's and three Fin Com's. Point out that school funding is X% our our budget.

Conway Grammar School

Tanya pointed out that the E-Rate revenue source if used would bring the assessment increase under 2.5%. Others pointed out that if we're going to ask for 2.5% increase for Frontier, we also need to ask for 2.5% increase for CGS. Add also a blurb to the Conway letter about the long-range planning. Only need them to come down less than \$7K. `

Dept 150 Town Admin

Do we know what the new town administrator's actual salary will be? Several individuals supported elimination of the clerical support until there is a better idea of how many hours a week will be needed for this work. Current placeholder is \$14,040 for 18 hours per week at \$15/hour for 52 weeks. We will ask the SB to explain/defend the 18 hours per week, and we are looking for like 10 hours per week.

Dept 150 Legal

Voted unanimously to leave it at \$10K.

Dept 175 Planning Board

Ask Diane to back it off to \$2500. Voted unanimously.

Dept 190 Personnel

Do they really need \$2K? Jim will look for their request in email.

Heating Oil

We purchased 6,000 gallons of oil last summer. This was \$19K worth of oil at the time. We feel this should be drawn down and no additional oil budgeted until it is used up. We decided to zero out heating oil for both town garage and firemens auxiliary buildings.

Dept 220 Fire Dept

James and Tanya recalled that there was agreement last week to reduce the Fire Dept Equip from \$10K back to level budget of \$8600. *(Note-taker comment: I reviewed the video of the budget hearing with the Fire Dept and though there was initially discussion of level-funding the equipment account, subsequent discussion regarding the need to start replacing fire hose at \$7.50/foot indicated that the \$1400 increase would be supported)*. Also moved the Gas line to \$1200 even and we are zeroing out the heating oil budget. Final budget is \$50,142 we recommended.

Dept 192 Building Maintenance

We zero'd out the \$4K for Heating Oil as per above.

Dept 231 Ambulance

Before the warrant is finalized, James will check with Joyce to identify what the balance is in the ambulance receipts reserved account in order to accurately determine how much money will be moved into their stabilization account. And also he will ask about the life expectancy on the ambulance replacement and how much money they need to collect over what period of time.

Dept 422 Highway

We could get a full depth reconstruction out of the Feds if we do the engineering plans IF it is the correct classification. Rural Major Collector. Andrea moved reducing non-salary by \$10K plus whatever the salary is that is agreed to. Voted unanimously but we will re-look at this next year.

Dept 510 Board of Health

Although after backing out the escrow funds, and the COLA, they increased the overall request from \$160,580 to \$161,188, a \$1,243 increase, we voted unanimously to accept their overall request. Reviewed and accepted their modified budget request.

Wage Adjustment

Voted unanimously for a 2.25%. Unemployment and Social Security may need to be adjusted by Jan to cover the increase in salary/wage.

Budget Process

We want to see FY12 actual expense on the budget exhibits next year, as well as the year-to-date.

Minutes Approval

March 25th approved.

Adjourned at 10:30 pm