



TOWN OF BERKLEY FINANCE COMMITTEE
Meeting minutes of March 14, 2022
In Attendance: Joe Freitas, Michele Hamilton,
Matt Chabot and Nancy Gajoli

Meeting called to order by Chairman, Joe Freitas at 6:04 pm.

Chairman Joe Freitas requested a review of the minutes from the meeting of February 22, 2022.

After review, a motion was made by Michele Hamilton and seconded by Matt Chabot, verbal roll call done and minutes approved unanimously.

The purpose of this meeting is to begin the Fiscal Year 2023 budget process.

First on the agenda is the library and the head librarian, Carol Buote, was introduced by Chairman Joe Freitas.

Ms. Buote walked through the formula for the MAR Calculation to come up with what is referred to as "the magic number". First you get the average of the previous 3 years budget numbers; divide by 3 and multiply that number by 1.025%. this years "magic number" calculated at \$150,855. In addition, to keep certification, 19% of the state aid has to be spent on the materials.

The magic number is the amount of funds needed to maintain certification. Without certification the Berkley Library would not be allowed to apply for grant funds, they would lose state aid and the community would not be able to borrow from other libraries' materials through interlibrary loan.

The budget for programs provided by the library is zero. The majority of are programs are developed with in-house and others are funded by grants, donations and Friends. Also, some of the patrons donate their time to assist in running the programs.

During Covid, the number of programs that could be provided were limited, especially those for the children. Currently, with the covid protocol changes, the library is rebuilding the programs being offered for both kids and adults.

The library applies for grants when they become available and currently have a balance of \$35, 378.11 within their state aid funds.

Matt Chabot 03/21/22

Final topic of discussion was Capital Needs. The request came for replacing the 2 desktops and 1 laptop. Also, need some form of AC with heating for the second floor of the library. Currently investing in a split system with a roughly cost of \$8,000-\$11,000.

Next on the agenda was Robert Rose. Mr. Rose is the director for the Highway Department, Transfer Station and is the Tree Warden.

Mr. Rose spent a great deal of time going over the needs of the various departments and explaining the increases that are requested for the fiscal year 2023 budget. The majority of the increase were for payroll. The total increases from 2022 to 2023 budget for Highway and Transfer Station is roughly \$74,113.00.

The major issue Mr. Rose is concern about is actually the Forestry department. There is a major increase requesting of \$64,700 for tree removal.

We have a bucket apparatus that can reach roughly 70 feet in the air and this can take care of the majority of the trees that are causing issues along the roads and town property that could cause damage if we were to have a major storm.

In the pass, the employees of the Highway Department would take out the bucket truck and handle the trees that were causing issues or were sick. As it stands right now, the crew from the Highway Department are unable to utilize the bucket and are not interested in learning how to use the truck and it is not apart of their contract saying it is required.

The only person who can handle the bucket truck is Mr. Rose himself, but he would still need a crew on the ground to assist him, leaving no recourse but to increase the amount needed to remove trees by contacting an outside vendor.

In addition, we discussed the Capital Equipment that was needed for the department. There was a topic of discussion related to a possible debt exclusion of a million dollars to cover the needs of the various departments in the need of Capital equipment/supplies.

Both the Librarian and the Highway, Transfer Station, and Tree Warden provided us with detailed handouts related to the request for their fiscal year 2023 budget and able to explain the increases and answer our questions.

After a brief discussion related to the presentations, Mr. Freitas called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 pm.

Motion was made and seconded. No other discussion, meeting was unanimously voted to adjourn.

Joe [Signature] 3/21/2021
Michelle Hamilton 3/21/2021
Nancy B Bayoli 3/21/2022



Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 15, 2022

Called to Order by Chairman Joe Freitas at 6:00pm.

Committee Members in Attendance included

Joes Freitas, Tabitha McCrohan, Matthew Chabot, Nancy Gajoli, Michele Hamilton

Tonight we will be hearing form 2023 budget of Town Assessors office, Town Clerk, Finance Committee Clerk.

First Town Clerk, Heather Almy, The town clerk's office is in need of new tabulators for voting. This is being presented by the Financial Advisory committee to be voted on at town meeting and will not be in the operating budget.

Due to the 3 elections that will be happening this year we will be increasing funds for the elections and registrations to match the FY21 budget. There is an increase in the mailout line item due to the increase in postage. Conference dues have increased so there is an increase in this budget item. Dog license costs have increased due to people not sending in an envelope for return license and tags. This applies for dump stickers as well. Negotiations are still underway for clerical staff.

Assessors budget proposal for FY23. There is a requested increase of 2% for elected individuals and 3% for the own assessor. There is an added 36% for software expense because of something that was left out last year. There is a decrease in the back log down to 224 from 555. The levy has increased this year and there is projected new growth for the. The Attorney General has come to a new formula with Verizon for a valuation increase. New Growth has climbed due to a couple of new commercial buildings in town. Most new growth can be attributed to small builds such as sheds, porches, finished basements and home improvements.

Request for clerical staff clerk for 10 hours. FY22 there was a one-time appropriation for an outside assessor. This has aided in the back log and there is still remaining monies from this appropriation. Chairman Joe Freitas has questioned who is handling the administrative duties while there has been a large movement to catch up on the backlog. The response was that Gary the staff assessor has, yet there has been a large increase in motor vehicle excise tax abatements due to many new cars being purchased.

A part time clerk would lighten this workload. Last years appropriation of the \$8,000 for outside assessors has brought approx. \$50,000 to the town. Monthly expenses include, dues, postmaster, copier rentals. Increase from FY21 to FY22 was a large increase. Level funding from FY22 to FY23. Chairman Joe Freitas would like a breakdown of the expenses that are included in the list. The Fin Com will send an email to Gary and ask for a detailed breakdown. Due to a

software change the software expense will be going down due to a change in software this year. In final the assessors would like to emphasize the need for the clerk.

Tax collector and treasurer, Wendy Cochrane to present her budget. Clerical staff increases per the according step increases and negotiations. Level funding for most items, due to the use of Bristol Plymouth there is a large saving for most supply costs. There is a line item for certification purposes. Due to COVID restrictions there was no ability to due tax title so the prior year was returned.

Due to the ability to collect now, this line item cost has increased. Wendy has now become a certified Tax collector and has been asked to be on the education board for Tax collectors. It is an additional cost of \$850 increase to participate in the teaching course that can help with the future treasure tax collector positions.

Finance Committee is level funding for the FY23 and returning \$1,330 from last year to the general fund.

for *ML* 3/21/2022

Matt Chaboe 03/21/2022

Umelu 3/21/2022

Michelle Hamilton 3/21/2022

Nancy B Gayle 3/21/2022