

The Wilbraham Finance Committee
Meeting Minutes
Town Hall
March 14, 2016
7:00 p.m.

Present: Dan Miles, Walt Damon, Anna Levine, Carolyn Brennan, Mike Mannix,
Todd Luzi, John Guzzo

Absent: Nancy Piccin

Also present: Town Accountant Nancy Johnson, Town Collector/Treasurer Tom Sullivan, Recreation Director Bryan Litz, Board of Selectmen Sue Bunnell and Bob Boilard, and Town Administrator Nick Breault.

FY-2017 Budget

Recreation Department

Bryan Litz started by explaining the three sources of income for the Recreation department:

1. General Fund.
 - 80% of this is for salaries
2. Revolving Account
 - 100% self-sufficient
 - 100% funded by program fees
 - Reviews/adjusts fees per program annually to ensure most, if not all, programs pay for themselves.
3. Fund Raising groups
 - Friends of Recreation is their primary fundraiser, a 501-C3 group
 - Also, Football Association, Lacrosse association, Disc golf association, Wrestling Association, etc.
 - Works with them hand-in-hand to ensure capital costs are covered. Most of these associations give a couple thousand a year for maintenance of the specific facilities they use.

The fees the Spec Pond facility brings in are turned around and put back into the maintenance of the facility. Bryan presented the committee with a spreadsheet of fees collected per program into the revolving account and expenses paid out per program. Hampden residents are charged a few dollars more per program to help defray administrative and maintenance costs that would otherwise come out of the general fund or the revolving account. A couple years ago Bryan suggested to the Hampden Rec Commission to pay a yearly assessment, which would be spread out among Hampden's tax base. This would have brought Hampden registration fees down to the cost of Wilbraham registration fees, in essence making a regional Park & Rec department. The Hampden Commission declined the offer. Bryan noted that it is very rare for a student to be turned away from a program, and typically the reason they would be turned away is that they tried to register too late in the sport season.

The FY-2017 budget is level funded for expenses with one exception. The way trash was being collected from the Spec Pond facility was not working for our DRC. The trash and recyclables were being put all in the same bags. The Grounds & Building Maintenance line for Recreation was increased \$2000 (which is being transferred from a line item in Solid Waste) in order to hire a company for trash collection. Spec Pond will now have a 10 yd dumpster and single stream recycling. Bryan noted that he typically runs out of general funds prior to the end of the fiscal year and the revolving fund is used to

pay costs to up to the end of the fiscal year.

School Budget

Dan opened the discussion by saying the BOS is offering \$260,000 of the non-recurring \$360,000 that was given to the school district in FY-2016. With this \$260,000, the proposed Regional School Assessment is \$22,212,974, and a debt of \$1,687,868 for a total budget of \$23,900,842. The school is also using approximately \$600,000 from their excess and deficiency fund, and even with that, the school is running a \$500,000 deficit for FY-2107 budget. Walt commented that it is early in the budget process and the school still does not yet know exactly what the State will be giving them. The Finance Committee feels Hampden will also agree with their 25% matching funds to the \$260,000. When the school presented the budget to the Finance Committee, Beth R. did say she was using conservative numbers, and Anna wanted the Finance Committee to keep that in mind when voting on the \$260,000. Dan pointed out that the levy limit gives us \$1,100,000 per year, and we are considering giving the schools approximately \$900,000, if you include the \$260,000. Anna pointed out that \$260,000 is a little over 1% of the Wilbraham's total assessment. Bob Boilard reminded the committee that even with the \$260,000 the School is still in a \$500,000 deficit, and not giving them the extra money would just put them in a larger hole. The Finance committee would like to see the School line budget for FY-2017.

MOTION: Recommend to the BOS to fund the Regional School Assessment \$21,952,974, which is less the \$260,000. Seconded, 2 approved, 4 opposed, 1 abstained, motion failed.

MOTION: Recommend to the BOS to fund the Regional School Assessment for FY-2017 \$22,212,974, which includes the additional \$260,000. Seconded, 4 approved, 3 opposed, motion passed.

Dan informed the committee that budgets can be reopened and re-voted if new information is made available, or if there are members not present during a vote. There was some discussion who is allowed to reopen the budget.

Additional Funding List

Dan would like the Finance Committee to prioritize the Additional funding list:

1. Highway/wastewater full-time position, \$26,000.00
2. Library part-time position, \$16,279
3. New patrolman, \$53,000
4. New copier for the Council on Aging, \$5,835
5. Tree Warden for tree removal, \$5,000
6. Selectman dues, \$4,930

Dan would pay the non-recurring copier and selectman dues. Paying recurring items are a little more difficult. Mike suggests the need for a new patrolman is temporary as it would be used to cover people who are out on injury leave, and these people will come back. He also would like to hold off on the dispatch position as there may be a regionalization of dispatching. Mike would like to know how many 911 calls dispatch receives in a year. Dan pointed out the supervisor in Dispatch at times has to cover shifts that would otherwise go uncovered; she does not get paid for these shifts. Walt's top priority is the Dispatch position and least priority is the copier. He would like to see the COA go to the state bid list to find a cost of a copier. Carolyn Brennan, who works for the COA in another town, says the price Paula received on a new copier is very reasonable, and a copier is imperative for that department, used hundreds of times throughout the day. Regarding the Highway/Wastewater position, Federal unfunded mandates are requiring the cleaning of catch basins and sewer lines. Dan has suggested that each member prioritize the Additional Funding list individually and bring their list to the next meeting so they

can have a solid place to start to determine which, if any, Additional funding items are funded. Dan feels the copier and the selectman travel/training are so small that they could come off the list. Carolyn asked if she could make a motion.

MOTION: To add the cost of a new copier for \$5,835 to the Council on Aging budget, and add the cost of selectmen training/travel for \$4,930 to the selectmen's budget. Seconded, 4 in favor, 2 opposed (Anna did not vote)

Next Finance Committee meeting is March 21, 2016

Motion was made to adjourn at 8:53p.m. Seconded, voted unanimously.

Debbie Brennan
Staff Accountan