

TOWN OF BERKLEY MASSACHUETTES

FINANCE COMMITTEE

MEETING OF OCTOBER 6, 2022

IN ATTENDANCE:

CHAIRMAN, JOE FREITAS, MICHELE HAMILTON, NANCY GAJOLI, MATTHEW CHABOT

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 6:10 PM. BY CHAIRMAN JOE FREITAS.

Chairman, Joe Freitas, called for a motion to accept the minutes of August 17, 2021 meeting. Motion was made by Nancy Gajoli and seconded by Michele Hamilton. A roll call vote was taken and the committee members in attendance (Matt Chabot came in at 6:15 pm) unanimously voted to approve the minutes as written.

Discussion on the special Town Meeting warrants for November 2021 and the impact of uncommitted monies and possible expenditures the Finance Committee will support.

The un-committed money of \$163,031 from the state and the Board of assessors projected at \$160,000 and the actual came in for a total of \$214,175.00.

At the Town meeting funds were appropriated and for the MSBA Feasibility study and Architectural design project for the Berkley Community School repairs for a total of \$299,164. (Two deposits of \$220,000 and \$79,164).

In order to continue with the feasibility/architectural study we have to meet the \$500,000 requirements, leaving a balance of \$214,175.

We also have to consider funding the assistant ACO for the remainder of year. Total cost needed is \$5,700. (\$150.00 for two days, for a total of 38 weeks, equals of \$5,700).

In addition, when one of our employees exceeds our expectation by taking courses and earning their certification for their specific roll within the department a bonus of \$1,000. Congratulations to our Tax Collector, Wendy Cochrane for her achievement.

After a discussion related to the expenditures listed, dealing with the lack of uncommitted monies, the decision to support the following funds listed above leaves us with a very bleak balance.

Funds dealing with	Fees required	Balance
Uncommitted funds		\$214,175.00
MSBA	\$200,836.00	\$ 13,339.00
Assistant ACO	\$ 5,700.00	\$ 7,639.00
Tax Collector Bonus	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 6,639.00

Another issue that was brought to our attention was the Bristol Agriculture High School assessment came in higher than expected. Referring to page 9 of the financial report, we were able to review the amount we recommended and approved was at 2% in the amount of \$72,451 and the actual bill came in at \$81,296, a difference of \$8,845.00.

Without having to go to reserve's to pay this bill, after some discussion, it was decided to go back to the 2022 financial report and see if there is any monies that could be utilized to pay this bill.

An email from Town Administrator, a future finance pressing issues facing the Town of Berkley is the Bristol Plymouth Vocational High School debt exclusion which came in at 20 million dollars for the Town of Berkley. This is just one of many financial pressing issues that may come our way during the planning of the budget; it has been suggested to the Town Administrator by Chairman Joe Freitas to research for any other pressing items that will affect the town in the next couple of years for planning purposes.

The total Bristol Plymouth project for all districts contribution is between 180-183 million and as indicated, Berkley portion will be approximately 20 million and this will impact the tax rate for FY24.

Unfortunately for the Town of Berkley, our Town Clerk and the maintenance person has resigned from their position. After discussion, the finance committee is recommending a budget freeze and no new future hires at this time, with the exception of the ACO assistant.

Chairman, Joe Freitas introduced Highway Surveyor of Berkley, Robert R. Rose to discuss the conditions of the equipment for the Highway Department and other departments that fall under the same umbrella. The majority of the equipment is over 25 years or older. The equipment is utilized primarily under the worst possible driving condition. The vehicles are not only in need of repairs and getting the parts are becoming difficult to find due to the age of the vehicles they are a hazard to the crew that works with the vehicles and also to the Berkley community.


Mr. Rose provided a list of equipment, their age and the condition of the vehicles that need to be address and explained that the majority of the equipment was purchased used. The department is in desperate need of a water hauling piece of equipment. This piece of equipment, a 1954 old Ford fire truck, has a 70 year old braking system and no power steering. This truck transported the water to the street sweeper, jet out the water clogged drainage pipes, supply water at construction site and jet out water clogged drainage pipes. This truck cannot pass inspection, the personal refuse to drive it, thus services that were supplied by this truck can no longer be done.

Based on the conversation we had and the information handed out it was determined that we as a committee needs to look to address some of these issues and see if we come up with a recommendation for a purchase for this fiscal year.

The conversation with Mr. Rose brought several concerns for future issues. How do we move forward, Capital Improvement plan; staffing; structural improvements; eliminating personal if necessary; cut labor cost. These were just a few of the topics that were discussed, options we can look at and make recommendations.

Chairman Joe Freitas requested a notice to the town administrator putting in for copies of warrants paid for the months of July, August and September for both the municipal side and the schools. Please break them down by month and provide them with in the next 10 days.

Chairman Joe Freitas called for a motion to adjourn. A motion was made by Matthew Chabot and seconded by Nancy Gajoli. Verbal vote taken, committee voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:08.

 11.2.2021

11-2-2021

Michelle Hamilton 11-2-2021

Nancy B Gajoli 11-2-2021