

Brimfield Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: May 09, 2023,

Location: Town Hall

Committee Members Present: Joe Ballou: Chair, Denise DuPont, Mike Moloney, Billie Jean Rubio, Ted Steensen, Nancy Waugh, Patrick Kubala

Staff: Marie Arsenault - Accountant

Called to order: 6:30 p.m.

Joe Ballou asked Committee Members if they reviewed the minutes from the meeting on April 25, 2023. They stated they did review them.

MOTION: Nancy Waugh made a motion to accept the April 25, 2023, minutes as written.

SECOND: Denise DuPont

VOTE: All

Review appropriations balances

Joe Ballou stated that Marie Arsenault, Town Accountant sends the Appropriation Balances out each month. He said he saw that the Town Clerk exceeded the budget for supplies. He asked Marie if that item was resolved. She said she worked with the Town Clerk to move allowable expenses to the Dog Officer account. Joe Ballou asked if that was the Election Expense account that had the deficit. He said there is still another election to run, and Marie stated they can have a deficit for the last two months of the year with the approval of the Finance Committee and Select Board. Joe asked if they needed to vote on this and Marie said they will in July.

Joe stated if the Town Clerk already overspent, is there enough money budgeted or will the budget be in deficit again this coming year. He went on to say that Elections are unpredictable so they will take care of it when it comes up.

Joe asked the Committee members if they have any other questions or discussion regarding appropriation balances. He said he attended the Select Board meeting, along with Nancy Waugh, Denise DuPont, and Marie Arsenault, to discuss the final budget. He said the Select Board agreed to go ahead with the proposed Warrant for the 60/40 split for Health Insurance. During that meeting it was discovered the Building Committee never asked for the \$50,000 for the Building Facilities Study. The Finance Committee said they should reopen Article 24 (now renumbered to 19) and then vote to take no action on it.

MOTION: Mike Maloney made a motion to reopen Article 24.

SECOND: Ted Steensen

VOTE: All

MOTION: Billie Jean Rubio made a motion to take no action on the article for the Building Facilities Study request for \$50,000.

SECOND: Denise DuPont

VOTE: All

MOTION: Nancy Waugh made a motion to approve the article for the Health Insurance split.

SECOND: Mike Maloney

VOTE: All

Joe Ballou stated that the Town Legal Counsel said the Health Insurance split would only pertain to active employees and not retirees. Denise DuPont read out the Article for the Health Insurance Split from the Town Website.

There was a discussion surrounding the numbering of the Articles. They went down the list to renumber and found number 26 was used twice so there are 27 Articles. There were changes so they will make sure all are numbered correctly.

Joe Ballou said he received an email from Mike Doyle (resident) saying he was concerned about the Police Chief's salary since the budget was funding the person and not the position. There was discussion indicating the current Chief would still get the lower salary (as he requested), but the budget should be funded at a higher amount in case the position became vacant, and a new Chief had to be hired. The Committee members said it was better to fund at a comparable rate and if money were left over at the end of the fiscal year, it would go back to free cash. Ted Steensen suggested the \$50,000 from the Building Facilities could be used to increase the Police Chief's salary budget to \$79,740.

There was a discussion about if a new Police Chief came in, what would stop a person from taking more than the salary if the budget has more money than what the Chief's agreed salary was. Ted Steensen asked if there could be a contract. Nancy Waugh asked if the extra money could be kept in a separate account. Joe Ballou stated that the Select Board must sign the time sheets so they should catch it there.

Billie Jean Rubio said that they should continue to budget for the position and add the Cost of Living each year in case they must hire a new chief to make sure there would not be a problem increasing the current Chief's salary from \$60,000 to a much larger salary if needed.

MOTION: Mike Maloney made a motion to reopen 022105112 the Police Chief salary.

SECOND: Patrick Kubala

VOTE: All

MOTION: Mike Maloney made a motion to change the recommended amount for the Police Chief salary to \$79,740.

SECOND: Billie Jean Rubio

VOTE: All

Marie Arsenault indicated that line 22, for \$4,888 should have been budgeted in 2023 only. It was for "Click it or Ticket." She pointed out line 34 to the far right had a formula that was not correct. Mike Maloney said he will go back and check the formula.

Joe Ballou suggested that the extra \$50,000 go into the roads budget since the Highway Supervisor is trying to get the amount to \$100,00. Denise DuPont asked if there is a plan for the budget. Joe Ballou stated the Highway Supervisor uses the money to repair as many roads as he can and does not have a specific plan.

MOTION: Patrick Kubala made a motion to reopen the Town Road Maintenance Account.

SECOND: Denise DuPont

VOTE: All

MOTION: Patrick Kubala made a motion to raise the Town Road Maintenance Account from \$87,180 to \$100,000.

SECOND: Billie Jean Rubio

VOTE: All

MOTION: Patrick Kubala made a motion to reopen the Town Road Maintenance Account.

SECOND: Denise DuPont

VOTE: All

MOTION: Ted Steensen made a motion to reopen Articles 26 and 27.

SECOND: Patrick Kubala

VOTE: All

MOTION: Mike Maloney made a motion for Article 26 to be \$573,714 and Article 27 to be \$178,000.

SECOND: Ted Steensen

VOTE: All

Joe Ballou stated he would send the changes to the Road Maintenance and Police Chief budget changes via email to the Select Board. Mike Maloney said he will finalize the spreadsheet, proof it, and then send it to Joe. There was a discussion surrounding hand outs of the budget for the Town Meeting.

MOTION: Ted Steensen made a motion to adjourn.

SECOND: Denise DuPont

VOTE: All

The meeting adjourned at 7:18 p.m.

The next meeting is June 06, 2023, at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Patricia A. Plasse