**Harwich Finance Committee**

**Minutes**

**Small Meeting Room- Town Hall**

**732 Main Street, Harwich, MA 02645**

**Meeting Time: 6:30 PM**

**Thursday**

**December 19, 2019**

**Members Present:** Jack Brown, Jon Chorey, Angelo LaMantia, Tom Sherry, Carol Coppola (Town Accountant)

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM
2. **Public Comment**: There was a brief conversation with a prospective Finance Committee member
3. **Approval of Minutes:** No minutes were submitted for approval
4. **New Business:** Town Accountant Carol Coppola explained some of the details of a report on 1st Quarter Revenues and Expenditures that she prepared. Carol stated that the budget was “tracking normal” in the 1st quarter. The Governor approved the State’s supplemental budget, which officially allocated funds to Harwich for reimbursement of costs related to this past summer’s tornado. The total amount the Town submitted to the State was approved (Approximately $1.2 million), however a date for receipt of these funds has not yet been received. Jack Brown wants to keep tight tabs on this money and where it goes. Tornado funds disbursed by the Town have been accounted for separately by the Town Accountant. A breakdown of the major components of Free Cash was given by the Town Accountant. Carol stated that the upcoming budget year would be difficult. The Board of Selectmen’s official budget message was for an increase in taxes of 2%. However, the Board of Selectmen recently approved several collective bargaining agreements with increases of 6-7%. Jon Chorey referenced the Town Accountant’s recent informational event on town budgeting, citing that around 80-85% of budgets are salary and wages. There was a recognition that these salary and wage increases are not consistent with the Selectman’s own budget message of 2%.

Jon Chorey suggested increasing the hours of the attorney’s who are very successfully collecting back taxes. The Town Accountant said that she will talk to these attorneys about doing more of this work for the town.

Angelo stated that those town departments that bring in more money than they spend should not be as heavily scrutinized when they need some money appropriated for a small expense. He doesn’t believe that it is clear to members of Town Meeting that some departments cover or more than cover their own expenses with fees and other revenue.

Jack referenced cash that some town departments keep on hand for use in daily business. The Town Accountant said that Petty Cash Funds have been taken control of and that departments must report to the town the balance of these funds. The Town Accountant’s office has also worked to reduce Petty Cash Funds.

*Segal*, an actuarial accounting company, produced a breakdown of Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) liabilities by town department at the request of the Town Accountant. Carol stated that she believes the Finance Committee will be surprised by the results.

Jack Brown provided Literature on the Massachusetts Mutual Association. The Town has a small amount of money to help pay expenses for some Finance Committee Members to attend the Mass Mutual Association Meeting, which is January 17th. A brief discussion ensued on spending this money “as if it was your own” and the logistics of attending.

A request for a motion was made by Jack to pay WB Mason for name plates and holders in the amount of $83.38. This motion was made by Tom Sherry and seconded by Jon Chorey. Approved Unaminously.

1. **Next Meeting:** There is a joint meeting between the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee to discuss the Town’s Capital Outlay Plan on 12/23/2019 and on 1/6/2019.
2. **Adjournment:** Tom Sherry made the motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Jon Chorey. The vote to adjourn was unaminous, which concluded the meeting at 6:50 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeffrey Hadley