

Town of Mansfield

6 Park Row, Mansfield, Massachusetts 02048

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Finance Committee

Meeting Minutes 5.31.2023

Present: Ms. Sara Walsh, Chair, Mr. Scott Feely, Vice Chair, Ms. Greta Thurston, Clerk, Mr. Walter Wilk, Mr. Jack Cooney, and Ms. Melinda Tarsi.

Guest: Mr. Barry LaCasse, Assistant Town Manager and Mr. Kevin Dumas, Town Manger

Minutes: Sharon Varricchione

1. **Call the Meeting to order:** Ms. Sara Walsh, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:05pm.

2. **Approval of Minutes: 5/18/23**

Motion: To adopt the meeting minutes 5/18/2023

Passes: 6:0:1(Feely/Wilk/Flaherty – was absent)

3. **FY23 and FY24 Budget Updates:**

Mr. Lacasse gave an update based upon period 10 and notified the Committee that FY23 is tracking fine in both revenue and expenses with a couple of exceptions to be discussed during the Finance Reserve portion of the agenda.

The revenue side is tracking at \$1.3 million over budgeted with one more month to go which is good news. Mr. Feely asked how the trend was going and Mr. LaCasse said the slope is still going up but feels that we can not expect the trend to continue through FY24 but it is good to know that we are still trending up. He then suggested for FY25 that the next Assistant Town Manager take the liberties that he has taken as he sees the trend plateauing. Mr. Wilk mentioned interest rates are going up and Mr. LaCasse mentioned ironically, they have made over \$300,000 additional in interest income in local receipts and Mr. Wilk mentioned that our stabilization fund should go up too. Mr. LaCasse then said on the minus side, the cost to borrow has gone up. On the plus side, any overbudgeted money will go into Free Cash for next year.

Ms. Walsh asked if there were any changes to the budget. Mr. LaCasse said there is one change. First, he explained why the motions are not distributed earlier and he stated that they want to wait until they have the most recent information and all the Cherry sheets: The Senate Ways and Means and The Conference Committee. Another reason we wait is because we have a lot of Capital Improvement projects and we want to make sure we have the most recent numbers from our Department Heads vendors to verify the correct amounts. He then mentioned that the motions have been out there for some time and have been reviewed and we always strive to get the final ones out there as soon as possible.

4. **Review School FY 23 3rd Quarter Update:**

Ms. Walsh received the Third Quarter Update from the Schools and shared with the Committee. She asked if there were any Committee comments and there were no questions. The Schools said they will provide quarterly updates for the Committee to review.

5. **Finance Committee Reserve Transfers to be determined:**

Mr. LaCasse, asked for a Finance Committee Reserve transfer of \$54,000 which represents the short fall for our Electric Department expenses and offered that last Summer the electric rates increased suddenly and dramatically which we knew would affect our FY23 budget but we didn't know up to what extent. This should be the last request and we would ask for anything else at Town Meeting if we needed to. If this is approved by the Committee, it would leave you with \$141,251.28 in your Finance Committee Reserve which would roll over to Free Cash.

No committee questions

Mr. Feely moved to approve a transfer of \$54,900.00 from the General Fund Reserve Fund to the following accounts:

Public Buildings – Electricity	\$17,500.00
Police – Electricity	\$2,400.00

Fire – Electricity	\$13,000.00
Emergency Management – Electricity	\$4,500.00
DPW Highway – Electricity	\$15,000.00
<u>C.O.A. – Electricity</u>	<u>\$2,500.00</u>
Total	\$54,900.00

Motion: To adopt the meeting minutes 5/18/2023

Passes: 7:0 (Feely/Wilk)

Mr. Wilk inquired about the list of what was coming out of Free Cash and Mr. LaCasse stated it was \$1.4 million heading out of Special Town Meeting into Annual Town Meeting and if all of our transfers are approved at Town Meeting we will still have \$505,409 available Free cash at Town Meeting which is a good position to roll over in next years Free Cash. Mr. Feely said it's important for people to know that if we had a typical winter we may have only had about half of the Free Cash to roll into the next year. Mr. LaCasse also offered that we were able to do more things with Free Cash through CIP verses to have to short term borrow.

6. Town Meeting Warrant Review and Vote:

Article 1

Mr. LaCasse ran through the Draft Article 1 and the three Motions. Motion 1 – is \$400,000.00 from the Healthcare Stabilization Fund. Motion 2 – is the \$100,000 from the Opioid Mitigation Stabilization Fund and Motion 3 – is the Town General Fund budget of \$51,489,660.63.

In addition, Mr. LaCasse wanted to highlight that the Town Manager and Town Counsel met regarding language that would make the Finance Committee and the Towns people feel more comfortable about the Town Managers ability to transfer funds. Mr. LaCasse stated that this is the agreement that he had with the Finance Committee last year where he would notify them of any transfers. Mr. LaCasse then pointed out the new language written by Town Counsel where the Finance Committee would need to be notified of any transfers greater then \$50,000. Mr. Wilk asked how many there were. Mr. LaCasse invited Mr. Dumas into the meeting as he had this number.

Mr. Dumas stated that they had none in FY: 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2023. In FY 2022, there were four account transfers and in FY 2021, there were two. Ms. Walsh said to be clear there were six transfers over \$50,000 in the last five years. In addition to the new language, Mr. LaCasse has a watchlist that he goes over with the Finance Committee for even those funds that are under \$50,000 which is a great communication tool to inform that Finance Committee if they are going over.

Motion: To move to support Article 1

Passes: 7:0 (Feely/Cooney)

Article 2 – Mr. LaCasse stated that Article 2 was for \$57,482,994.00 for the FY24 School Appropriation. This is the number that the School Committee had voted on previously.

Motion: To move to support Article 2

Passes: 7:0 (Feely/Flaherty)

Article 3 – Mr. LaCasse stated that Article 3 was the authorization for the Mansfield Municipal Electric Department to raise money to provide services to the citizens of Mansfield.

Motion: To move to support Article 3

Passes: 7:0 (Feely/Flaherty)

Article 5, Motion 1 – Mr. LaCasse stated this is the budget for the Water Enterprise Fund.

Motion: To move to support Article 5, Motion 1

Passes: 7:0 (Feely/Flaherty)

Article 5, Motion 2 - Mr. LaCasse stated this is the budget for the Sewer Enterprise Fund.

Motion: To move to support Article 5, Motion 2

Passes: 7:0 (Feely/Flaherty)

Mr. Wilk stated that he wanted those who might be watching this Finance Committee meeting to know that these Articles have been previously reviewed and that they are not just seeing them for the first time. Ms. Walsh stated that this is also apart of the whole budget process and that this was not new.

Article 5, Motion 3 - Mr. LaCasse stated this is the budget for the Airport Enterprise budget.

Motion: To move to support Article 5, Motion 3

Passes: 7:0 (Feely/Flaherty)

Article 5, Motion 4 - Mr. LaCasse stated this is the budget for the Parking Enterprise Fund Budget.

Motion: To move to support Article 5, Motion 4

Passes: 7:0 (Feely/Flaherty)

Article 7 motion 1 - Mr. LaCasse stated this is to use \$457,843.00 of Free Cash to purchase the list of Capital Improvement Projects including: GIS Flyover Update, Electronic Conversion of Town Records – Building, Expanding Firewall Layer for Public Safety, Town Hall/COA Security Assessment, MEMA Asbestos Removal, Mansfield Green Trailer, Firearms Replacements, MHS Gym Floors – Design, MHS Elevator Repair and MHS Track/Field Feasibility Study.

Motion: To move to support Article 7, Motion 1

Passes: 7:0 (Feely/Wilk) Mr. Wilk added as approved by CIP too.

Article 7 motion 2 - Mr. LaCasse stated this is to use \$1,157,000.00 to purchase the following: 2 Cruisers, 1 Detective Vehicle, 1 Animal Control Officer Van, 1 Fire car, 1 Trademaster Van, 1 Medium-Duty Dump Truck w/plow, 1 3/4 Ton Pickup Truck w/Plow, 1 Excavator and 1 Special Education Bus.

Motion: To move to support Article 7, Motion 2

Passes: 7:0 (Feely/Flaherty)

Article 7 motion 3 - Mr. LaCasse stated this is the annual request for roads, bridges, and a sidewalk loan authorization for \$2,500,000.00, money that is needed for the projects involved.

Motion: To move to support Article 7, Motion 3

Passes: 7:0 (Feely/Flaherty)

Article 7 motion 4 - Mr. LaCasse stated this is another loan authorization for \$900,000.00 for the replacement of the water mains on Stearns Ave.

Motion: To move to support Article 7, Motion 4

Passes: 7:0 (Feely/Flaherty)

Article 7 motion 5 - not voted on, may wait to Fall Town Meeting as they don't have the numbers.

Article 9 - Mr. LaCasse stated these are the real estate exemptions we ask for every year.

Motion: To move to support Article 9

Passes: 7:0 (Feely/Flaherty)

Article 10 - Mr. LaCasse stated this is to authorize the spending limit for revolving funds

Motion: To move to support Article 10

Passes: 7:0 (Feely/Flaherty)

Article 11- Mr. LaCasse stated this is where we are moving \$160,000.00 of free cash to the future payment of the Accrued Liabilities for Compensated Absences Reserve Fund. This is for those who leave and need to be paid out for any sick time etc.

Motion: To move to support Article 11

Passes: 7:0 (Feely/Flaherty)

Article 13 - Mr. LaCasse stated this is the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) zoning article

Motion: no motion – not voting

Citizens Petition: Mr. LaCasse stated that this was written in from a Citizen, to vote someone off a board. The committee discussed this Petition but did not take a position or vote.

7. Questions from Community: None

8. Committee Updates:

Ms. Walsh spoke with the School Committee Chair and the Select Board Chair regarding having two Tri Board meetings one in August and one in September. The August meeting would be to discuss procedure process and report requirements and the September meeting would be to discuss the parameters to agree upon that would allow the Town and the Schools to do their work in the Fall.

9. Communication in Newsletter:

Ms. Walsh stated that the Newsletter comes out monthly and they have the opportunity to provide a brief for the next version in July. Do we want to put any information in this version, pointing them to the website etc. Mr. Wilk suggested to put an article in that shares the budget process and how it starts in August. Ms. Walsh will get the language together for the Committee to review and comment.

10. Website Discussion:

Ms. Walsh stated that Ms. Tarsi sent the Committee website links for review and should any of these be added to the website. Ms. Walsh said they would review and decide which ones they would like to add to the website and also seek permission first.

11. Future Meeting and Agenda Discussion: 47:09

Ms. Walsh stated the next time they will meet will be on June 15th and then the following meeting will be on August 17th. She then asked Ms. Tarsi if it was too soon to talk about the survey in August. Ms. Tarsi said that she could have a draft for the Committee to review in August.

Ms. Walsh then said she will inquire what the transition plan is for Mr. LaCasse as he is retiring in December.

Ms. Thurston would like discuss the goals at the next meeting so they can assign them to the Committee members. Mr. Cooney as apart of these goals would like to have the department heads come throughout the year regarding their needs so it's not crammed into one timeframe. Mr. Feely said it's so beneficial to hear from them as you can learn so much.

12. Items Not Known in 48 Hours: None

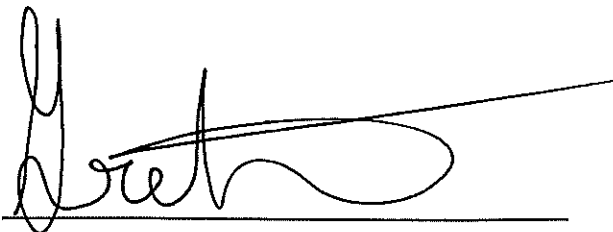
13. Finance Committee Member Comments:

Mr. Flaherty said, good job getting through the budget.

14. Adjournment:

Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 6:55pm.

Passes: 7:0 (Feely/Cooney)



8.17.23

Date