

## Harwich Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

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Thursday, March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at 6:30pm  
Harwich Community Center, Rm 3  
100 Oak St., Harwich, MA

**Members Present:** Jack Brown (Chair); Dana DeCosta; Laurie Gillespie Lee; Mark Ameres; Edward McManus

**Members Absent:** Jon Chorey

**Others Present:** Chris Clark (Town Administrator)

**I. Call to Order** The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by Mr. Brown.

### II. Topics for Discussion and Possible Votes

#### A. Discuss the 2-3-18 Town Administrator-led FY19 Budget Presentation and Budget Message.

A significant amount of money is being requested this year as opposed to previous years, with wastewater being a major portion limiting other potential allocations.

Clark notes that the sewer project is difficult expense to absorb given the Town's size and therefore a difficult fiscal year is inevitable. Limited changes have been made to the debt charts and targets remain. Project numbers are large with extended payback debt horizon. The largest projects include the fire station which is needed and the sewer project which is a requirement.

The Committee raised the importance of providing explanation of the debt situation at the Town Meeting. The Chair highlighted the need to review the Monomoy school budget where additional input/discussion is needed prior to making recommendations as the \$139,000 budget reduction was minimal in relation to the total allocation.

In response, Clark notes the budget allocation as a net zero increase overall. He believes that the budget is in line with expectations particularly considering Barnstable County as a whole, Harwich's budget comes in on the low end of the scale and it's preferable to be on the average.

Additional conversation regarding overtime (OT) budget took place. The Town has limited discretion regarding OT allocation for training elements. Natural climate events are out of our control. Unions have established "minimum manning regulations" for emergency staff, further reducing the Town's ability to limit OT. Towns have generally been advised to pay the OT to mitigate legal repercussions. Additionally, despite adding additional workers to the Town's payroll, OT has not stabilized and has in fact increased.

DeCosta added that while Harwich is on the low end of the 15 towns in terms of budget, we're also one of the smaller Towns. He feels that we should look at the staffing issues to better understand why we're consistently running into OT issues despite the additional staff. Looking at the use of provisional workers may be relevant. McManus brought up the fact that aspirants in other states are required to pay for their own training. These considerations may be reviewed.

DeCosta volunteers to write explanations for FinCom's recommendations to provide additional illumination.

Finally, the Chair notes that without a full complement of charter strength, the Finance Committee struggles to fulfill its mission. It is important that the additional appointments be made to facilitate the Committee's work.

**B. Agree on which Departments and Warrant Articles we want to discuss and get them set up.**

Motions for Articles to appear in Annual Town Meeting Warrant for May 7<sup>th</sup> 2018:

- On a motion by DeCosta seconded by Gillespie-Lee, the Finance Committee votes to support **Article 1: Town Officers & Committees** a no charge article.
  - No abstentions, none opposed, approved unanimously
- On a motion by DeCosta seconded by Gillespie-Lee, the Finance Committee votes to support **Article 2: Reports of Town Officers & Committees**, a no charge article
  - No abstentions, none opposed, approved unanimously

**Article 3: Elected Officials Salaries in Budget Discussion:**

There is general concern regarding the "salary range" approach to this position. The key issue here is the difference between elected and appointed positions. While the \$75,910-\$94,803 feels appropriate to the Committee, additional information/clarity is required to understand how this salary range compares to other comparable grade positions.

Additionally, it is important that the personnel bylaw be amended to detail how a candidate moves through the steps of the salary range. In order to determine whether to recommend a specific salary for the position or support the proposed range, further review is required. The Committee agrees to return to this discussion at the next meeting.

- On a motion by DeCosta, seconded by Ameres we move to accept and adopt **Article 6: Cape Cod Technical School District Budget** at \$1,581,237.
  - No abstentions, none opposed, approved unanimously

- On a motion by DeCosta, seconded by Gillespie-Lee we move to accept and adopt **Article 7: Water Department Budget** at \$4,238,297.
  - No abstentions, none opposed, approved unanimously
- On a motion by DeCosta, seconded by Ameres. we move to accept and adopt **Article 8: Adopt the Capital Plan**, a no charge article.
  - No abstentions, none opposed, approved unanimously
- On a motion by DeCosta, seconded by Gillespie Lee we move no recommendation pending further information on **Articles 11: Fund Snow & Ice Deficit from FY2018** and **Article 12: Fund Shortfalls in Budget Transfers for FY2018** at \$25,000 and \$100,000 respectively.
  - No abstentions, none opposed, approved unanimously.
- On a motion by McManus, seconded by DeCosta we move to accept and adopt **Article 13: Rescind Amounts in Long Term Debt authorized by Vote of the Town for Various Purposes That Is No Longer Needed.**
  - No abstentions, none opposed, approved unanimously
- On a motion by DeCosta, seconded by Gillespie Lee we move no recommendation pending further information on **Article 14: Fund the Construction of Phase II of the CWMP** at \$22,450,000.
  - No abstentions, none opposed, approved unanimously.
- On a motion by DeCosta, seconded by McManus we move to accept and adopt **Article 15: DHY Clean Waters Community Partnership** a no charge article.
  - No abstentions, none opposed, approved unanimously
- On a motion by DeCosta, seconded by McManus we move to accept and adopt **Article 16: Sewer Enterprise Fund** \$90,000.00 to be raised and appropriated.
  - No abstentions, none opposed, approved unanimously.
- On a motion by DeCosta, seconded by Ameres we move to accept and adopt **Article 17: Lower County Road Project for FY18** \$1,018,700 to come from retained earnings.
  - No abstentions, none opposed, approved unanimously.
- On a motion by DeCosta, seconded by Ameres we move to accept and adopt **Article 18: Repave Access Roads to Well Sites** at \$175,000.
  - No abstentions, none opposed, approved unanimously.
- On a motion by McManus, seconded by Ameres we move to accept and adopt **Article 19: Purchase Utility Trucks for the Water Department** at \$110,000.
  - No abstentions, 1 opposed, approved 0-1-4.

- On a motion by McManus, seconded by DeCosta we move to accept and adopt **Article 20: Re-appropriation of Bond Proceeds** at \$59,768.
  - No abstentions, none opposed, approved unanimously.
- On a motion by McManus, seconded by DeCosta we move to accept and adopt **Article 21: Purchase and Equip Vehicles for the DPW** at \$215,000 and **Article 22: Road Maintenance Program** at \$700,000.
  - No abstentions, none opposed, approved unanimously.
- On a motion by Ameres, seconded by DeCosta we move to accept and adopt **Article 23: Purchase New Replacement Ambulance** at \$340,000.
  - No abstentions, none opposed, approved unanimously.
- On a motion by DeCosta, seconded by Gillespie-Lee we move no recommendation pending further information on **Article 24: Construction of Station II** at \$6,050,000.
  - No abstentions, none opposed, approved unanimously.

Additionally, the Committee agreed to further discuss the relevant Marijuana bylaws and attending Articles, particularly as they relate to potential financial/economic development.

**C. Discuss Mr. Chorey’s study progress on all approved warrant articles at Town Meetings for the past 5 years. The intent is to see what the approved amount was for the articles, how the article was to be funded, what was actually spent on the article and what articles were approved but not acted upon.** No discussion

**D. Review Liaisons Assignments and change as needed.** No discussion

Motion to adjourn by Chair, seconded by Ameres.

Adjourned at 8:40pm

Respectfully Submitted,

*Sarah Manion*