



Town of Medway

FINANCE COMMITTEE

155 Village Street
Medway MA 02053

Tel: (508) 533-3200

Fax: (508) 533-3201

Wednesday, September 9, 2020 – 7:00 PM
Sanford Hall, Town Hall
155 Village Street

Meeting by Remote Access Only

Participating Remotely: Frank Rossi, Chair; Todd Alessandri, Vice Chair; Ellen Hillery, Clerk; Brian Cowan; Will Lane; Jeff O'Neill; Sue Segarra; Jim Sullivan.

Absent: Michael Schrader.

Staff Participating Remotely: Michael Boynton, Town Administrator; Carol Pratt, Finance Director; Dennis Crowley, Board of Selectmen.

Call to Order

At 7:02 PM Chairman Alessandri called the meeting to order and reviewed the meeting agenda. As is the case when a member attends via remote participation, all votes will be by roll call.

Discussion – Update on COVID expenses and FY20 budget close

Mr. Michael Boynton, Town Manager, reported that the Town got through FY20 without any issues, adding he was very positive about the way the year closed out. He acknowledged that a lot of things were not taking place due to COVID but other things were happening. He stated that he expected to hear about the certified free cash in the coming weeks. With people at the state level also working remotely, things are not the same as before. We anticipate that there will be a level funding of FY20 state aid, cautioning that if the federal funds do not come in, the state will go back and revisit the allotments. The state has recommended that communities use the estimates put in place at their Annual Town Meetings to keep things level. He reported that a state budget was not yet finalized.

Continuing, Mr. Boynton announced that there is a COVID-related \$124,000 pass-through cost on the DPW facility. Between the school side and Superintendent's office, they are working on getting the schools ready to open next week. We have \$1.1 million CARES Act funding available and we are preparing our list of eligible expenses. There are a handful of expenditures on the Town side which we are tracking for reimbursement. He expressed thanks to the department heads and the Finance division who are keeping track of those expenses. Brief discussion followed during which various types of costs relative to COVID are part of department budgets. It was noted that all the building-related costs are going through DPW.

Ms. Pratt reported that there are several grants that are coming to Medway which help mitigate the costs, allowing the City to save using the COVID funding as long as possible.

Ms. Hillery asked how the Town learns about grant opportunities; Ms. Pratt noted that this information often comes to them and they do not have to look for it. A couple were still in the application process. One is for technical assistance in the amount of \$24,000. All the potential grant opportunities add up to \$1.8 million. Agencies are contacting communities with these opportunities.

It was noted that Circuit Breaker and other school funding sources are unknown.

Regarding capital planning, Mr. Boynton stated that the Town uses free cash to take care of some capital items and never use it for operating expenditures. We will review it in the same way we have done in past years. This will give the Capital Improvement Planning Committee time to review all the requests followed by their meetings with department heads, and proceed from there.

Brief discussion followed on Fall Town Meeting. Mr. Boynton reported that there were items deferred from the spring which may or may not move forward. He added that he is not anticipating any major financial articles.

At this time, Ms. Pratt reported that the Town has received its Standard & Poor bond rating again at the AAA level. The Town bid on a bond today for \$8.8 million which includes \$2.3 million for water infrastructure, \$5.5 for Brentwood and some other little pieces. It came in at an interest rate of 1.374%.

Mr. Boynton clarified comments made on social media the past week. He noted that there will likely be an increase in water and sewer rates but part of that is necessary due to upcoming expenses as well as a new housing development coming on board. He responded to the questions posed about putting money aside for these expenditures. In order to minimize the rate and keep it from skyrocketing the Board of Selectmen opted to utilize mitigation funds toward the expensive water projects that are coming up. He pointed out that people were staying home during the pandemic and using more residential water which skews the typical usage amounts. Chairman Alessandri noted that the DPW Director provided some very informative documents explaining many things that are a result of the pandemic. Mr. Boynton thanked the Finance Committee for being supportive throughout these challenging times.

Mr. Rossi reported that he recently participated in live fire training. It was an amazing experience, and he has a whole new respect for firefighters. The turnout gear is very heavy, and he wore it crawling into a burning house. The lack of visibility in a smoke filled house was unbelievable. Mr. Boynton added that the training house was donated, and gave kudos to the Fire Chief and Deputy Fire Chief for putting together the training. He related a recent fire incident where all staff were at the scene, and the station was covered by another community via mutual aid agreement.

At this time, Mr. Crowley asked Ms. Pratt to run the revised numbers for the bond deficit for water infrastructure and Brentwood. He was interested in seeing the impact for next year with the new rate.

At 7:27 PM Mr. Boynton, Ms. Pratt and Mr. Crowley exited the meeting.

Reports

Chairman Alessandri announced that the Board of Selectmen approved the budget calendar for FY22.

Ms. Hillery, Clerk, stated there is no report as there is no change from the last one.

Regarding Liaison Assignments, Chairman Alessandri suggested members start reaching out to their departments.

Mr. Rossi reported the OPEB account is up to \$1.2 million as of the end of August.

Lastly, Chairman Alessandri suggested that the committee connect with Mr. Aicardi at the schools for an update on aligning the school budget.

Approval of Minutes

The committee reviewed draft minutes from July 8, 2020.

Mr. O'Neill made a motion to approve the minutes of July 8, 2020 as amended; Mr. Rossi seconded. No discussion. ROLL CALL VOTE: 8-0-0 (Alessandri, aye; Cowan, aye; Hillery, aye; Lane, aye; O'Neill, aye; Rossi, aye; Segarra, aye; Sullivan, aye).

Upcoming Dates

The next meeting is Wednesday, October 14. By then we hope to know more about Fall Town Meeting which is scheduled for November 16 at 7 PM. It was noted that the date of the regular November meeting falls on Wednesday, November 11, which is Veterans' Day. Brief discussion followed during which it was noted that, if no financial articles come forward, a public hearing may not be necessary.

Adjourn

At 7:39 PM Mr. Rossi made a motion to adjourn; Ms. Hillery seconded. No discussion. ROLL CALL VOTE: 8-0-0 (Alessandri, aye; Cowan, aye; Hillery, aye; Lane, aye; O'Neill, aye; Rossi, aye; Segarra, aye; Sullivan, aye).

Respectfully submitted,
Jeanette Galliardt