

**TOWN OF ROWLEY
FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of Meeting March 7, 2017
Rowley Town Hall**

Members Present: Lawrence White, Chairman, Sharon Emery, Vice Chairman, Janet Bridges, Peter Censullo, Paul Jalbert, Dennis Roy

Members Absent: Jami Snow

Others Present: Joseph Perry, Board of Selectmen; MaryBeth Wiser, Water Superintendent; John Manning, Chairman, Board of Water Commissioners; Abigail Tucker, Chairperson, Agricultural Commission

1. Call to Order: Larry White, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:22 pm.
2. Minutes of February 14, 2017: Roy moved to accept the minutes of the meeting held February 14, 2017. Jalbert seconded and the vote was unanimous in favor.
3. Review Proposed FY18 Budgets:
 - Assessor - Jalbert pointed out a typo on the budget worksheet, the total should read: \$136,739. Emery moved to accept the FY18 Assessor budget in the amount of \$136,739. Jalbert seconded, as amended. The vote was unanimous in favor.
 - Bradstreet & Dodge – Emery moved to accept the FY18 Bradstreet Reservation & Dodge Property budget as presented. Roy seconded and the vote was unanimous in favor.
 - Handicapped Commission – Bridges moved to accept the FY18 Handicap Commission budget as presented. Roy seconded and the vote was unanimous in favor.
 - Health Department – Emery questioned the Public Health Nurse stipend increase. Eagan explained that this line item is salary and would correct this on the budget sheet. Emery moved to accept the FY18 Health Department budget as corrected. Bridges seconded and the vote was unanimous in favor.
 - Historical Commission – Jalbert moved to accept the FY18 Historical Commission budget as presented. Roy seconded and the vote was unanimous in favor.
 - Information Services – Emery moved to accept the FY18 Information Services budget as presented. Roy seconded and the vote was unanimous in favor.

- Memorial and Veterans Day – Bridges moved to accept the FY18 Memorial and Veterans Day budget as presented. Jalbert seconded and the vote was unanimous in favor.
- Personnel Board – Jalbert moved to accept the FY18 Personnel Board budget as presented. Emery seconded and the vote was unanimous in favor.
- Streetlights – Emery moved to accept the FY18 Streetlight budget as presented. Roy seconded and the vote was unanimous in favor.
- Town Counsel – Roy moved to accept the FY18 Town Counsel budget as presented. Emery seconded and the vote was unanimous in favor.
- Town Moderator – Emery moved to accept the FY18 Town Moderator budget as presented. Jalbert seconded and the vote was unanimous in favor.

4. Proposed FY18 Hydrants and Water Department Budgets – John Manning, Chairman Board of Water Commissioners and MaryBeth Wisner, Water Superintendent attended to review the proposed FY18 budgets.

Hydrants - Wisner distributed information on hydrants and Manning noted that this budget is level funded. Discussion was held on hydrant maintenance expenses. White asked if the cost will go up if a new subdivision goes in. Manning replied that subdivisions are responsible for the cost of the hydrants.

Roy moved to accept the FY 18 Hydrants budget as presented. Emery seconded and the vote was unanimous in favor.

Water Department – Roy asked about the plan for filling vacant positions for which money is included in the salary line. He stated his concern that if the positions are not filled, the money will go into the stabilization fund. Discussion continued on this subject with different options proposed on holding the salary money back until the positions are filled. Wisner stated her understanding that the positions needed to remain in the budget to be able to recruit and hire personnel.

Wisner discussed the stabilization fund, explaining that this money is funding the capital plan. She stressed that the treatment plant is an expensive venture and the maintenance is ongoing, with a major expense every 10 years to change filters. Manning stated that they are looking forward five years to get the Water Department (WD) in a steady state, then they can look at reducing the water rates. They will also have five years of data to use for a trend analysis.

Roy stated his concern that the WD is spending more than they should in the area of capital spending, specifically on a fence, wood carved sign and cameras that may not be needed. He questioned why money is being spent there when it could be put into line replacement. Wisner

clarified the different funding sources and the reasoning behind the decisions made on the fencing. White stated it was public perception that is at issue, to see this type of spending but no decrease in water rates.

Overtime expenses and hydrant expenses were discussed with Roy asking for a simpler format of overtime projections and back up for FY18 Outside Services.

Wiser explained that under Admin they have added new lines to be more specific about expenses. She stated they are working very hard to ensure expenses are being charged correctly.

Roy initiated discussion on water main replacement. Wiser stated that this is first year the WD has talked about replacing water mains. The WD had a capital efficiency plan done and would like to “marry” projects with the Highway Department, but she stated she was not sure how it will happen as the WD does not have funds to follow the paving schedule.

Manning added that in anticipation of this activity, they have earmarked \$50,000 for an engineering study. White stated that the Highway Department will be on a future agenda and they can review the highway paving schedule against the WD plan at that time. White deferred further discussion until that time.

Roy moved to table the proposed FY18 Water Department budget. Jalbert seconded and the vote was unanimous in favor.

5. FY 18 Proposed Agricultural Commission Budget – Libby Tucker, Chairperson, Agricultural Commission presented the proposed FY18 budget. Tucker reviewed her letter of March 1, 2017 requesting an increase in funding for the Agricultural Commission budget.

Tucker discussed the Community Garden expenses including water and the cost of rototilling gardens that have been left behind un-cleared. The option of instituting a security deposit was discussed to ensure that garden plots are left in good condition. Bridges stated that the community gardens should be self-sufficient with no cost to the Town.

Tucker discussed the Farmers Market and several improvements they would like to make to increase awareness and attendance. Fees for participation in the market have been on a donation basis, but Tucker stated she was willing to change it to a fee basis, if needed. All were in agreement on the importance of the Farmers Market to the community.

Emery moved to accept the proposed increased FY18 Agricultural Commission budget as presented. Roy seconded and the vote was unanimous in favor.

6. Meeting Date: The next meeting will be held Tuesday, March 14, 2017.

7. Adjournment: Jalbert moved to adjourn. Bridges seconded and the vote was unanimous in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Theresa Coffey
Recording Secretary

Document Attached:

Meeting Agenda March 7, 2017

Meeting Minutes of February 14, 2017

FY18 Budget Worksheets in order of discussion:

- Assessor
- Bradstreet & Dodge
- Handicapped Commission
- Health Department
- Historical Commission
- Information Services
- Memorial and Veterans Day
- Personnel Board
- Streetlights
- Town Counsel
- Town Moderator
- Water Department
- Agricultural Commission