

**FINANCE COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

May 14, 2018

Members in attendance: Chairman Ed Hoak, Secretary Michele Hamilton, Nancy Gajoli, Joe Freitas, Barbara Miller and Melinda Paine-Dupont.

Treasure, Wendy Cochrane

Accountant, Kathy Avila

Selectman, Heather Martin-Sterling

Town Administrator, Alan Coutinho

Meeting was called to order at 6:30 by Chairman Ed Hoak.

Motion was made and seconded to accept the Finance Committee minutes of April 30, 2018 and May 7, 2018. The motion was unanimously voted for acceptance.

Due to the reopening of the two budgets on May 7, 2018, this meeting was posted as a working session to deliberate over recommended changes and for the Finance Committee to re-vote approval of acceptance.

Committee member, Joe Freitas, took a moment to thank all those who helped with the preparations for the emergency meeting of the finance committee called by the Town Selectman and the reopening of the approved budgets.

Joe Freitas explained that, unlike the schools, we don't have autonomy in our budget and therefore we needed to remove funding that was allocated for certain items yet to be determined. These items included current contracts under negotiation, town office clerks and town office hours.

Administrator, Alan Coutinho, stated that once a decision had been made on the items in question, in November a special town meeting would be scheduled.

It was brought to the Finance Committee's attention that negotiations for the town administrator was agreed upon and signed at level funding, no increase.

Regarding the fire chief's contract, no new contracts at this time and the pay remains level funded until December. At that time the contracts will be revisited for negotiations as the fire departments contract for chief runs from December to December.

The only other items discussed/changed were; an increase to Bristol Agriculture High School assessment in the amount of \$2,304.00.

Superintendent of the K-8 school system, Tom Lynch, was notified that \$52,000.00 needed to be transferred from the school budget line to the following line items; \$50,000.00 to health insurance and \$2,000.00 to Medicare.

There were typos with in the report (crazy zero) and adjustments were made when necessary, which assisted in giving us a few extra dollars towards available funds.

Prior to the vote, the Finance Committee went line by line, determined agreed to the changes and discussed the differences between the two budgets.

If the **override fails**, The Berkley Town Library will receive enough funding to remain certified; The Council on Aging will not get it's badly needed director; No additional police and the K-8 will see significant cuts in personal.

If the **override passes** then The Berkley Town Library will be fully funded for the first time in years, The Council on Aging will get their director, which will provide additional services and the ability to apply for grants. The police department will receive two, badly needed, additional police officers and the K-8 will not have to cut personal.

Budget 1, without override, a motion was made and seconded to accept revised budget in the amount of \$18,825,572. The motion was unanimously voted by the Finance Committee for acceptance.

Budget 2, with override, a motion was made and seconded to accept revised budget in the amount of \$19,473,100. The motion was unanimously voted by the Finance Committee for acceptance.

Next on the agenda was to approve the endorse the capital items agreed to by the Finance Advisory Committee. This funding comes out of certified free cash, are one time charges. A motion was made and seconded to accept the recommendation of \$1,326,755. To be dispersed accordingly to the departments for capital needs. The motion was unanimously voted by the Finance Committee for acceptance.

Town Administrator, Alan Coutinho, presented to the Finance Committee the additional cost provided by the Police Chief, Scott K. Labonte in the hiring two additional full time police officers, excluding the hourly wages, but are included in the collective bargaining agreement.

Chairman Ed Hoak, provided the committee with an article regarding the State Senate "calling for ed funding formula to be revamped" (Chapter 70). Not yet voted on, but are looking at the formula.

Chairman Ed Hoak reminded the members of the committee that we are scheduled for the Selectman's meeting on May 16, 2018 to present the 2019 budget as voted.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:40pm. The motion was unanimously voted by the Finance Committee for acceptance.

Felita Lane - Spent
Gu [unclear]
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Nancy B. Gayole
Ed Hoak

**FINANCE COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

April 23, 2018

Members in attendance: Chairman Ed Hoak, Secretary Michele Hamilton, Nancy Gajoli, Joe Freitas, Barbara Miller and Melinda Paine-Dupont.

Selectman, Wendy Cochrane

Accountant, Kathy Avila

Berkley K-8 Superintend, Tom Lynch and School Committee Members

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Ed Hoak at 6:30pm.

The minutes of April 9, 2018 were present and discussed. After a few recommendations for minor adjustments, a motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes. The Finance Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of April 9, 2018.

This meeting was posted as a public hearing for the Finance Committee and the Berkley Public Schools FY 2019 budget request.

Superintend, Tom Lynch began the presentation by pointing out that since the budget year of 2007 the school has lost 19 positions over all and this year could bring about additional layoffs.

The special education growth, including out of district placement at a cost of \$100,000 per student, and the decline of school choice, it is making it difficult to maintain the rising cost of education.

Also, the increase in providing food services is a concern. We offer breakfast and lunch, participation are up at both the middle and community school. Understanding the increase of participation is promising however; our reduced lunch per student has increased over the years and is now at 24.6%. Even with government assistance for the reduced lunch programs this puts a considerable burden on the school lunch budget.

Reviewing the FY2019 Local Aid Estimates for the Berkley k-8 School System, we see a slight increase from the proposed cherry sheet and Governor's estimate and what the house proposed; Chapter 70 increase of \$7,840.00; a decrease in School Choice Receiving Tuition of \$24,478.00; Unrestricted Gen Gov't Aid, Veterans Benefits, State Owned Land and Exempt: VBS and Elderly, these line items were level funded. Offset Receipts, Public Libraries was reduced by \$89.00. Based on the above changes the difference between the Governor Budget Request and the House Proposed budget is roughly an increase of \$7,751.00. Not a substantial amount of funding coming our way via the state.

Since the original presentation of the k=8 school budget, Mr. Lynch pointed out that they reduced the initial budget by \$200,000. However, based on several meetings with the Selectman, Chief of Police, parents and members of the Finance Committee on the discussions of the benefits of having an SRO for the schools, Mr. Lynch indicated that a SRO at a cost of \$56,000.00 per year and a Health Teacher at a cost of \$48,000.00 was added back into the budget. This reduced the previous budget by \$96,000.00.

A discussion preceded the above announcement regarding a SRO within the schools. Although no one person is against the idea there are several questions that still need to be addressed. What would his duties be, who would be responsible for their pay, at what school would they be located and if they would bounce between the two schools how or who would made those decisions. It was brought up that a lot of work still needs to be put forth and outlined before this is brought to fruition.

The conversation brought about a question asked of Superintendent Mr. Lynch, if he had a choice would he choose a SRO or a counselor? Although the most important element is the safety is critical, a counselor would have a major impact on all areas of concerns and could help reduce any immediate threat to the students; this would be preferable to the SRO at this time.

This is not to say we are not in support of an SRO, however, we need to have more discussions on this topic, not to just jump in. Having a recommendation of placing 1 or 2 new police officers on portal with an understanding that one may become an SRO is a direction that we should consider going.

Mr. Lynch thanked the committee for allowing the schools to address areas of concern for the schools and indicated that on May 1, 2018 the school will have an informational session present two budgets, one with an override and its impact and the second one will be with the override passing and suggested that the Finance Committee attend.

Chairman Ed Hoak, spent a few minutes going over the interoffice correspondence within our folders; Berkley Board of Selectmen provided a letter and based upon the latest available information The Town of Berkley assessment is \$829,593.00. The assessment from the Somerset Berkley Regional School District came in at \$3,059,048.00.

Also in our packets was the Town of Berkley report on examination of governmental and fiduciary fund financial statement for our review.

A motion was made and seconded at 8:00pm to adjourn. The Finance Committee voted unanimously to approve the adjournment of April 23, 2018 meeting.

Felipe - 1 Report
Joe M.
Bob
Nancy B. Gajale
Ed Hoak

**FINANCE COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

May 16, 2018

Members in attendance: Chairman Ed Hoak, Secretary Michele Hamilton, Nancy Gajoli, Joe Freitas, Barbara Miller and Melinda Paine-Dupont.

Selectmen, George Mello, Wendy Cochrane and Heather Martin-Sherman
Town Administer, Alan Coutinho
Citizens of Berkley

The purpose of this scheduled meeting with the Finance Committee, Selectman, Town Administrator and Citizens of Berkley is to present the finalized Fiscal Year 2019.

On Monday May 14, 2018 the Finance Committee reviewed and discussed the two budget proposals for Fiscal Year 2019. One which assumes the ballot for the override fails and another assumes the ballot for override is approved.

In addition, the Finance Committee unanimously voted to endorse the Finance Advisory Committee's proposed transfer of available free cash in the amount of \$1,326,755.00 to the following line items; Capital Projects \$966,970; \$100,000.00 for Snow and Ice cost that are in excess; \$20,000.00 for the Town's Master Plan and \$239,785 for the first significant transfer to the towns stabilization account.

Budget one (without override) recommends a total budget of \$18,825,572 and represents a total increase of 2%; K-8 while receive an 3% increase; funds for the Public Library to just over the required certification level; does not add any new positions most notably Police and Council on Aging director and the the K-8, even with a 3% increase, will have to necessitate layoffs.

Budget two (with override) recommended total budget of \$19,473,100. This budget adds funds to the High School Stabilization account; provides a stable High School Stabilization with reasonable year over year cost growth for at least 8 years.

In addition, this budget provides the Police an additional \$112,000 for 2 additional full-time officers; provides a part time Council on Aging Director and the Public Library is fully funded to their requested level.

This budget proposal was assembled with sustainability and leaves an estimated \$161,514 available to address open items that will carry forward to November's Special Town Meeting that impact's the final Fiscal Year Budget for 2019. These items include; Miscellaneous proposals being considered by the Board of Selectman; Negotiation of open bargaining unit contracts and potential additional funds to be transferred to the General Stabilization.

Melinda Paine-Dupont
for [unclear]
[unclear]

Nancy B Gajoli
E Hoak

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for [unclear]
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E. Hoak