

The Wilbraham Finance Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
Council on Aging Dept.  
January 9, 2017  
7:00 p.m.

Present: Dan Miles, Anna Levine, Nancy Piccin, Todd Luzi, Carolyn Brennan, Marc Ducey, Tim Murphy, Kevin Murray

Absent: Mike Mannix

Also present: Lance Trevallion, Town Building Inspector, Paula Dubord, Director of Elder Affairs, Nancy Johnson, Town Accountant

1. **Open Forum:** Mark Ducey had a conversation with a School Committee member over the weekend. As a result of the conversation Al Ganem, Superintendent of HWRSD, reached out to Mark via email. Mark, Dan and Al are trying to set up a time to meet and discuss the school budget. Mark would like to look into outsourcing the janitorial services for the schools. There could be a significant savings in outsourcing the janitorial services. The Town already outsources janitorial services. The funding for janitorial services has not changed significantly over the last few years. The Town has taken on the custodial/maintenance of Memorial School, and the new Fire Station and will have a new Police Station soon. Additional funding is needed for janitorial services for the Town.

2. **FY2018 Budget**

**a1. Facility Maintenance:** Ron Rauscher was unable to attend the meeting. Lance Trevallion presented the FY2018 proposed budget for Facility Maintenance Department. Requests for additions to the budget include:

- \$2000 for lawn maintenance at Gazebo Park
- \$1,800 increase to the maintenance of Sevey Park. It has had major improvements over the last year and therefore the maintenance has increased.
- \$17,000.00 increase in the maintenance of the main Fire Station. The Fire Station has tripled in size, and yet no increase has been made to the budget to account for the increased custodial work, maintenance or inspections since the new Fire Station opened.
- \$28,000 for maintenance of the new Police Station. This would cover all inspections (Elevator, Boiler, Fire Alarm, Monthly Security, Lock-up), Maintenance and Custodial. In Police Chief Tucker's narrative, he expressed great concern that if the same level of custodial service continues at the new station then a problem will develop in short order.

Ron also wants everyone to be aware that Memorial School needs maintenance and some consideration should be made there. Currently the town is taking on all the costs of maintaining an empty building. It was noted that the Lower Pioneer Valley Educational Collaborative toured the building as a possible site for their operations. There are other possible options of renting out the building to maintain it as an educational facility. If it is not used in an educational manner for an extended period of time, then many code issues will kick in. Clarification needs to be made regarding what Ron pays for from his budget for the Police Station's maintenance/custodial, and what Roger pays for from the Police budget. It was decided

that Ron needs to attend a Finance committee meeting to break down what the \$28,000 would be used for on the new Police Station, and other questions. Lance pointed out that we have just one facility person that takes care of 7-8 buildings, and several parks, compared to the staff the high school has employed. Just the energy management in all the buildings to keep employees comfortable is an involved process and it takes time. It's a lot of work for one person. They sub everything out, and the bidding process is time consuming.

**a2. Inspectors:** Lance increased the Training budget by \$150, as training requirements for all inspectors are increasing, plumbing inspector especially. The Books/Periodicals has increased \$100, had a code change this year, so they need new code books. Other than that the budget stays the same. Lance announced he will retire a year from June. He believes we may need a part-time building inspector, after he retires. Or at least contract an inspector and pay them per inspection fee, as we currently do for electrical and plumbing.

**b. Council on Aging:** The biggest changes in her budget is shifting some funds around, only increasing her bottom line budget by \$100 from FY2017. She provided some reports to the Finance Committee to let them know what Council on Aging does, who they serve and how many people they serve a year. Paula informed the committee that there are 4000 seniors in Wilbraham. There are more seniors than students in the school system, yet Wilbraham has the smallest Senior Center in the area. They cannot keep up with the service demands. Carolyn interjected that this side of 495 Wilbraham has one of the smallest Senior Centers for this size community. Anna asked how the Friends' fund raising was going. Paula stated that the funding raising has hit a stall. The Friends are a very dedicated group of 20 seniors, some of them as much as 85 years old, trying to sell cookies. To date they have raised approximately \$180,000, for a new senior center. The biggest challenge the senior center has is their facility. It is much too small. They have had a feasibility study, and every possible piece of property in Wilbraham has been looked at for a new location, even property that is not for sale. Three to five acres are needed, which includes enough space for parking. They haven't been able to find a suitable location. Paula has been asking the Select Board, for over a year, to talk to the school committee if there is a school available, with no answer. So at this point they are at a standstill in regards to finding a new location. The ideal location for a senior center is near senior housing. Paula learned last week that they have lost their meal program here. Greater Springfield Senior Services provides the meals of them. Since the senior center moved into the YMCA building, the meals have declined steadily, down to Mondays only, and now they have lost that. The loss of the GSSS is due to lack of participation, and Paula feels participation would increase greatly if they had a facility that could accommodate seniors comfortably. The space they use for senior lunches is shared with the YMCA, and they only have 50 minutes to serve lunch on Mondays. We currently pay \$7,868 per month to rent that space for the senior center and the recreation department. The YMCA does not pay tax to the town for renting out that location. The meal program is essentially dead. Carolyn pointed out that a meals program is important to an older adult to be able to hang out and socialize, it becomes their home. She offered to all to tour the senior center facility in East Longmeadow, in which she is the director with 14 employees. It is three times the size of Wilbraham's. It's too bad that the feasibility study for the senior center and the police station happened at the same time, as it was a losing battle for the senior center. Paula and her staff decided to continue the meal program on Monday's without the support of GSSS. They will make grilled cheese and soup; or order pizza to keep it going, they do not want to lose the program. Paula provided some charts and graphs detailing the services/programs she offers and the number of seniors who participated in the services/programs. Paula pointed out that by 2020, 46% of Wilbraham's population will be considered senior. Paula took the Committee on a tour of the center and explained the many shortcomings of the space.

**c. Liaison updates:** The committee discussed when each liaison will meet up with the department head, and what to discuss with each. The next Finance Committee meeting will be Wednesday, January 18, 2017 at the DPW. There will also be one on Mondays, January 23<sup>rd</sup> and January 30<sup>th</sup>, locations to be determined.

**3. Vote Minutes:**

MOTION: Accept the minutes for the November 7, 2016 Finance Committee meeting. Seconded, voted unanimously.

Motion to adjourn, seconded, and voted unanimously.

Debbie Brennan  
Staff Accountant