

**TOWN OF ROWLEY
FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of Meeting March 28, 2023
6:30 PM**

Finance Committee Attendance: Present were Larry White – Chairman, Sharon Emery – Vice Chair, Pamela Bowen, Peter Censullo, Tom Corben, Dennis Roy and Chip Sheerin.

Other Attendees: Town Administrator Debbie Eagan, Police Chief Scott Dumas, Town Clerk Catie McClenaghan, Water Commissioner Bernie Cullen, Water Superintendent Bob Gray, Building Inspector Ken Ward, Health Director Frank Marchegiani, Veterans’ Committee Chair Bob Breaker, and Treasurer/Collector Karen Summit

1. Call to Order – Chair Larry White called the meeting of the Finance Committee to order at 6:37 PM.
2. FY23 Reserve Fund Transfer – Town Hall Expenses – Eagan reviewed the cost for the Town Hall elevator repair and for oil, both higher than expected.

Emery made a motion to approve the FY23 Reserve Fund Transfer Request in the amount of \$4,000 to Town Hall Expenses. Bowen seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous in favor.

3. FY24 Budgets

Town Moderator – *Emery made a motion to accept the Town Moderator FY23 Budget. Corben seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous in favor.*

Board of Selectmen - *Sheerin made a motion to accept the Board of Selectmen FY24 Budget. Bowen seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous in favor.*

Finance Committee – *Emery made a motion to accept the Finance Committee FY24 Budget. Corben seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous in favor.*

Town Accountant – *Corben made a motion to accept the Town Accountant FY24 Budget. Emery seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous in favor.*

Town Clerk – *Bowen made a motion to accept the Town Clerk FY23 Budget. Sheerin seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous in favor.*

Election – Emery made a motion to accept the Election FY24 Budget. Sheerin seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous in favor.

Board of Registrars – Corben made a motion to accept the Board of Registrars FY24 Budget. Emery seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous in favor.

Zoning Board of Appeals – A corrected Form 3 was distributed; the budget was level funded.

Corben made a motion to accept the Zoning Board of Appeals FY24 Budget. Bowen seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous in favor.

Agricultural Commission – Emery made a motion to accept the Agricultural Commission FY24 Budget. Corben seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous in favor.

Town Hall – Roy commented that the estimated cost for needed elevator lift expenses should be included in the budget.

Roy made a motion to accept the Town Hall FY24 budget expense line increase of \$1320. Sheerin seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous in favor.

Roy made a motion to accept the Town Hall FY24 budget as amended. Corben seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous in favor.

Town Hall Annex – Emery made a motion to accept the Town Hall Annex FY24 Budget. Bowen seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous in favor.

Police Department – Police Chief Scott Dumas presented the proposed FY24 Police Department “A” budget as level funded. He reviewed wages and increases due to contractual obligations. He also discussed the HVAC maintenance contract of \$6600 which was the lowest bid received, and a \$1500 increase in fuel costs.

Chief Dumas reviewed the “B” budget reflecting the addition of three police officers, due to the elimination of reserve officers. Beginning June 2024, all part-time officers will be eliminated.

Budget “B” requests three officers, “C” two officers and “D” one additional officer each this FY24, FY25 and FY26. Chief Dumas noted that the Select Board recommended the “D” budget.

Chief Dumas discussed the desire among police officers for more work/life balance, and are not taking overtime shifts as frequently as in the past. Reserve officers have full time jobs and are reluctant to take shifts with the uncertainty of being held for a second shift.

Roy asked about the forecast for current year expenses. Chief Dumas replied that it will be close with police cruiser repairs spent 90% already, expenses due to outfitting the new electric cruiser as well as mechanical problems with the electric cruiser.

Emery made a motion to accept the Police Department FY24 “A” Budget. Bowen seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous in favor.

Constable - *Emery made a motion to accept the Constable FY24 Budget. Corben seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous in favor.*

Inspection Department – Building Inspector Ken Ward presented the proposed FY24 budgets, “A” and “B”. Version B included an increase in three items: dues, meetings and seminars, and code books. Ward provided an explanation of the increased costs for certifications and licenses and education to stay current with the new energy code. Budget A is level-funded.

Emery made a motion to accept the Inspection Department FY24 “A” Budget. Roy seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous in favor.

Harbormaster - *Emery made a motion to accept the Harbormaster FY24 Budget. Corben seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous in favor.*

Whittier Vocational Technical High School – *Sheerin made a motion to accept the Whittier Vocational Technical High School FY24 Budget. Bowen seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous in favor.*

Health Department – Health Director Frank Marchegiani presented the proposed FY24 Health Department budget.

Corben made a motion to accept the Health Department FY24 Budget. Emery seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous in favor.

Council on Aging – Roy distributed corrected forms for COA Budget A and reviewed his edits, including the adjustment to wages that was made after Town Meeting. He also reviewed edits to Form 2.

Roy made a motion to table the Council of Aging budget pending review by the Town Accountant. Emery seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous in favor.

Veterans Affairs - *Emery made a motion to accept the Veterans Affairs FY24 Budget. Bowen seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous in favor.*

Parks & Recreation – Corben asked for clarification of what is included in the “Miscellaneous” line item.

Corben made a motion to table the Parks & Recreation budget pending more information on the Miscellaneous line item. Bowen seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous in favor.

Historical Commission - *Corben made a motion to accept the Historical Commission FY24 “A” Budget. Emery seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous in favor.*

Veterans Committee – Chairman Bob Breaker presented a request for an additional \$500 to pay for Memorial Day parade expenses and flags on the Town Common. He said the Veterans Committee is also raising funds independently.

Corben made a motion to accept the Veterans Committee FY24 Budget. Bowen seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous in favor.

Unemployment – *Corben made a motion to accept the Unemployment FY24 Budget. Roy seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous in favor.*

Retirement – *Roy made a motion to accept the Retirement FY24 Budget. Sheerin seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous in favor.*

Blanket Insurance - *Emery made a motion to accept the Blanket Insurance FY24 Budget. Bowen seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous in favor.*

Group Health/Life Insurance & FICA – *Sheerin made a motion to accept the Group Health/Life Insurance & FICA FY24 Budget. Corben seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous in favor.*

Water Department – Water Commissioner Bernie Cullen and Water Superintendent Bob Gray reviewed the Water Department FY24 Budget Overview.

Discussion was held on the leak detection and meter replacement programs. Cullen said the town-wide program was increased to twice a year and explained the methods used to detect leaks. He noted that meters are replaced when they reach their life expectancy or when readings indicate zero or fluctuating usage. Discussion was held on water rate studies. The last study was done approximately three years ago and Cullen said he felt another study would only recommend an increase in water rates. Roy commented the stabilization fund should allow for a rate decrease. Cullen replied that they do not want rates to go up and down and would like to have three years of revenue supporting a rate decrease. Roy commented he felt there was a lot of over-estimating in the budget. Cullen replied that was largely due to open positions and medical insurance costs that must be budgeted even if not being used.

The status of outstanding capital projects was reviewed and plans to fund upcoming projects.

Emery made a motion to recommend the Water Department FY24 Budget. Bowen seconded the motion and the motion carried by a vote of 6 in favor and 1 opposed (Roy).

4. Discuss FY24 Triton Budget – Select Board Members commented on the increasing Triton budget and the Rowley assessment, and the financial strain it is putting on the town. Select Board Chairman Bob Snow and Water Commissioner Bernie Cullen also provided comments. Town Administrator Debbie Eagan commented on the importance of planning for FY25 and FY26.

(Pamela Bowen left the meeting at 9:00 pm)

Chairman White called for a roll call vote to indicate support of the Triton FY24 budget:

Corben – No

Emery – Abstain

Roy – No

Sheerin – No

Censullo – Abstain

White – No

Since the Finance Committee's vote did not support the budget submitted by Triton, Chairman White instructed Eagan that the Finance Committee recommendation to the Omnibus should be left blank.

5. Report by Liaison Members on their Departments – No action.
6. Minutes – No action.
7. Discuss Upcoming Meetings – The next meeting is scheduled for April 4, 2023 at 6:30 pm.
8. Adjourn – *At 9:10 pm Corben made a motion to adjourn. Censullo seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous in favor.*

Respectfully submitted,

Theresa Coffey
Finance Committee Secretary

Documents used at or for the meeting:

Agenda for March 21, 2023

FY 23 Reserve Fund Transfer - Town Hall Expenses

FY 24 BUDGETS

- Town Moderator
- Board of Selectmen
- Finance Committee
- Town Accountant
- Town Clerk
- Election
- Board of Registrars
- Zoning Board of Appeals
- Agricultural Commission
- Town Hall
- Town Hall Annex
- Police Department
- Constable
- Inspection Department
- Harbormaster
- Whittier Vocational Technical High School
- Health Department
- Council on Aging
- Veterans Affairs
- Parks and Recreation Committee
- Historical Commission and Historic District Commission
- Veterans Committee

- Unemployment
- Retirement
- Blanket Insurance
- Group Health/Life Ins. & FICA
- Water Department