

Harwich Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

April 26th, 2018 at 7:00pm
Harwich Community Center, Rm 3
100 Oak St., Harwich, MA

Members Present: *Jack Brown (Chair); Mark Ameres; Edward McManus; Jon Chorey; Angelo LaMantia*

Members Absent: *Dana DeCosta; Laurie Gillespie Lee*

Others Present: *Chris Clark (Town Administrator); Carol Coppola (Finance Director)*

I. Call to Order The meeting was called to order at 7:05pm by Mr. Brown.

II. Topics for Discussion

A. Discuss Unvoted Warrant Articles and “NRPFI” articles and vote as presented or vote amendments.

- On a motion by Ameres seconded by McManus, to reconsider **Article 11: Fund Snow & Ice Defecit From FY2018** at \$250,000 from free cash.
 - No abstentions, none opposed, approved unanimously.
- On a motion by Ameres seconded by McManus, we move to accept and adopt **Article 11: Fund Snow & Ice Defecit From FY2018** at \$250,000 from free cash.
 - No abstentions, none opposed, approved unanimously.
- On a motion by Ameres seconded by McManus, we move to reconsider **Article 12: Fund Shortfalls in Budget Transfers for FY2018** at \$100,000 from Free Cash.
 - No abstentions, none opposed, approved unanimously.
- On a motion by Ameres seconded by McManus, we move to accept and adopt **Article 12: Fund Shortfalls in Budget Transfers for FY2018** at \$100,000 from Free Cash.
 - No abstentions, none opposed, approved unanimously.

Article 14 Discussion:

Clark notes that the original budget was an outdated estimate. The numbers are now believed to be more reliable as similar projects have come in in line with estimated budgets.

On the Chatham pump station, a volume assumption was made based on utilization. The original presumption was incorrect as the pump station will primarily service Harwich instead of Chatham. In closing, Chatham isn't connecting as many homes as originally envisaged into the station which results in the estimate change.

- On a motion by Ameres seconded by McManus, we move to reconsider **Article 14: Fund Construction of Phase II of the CWMP** now at \$24,775,00.
 - No abstentions, none opposed, approved unanimously.
- On a motion by Ameres seconded by McManus, we move to accept and adopt **Article 14: Fund Construction of Phase II of the CWMP** at \$22,450,000.
 - No abstentions, none opposed, approved unanimously.
- On a motion by McManus seconded by Ameres, we move to reconsider **Article 48: Reserve Appropriation Amounts for CPC Accounts** at \$492,909.
 - No abstentions, none opposed, approved unanimously.
- On a motion by McManus seconded by Ameres, we move to accept and adopt **Article 48: Reserve Appropriation Amounts for CPC Accounts** at \$492,909.
 - No abstentions, none opposed, approved unanimously.
- On a motion by McManus seconded by Ameres, we move to reconsider **Article 66: Stabilization Fund.**
 - No abstentions, none opposed, approved unanimously.
- On a motion by McManus seconded by Ameres, we move to accept and adopt **Article 66: Stabilization Fund** at \$600,000 from free cash.
 - No abstentions, none opposed, approved unanimously.
- On a motion by Ameres seconded by McManus we move to reconsider **Article 67: OPED Trust Fund.**
 - No abstentions, none opposed, approved unanimously.
- On a motion by Ameres seconded by McManus we move to accept and adopt **Article 67: OPED Trust Fund** at \$700,000 from free cash.
 - No abstentions, none opposed, approved unanimously.
- On a motion by McManus seconded by Ameres we move to reconsider **Article 68: Fund Prior Year's Unpaid Bills.**
 - No abstentions, none opposed, approved unanimously.
- On a motion by McManus seconded by Ameres we move to accept and adopt **Article 68: Fund Prior Year's Unpaid Bills** at \$10,500 from free cash.
 - No abstentions, none opposed, approved unanimously.

Articles 25, 26 & 27: Pet Cemetery Discussion:

Chorey is concerned that he has yet to see a comprehensive business plan with numbers backed by industry standards and the committee voted to approve the relevant articles. He further notes that the Town personnel don't possess the necessary expertise in the sector.

The committee shared then shared the business plan with Mr. Chorey that had been presented and reviewed at previous meetings.

Clark responded that since we're not in the private sector, the Town's primary focus is to recover direct costs in order to avoid undue liability to the tax payer. The revenue projections were based on very conservative assumptions. There will be minimal financial impact to the voters as it will basically fund itself. Additionally, the revenue could be used to offset the Head of the Cemetery Department's salary.

LaMantia raised the point that regardless of the viability of the idea, it simply may not pass at Town Meeting. The argument has been made that the Town is "putting people out of business" when the reality is the true intent is to assist/support the residents of the Town. There may be ways to lower the cost by increasing the debt horizon.

The Chair adds that overall the Town needs to improve efforts to promote revenue generation. This is a project that could reduce or slow the rate of growth of the tax increase.

McManus adds that given the public's lack of information on the project, there is little chance of the project passing and the Committee should consider reconsidering the relevant Articles to indefinitely postpone to provide more time for a full presentation to be given to public.

The FY19 Finance Committee Liaison sheet was presented to the committee. The Chair requested that all members review the assignments and provide feedback after Town Meeting.

Additionally, the Chair requested that committee members be prepared to be spokespeople for the various articles in order to provide additional information at Town Meeting.

Motion to adjourn by DeCosta seconded by Ameres.

Adjourned at 8:20pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sarah Manion