



Town of Georgetown

MINUTES

Committee: Finance and Advisory Committee

Date: March 30, 2022

Time: 7:00 pm

Location: Town Hall Second Floor Meeting Room

Members & Staff present: Ed Dobie (Chair), Steve Epstein (Vice-Chair), Alicia Raspa (Clerk), Daryle Lamonica, Michael Kelley, Orlando Pacheco (Town Administrator), Mary McMenemy (Town Accountant), Gary Fowler (Town Selectman), Peter Durkee (Highway Superintendent), Thom Berube (Town Assessor), Colleen Ranshaw-Fiorello (Council on Aging Director), Susan Clay (Chair of Council on Aging/Library Trustee), Sarah Cognata (Library Director), Kevin Moran (Library Trustee Chair), Mary Saunders (Library Trustee), Alex Williams (Treasurer).

Quorum obtained.

Members not present: Nichole Coscia, David Harris

The meeting was called to order at: 7:01pm.

The governor's order regarding the suspension of the open meeting law was read.

Motion to approve minutes from the March 16, 2022 meeting was made by Steven Epstein, Second Michael Kelley. All in favor: Ed Dobie, Steven Epstein, Alicia Raspa, Daryle LaMonica, Michael Kelley.

Motion to approve minutes from the March 23, 2022 meeting was made by Steven Epstein, Second Michael Kelley. All in favor: Ed Dobie, Steven Epstein, Alicia Raspa, Michael Kelley. Abstain: Daryle LaMonica

MEETING MOTIONS / ACTIONS AND SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS:

NEW BUSINESS – FY 2023 BUDGET

- **Highway Department Budget Discussion with Peter Durkee, Highway Superintendent**
 - The other property services line increased by 2,400 for dock removal from parks and recreation. The money would be used to fertilize the parks instead
 - Communication increased due to increased cell phone charges.
 - Other professional services include dues, medical licenses, and classes the department needs to take. \$15k was moved from this line item in prior years to be separated into police detail line.
 - Other unclassified items includes \$20k for stormwater cleanup. So far \$7,233 has been spent in FY 2022 prior to spring cleanup
 - Salaries and wages increased 2% as contracted. It appears Mr. Durkee's salary increased 4% from prior year but only because the prior year 2% raise was not properly reflected.
 - Current snow and ice deficit is \$184k due to vendors and \$19k for overtime.
 - Mr. Epstein inquired about the state of the equipment. Mr. Durkee noted that they recently obtained a machine to replace tires from Whittier Tech.
 - Discussion ensued about the possibility of a shared mechanic and aboveground fuel depot.
 - Mr. Epstein inquired about whether any line items could be cut without interruption of service. Mr. Durkee noted that the actual expenses have been in line with budget for the past few years, with the exception of snow removal.

- **Town Assessor's Budget Discussion with Thom Berube, Town Assessor**
 - Overall expenses increased 1.92% representing 2% raises and a slight decrease in expenses.
 - New growth New growth has grown from approximately 10 million per year since Mr. Berube began. Mr. Berube has been tracking board meetings and picking up revenue at the planning board level. 2019 was a soft year with new growth. Most of the land has been built out. In 2020, Mr. Berube began to look at projects which had not been captured like renovations on existing homes.
 - Revenue in 2023 is down because the tax rate decreased.
- **Council on Aging Budget Discussion with Colleen Ranshaw-Fiorello, Director and Susan Clay, Chair of COA**
 - Repairs and maintenance includes alarm system, HVAC, hood over the stove.
 - Rental lease is the Toshiba copier.
 - Other property is the amount paid to the school department for custodial maintenance.
 - Communication is telephones and stamps and mailing supplies.
 - Contract services recreation is fitness instructors.
 - Other unclassified includes the addition of a water bottle station for 2k.
 - The requested budget includes a third program assistant to work 32 hours per week at \$17 per hour. This position is needed due to the increase in services as the population ages. Approximately 26% of the population is able to take advantage of the services.
 - Mr. Dobie inquired if they could generate additional revenue, not really with the costs of inflation.
 - Mr. Pacheco noted that the draft salary survey is with the Board of Selectmen and the proposed position is one of the ones under review.
 - Mr. Dobie requested that the Committee note where the custodian services are accounted for in the school department budget.
- **Library Budget Discussion with Sarah Cognata, Library Director. Also in attendance are library trustees Kevin Moran (Chair), Mary Saunders, and Susan Clay**
 - Increase in expenses – rental and copier. There is a new 3 year lease on the copier. Cleaning company renegotiated the contract and will increase July 1, 2022. Up 4k. Library budget is different because there is a need to increase 2.5% over the past 3 fiscal years.
 - Materials budget needs to be 19% of the total budget, can change if hours or town population increases. This is necessary for state certification, so that Georgetown library patrons can access materials statewide.
 - The requested budget includes a raise for the staff to \$43,000 per year from \$35,000.
 - Mr. Epstein inquired about the HVAC system. The plan is to repair with the ARPA funds and then the capital upgrade will be for 2028.
- **Treasurer with Alex Williams, Treasurer**
 - There are 2 notable changes. The budget removed \$28,000 from outside payroll services, payroll will be done in house. The finance clerk position is no part time but is no longer split between the treasurer's office and accountant's office
 - Tax title foreclosure is \$8,000 and is level funded. Mr. Epstein inquired about the delinquent tax base. Alex is working on 15 properties which are delinquent from FY 2020 or FY 2021. Mr. Fowler inquired about the deferred tax program. That is done through the assessor's office.
- **Town Accountant with Mary McMenemy, Town Accountant**
 - Expenses are level funded, Ms. McMenemy typically does not use them all. Ms. McMenemy will revise the budget to reflect expected spending.
- **Board of Selectmen, Reserve Fund, and Town Counsel Budget Discussion with Orlando Pacheco, Town Manager and Gary Fowler, Board of Selectmen**
 - Purchase of services is unallocated electricity. Increase in usage is driven by schools coming back to full capacity after COVID. Gas supply contract expires in December. National Grid's delivery charges will increase. Discussion ensued about electric costs and efficiency.
 - Boston System contract is flat for next fiscal year
 - Discussion of mandated conservation program to look at departmental efficiencies.
 - Increase in salaries is due to contractual increases from Mr. Pacheco over the prior Town Manager
 - The reserve and town counsel lines are level funded but additional legal fees are expected to be needed.

Items not reasonably anticipated by the Chair 48 hours in advance of the meeting:

- Override might be needed for the next 12-24 months. Discussion ensued a combination of cuts and use of free cash or other reserves.
- Decided to meet at 6 PM next week in order to have additional time to discuss prior to the departmental discussions.

LIST OF DOCUMENTS AND OTHER EXHIBITS USED AT MEETING:

- FY 2023 Budget (available via ClearGov)

Documents and Other Exhibits used at meeting will be available for review at: Town Accountant's Office
(Office)

Meeting was adjourned at: 9:48 pm ***Motion to adjourn made by Daryle LaMonica***, Second: Steve Epstein.
All in favor: Ed Dobie, Steven Epstein, Alicia Raspa, Daryle LaMonica, Michael Kelley.

NEXT MEETING:

Date: April 6, 2022
Time: 6:00 PM
Place: Town Hall, Second Floor Conference Room

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman: _____
(Signature)

Minutes approved by Committee on: April 6, 2022
(Date)