



Town of Medway
FINANCE COMMITTEE

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Wednesday, February 10, 2021 – 7:00 PM
Sanford Hall, Town Hall
155 Village Street

Present in person: Todd Alessandri, Chair; Frank Rossi, Vice Chair; Jeff O'Neill.

Participating Remotely: Ellen Hillery, Clerk; Brian Cowan; Will Lane; Michael Schrader; Sue Segarra; Jim Sullivan.

Staff Participating Remotely: Carol Pratt, Finance Director; Julie Harrington, Director, Parks & Recreation.

Others Participating Remotely: Deb Rossi, Chair, Parks & Recreation Commission; Dennis Crowley, Selectman.

Call to Order

At 7:03 PM Chairman Alessandri called the meeting to order, noting that three members were present in the meeting room, and six members were participating remotely via teleconferencing. He shared the items on tonight's agenda. All votes will be by roll call as is customary with remote participation.

Discussion of Parks Revolving Account

Present: Carol Pratt, Finance Director; Deb Rossi, Chair, Parks & Recreation Commission; Julie Harrington, Director, Parks & Recreation.

Ms. Pratt explained that this item was placed on the agenda was to review the costs and revenues from the prior year, and how to handle things going forward. There is a possibility that there will be a negative balance at the end of the fiscal year, given that the fields have not been in use and fees are not coming in. She noted that she anticipated that the ending balance may be a -\$40,000. She was hopeful that the negative balance may be offset by the beginning balance of \$40,000+.

Ms. Rossi reported that mosquito issues and possibility of EEE created issues for use of the fields, necessitating that events were being cancelled even in 2019. In the spring of 2020, the coronavirus became prevalent, and no revenue was coming in. There were still expenses for mowing the lawns, provided portable toilets, and other things regardless of whether or not the fields were in use. She explained that the commission has been keeping an eye on things and have started to schedule things with the expectation that the pandemic and restrictions may continue longer than they would hope.

She added that there is a unique Wedge Season for football, but the fields have to be cleared for use before a game. It is around \$3,000 for all three fields to be cleared. That cost is not in the budget, given the lack of revenue in the revolving account. Snow removal will be completed by the Department of Public Works, but not until after their street and sidewalk work is done.

Ms. Rossi stated that Ms. Harrington is working hard to get spring programs in place and so far it is a positive balance. Hopefully this will avoid a funds transfer.

Mr. Sullivan asked for a projection of expenses and revenue coming up so the Finance Committee is aware of how things are going. Ms. Pratt agreed to forward it. Ms. Rossi added that expenses are expected to total around \$185,000 which is an average of the last three years. The revenue is estimated at \$125,000 to \$150,000. Brief discussion followed during which it was noted that the Commission may still need to come back to Finance Committee for additional support. Use of the stabilization fund is not possible without a Town Meeting vote; those funds have to be used for the fields, not to cover operating expenses.

Ms. Pratt noted that there are a lot of COVID-19 expenses and some of those were not eligible for reimbursement. Free cash has already been earmarked. The Capital Improvement Planning Committee will be presenting the capital plan showing how free cash will be used. If there are unused funds as the end of the fiscal year approaches, those could be transferred to Parks & Recreation.

Selectmen Crowley theorized that, if the Reserve Fund is not used, perhaps the unused funds could be used. Every year the Board of Selectmen puts \$50,000 into the Athletic Field Stabilization Fund to be used for replacement of the fields. Ms. Pratt noted that the Athletic Field Stabilization Fund balance is approximately \$300,000 right now though there was not an allocation last year.

Brief discussion followed on various funding options. Could the Finance Committee Reserve Fund monies be used or the contribution be made out of free cash? An ETR, formerly known as Emergency Transfer Request and now called a Request for Transfer from the Finance Committee Reserve Fund, is for expenses that are Unbudgeted, Unanticipated, and Necessary. This use would meet those criteria. Transfers between departments could be done, but the Finance Committee has to vote on a budget transfer or disbursement. Ms. Rossi theorized that, if the department can get over this present hurdle, things should work out. Use of the fields is the critical factor. She added that fertilizing the fields is important in the spring, and that will be a significant cost.

Directing his question to Ms. Harrington, Mr. Rossi asked if she is seeing interest in field use for spring and summer already. Ms. Harrington responded that the fields will be well used in the spring, and they are currently working through those requests for both local and out-of-town groups. There are some "round robins" or "jamborees" coming up in March, if the weather cooperates.

Responding to a question from Selectman Crowley relative to out-of-town groups coming to Medway. Ms. Harrington stated that those groups will be paying for field use, some as early as February. He expressed concern that the cost of clearing snow from the fields may be more than revenue brought in by the field use. Ms. Rossi reiterated that the Recreation Department will not have that expense as DPW will be assisting with snow removal. Brief discussion followed.

Regarding status of the Snow and Ice Budget, Ms. Pratt noted that the numbers have not been updated after the recent storms. Once the data is updated, she will forward the report.

At 7:25 PM Ms. Rossi and Ms. Harrington exited the meeting.

FY22 Budget and ATM Calendar Review

The committee reviewed a timeline of pertinent dates relative to budget review and preparation for Annual Town Meeting.

Present: Carol Pratt, Finance Director; Dennis Crowley, Selectman.

It was noted that the budget will not be available to the Finance Committee until after the Board of Selectmen reviews it. Chairman Alessandri confirmed that the public hearing needs to be held on April 7, location to be determined. Brief discussion on meetings with various departments. There will be additional meetings with departments in March. Ms. Segarra reported CIPA would like to come in on March 10. Chairman Alessandri theorized that a longer meeting is better than holding too many additional ones and suggested that the schools come in on March 10 as well.

Chairman Alessandri stated the committee will likely meet on March 17 and possibly either the 24th and 31st to get all the departments in. At this time, he asked members to reach out to their liaison groups to see their availability of either the 17th or 24th. He suggested that Planning and Information Services come in on March 24.

Regarding the Annual Town Meeting Warrant, Ms. Pratt stated that that Board of Selectman will likely close it at its February 16 meeting. After closing, it will be updated and transmitted to the Finance Committee shortly after that.

Mr. Rossi asked Selectman Crowley if there were any other items that the Finance Committee should know about. Selectman Crowley responded that there will be some discussion about the Evergreen Cemetery which will take place in executive session in the coming week.

Subcommittee Reports for Town Book

There was brief discussion on the book which is made available for Annual Town Meeting. Chairman Alessandri asked that reports to be submitted to him by April 12, noting he will confirm submission deadlines with Ms. Potter, Assistant Town Manager. He will send out an email with specifics as well as where to find a copy of last year's book to use as a guideline. He will also send out a Word version of last year's report.

Miscellaneous Reports

In lieu of a Chairman's Report, Chairman Alessandri provided a brief report on the December 9 joint meeting with the School Committee and Board of Selectmen along with details of that discussion. In general, the schools budget is in good shape, and they will keep everyone updated as the rest of the fiscal/school year progresses.

There was no Report from the Clerk.

Liaison Reports

Ms. Hillery reported on the status of the Council on Aging, specifically, that they had not held a meeting. The Library Trustees have not held a meeting either.

Mr. Sullivan reported that the Planning and Development Board is continuing to work on Warrant articles that were deferred from Fall Town Meeting. He noted there has been discussion on social media on where to locate the pickleball court with Idylbrook being a frontrunner location. Mr. Crowley noted residents are concerned about traffic and noise in that area, adding that other locations are being considered. Following an upcoming conference call with industry professionals, the Town may have some pricing figures to present at Town Meeting.

Mr. Schrader reported that the Centralized Water Treatment Plan Committee has held a number of meetings relative to choosing a designer for the new treatment plan. Selectman Crowley added that the Board of Selectmen has a chart/timeline on this, and the construction is supposed to start in July 2022. So far all preliminary components are on schedule.

Ms. Segarra stated that the Capital Improvement Planning Committee (CIPC) has been meeting regularly. They have already met with department heads, and should have reported to the Board of Selectmen with the proposed list. She theorized that they should be ready to meet with the Finance Committee on March 10. Brief discussion followed.

Mr. Rossi suggested that a workshop be held with the Finance Director on how to handle the bonding for this. Chairman Alessandri will reach out to Ms. Pratt to schedule a time for this presentation, after he has some confirmation on other meeting dates.

Review/Approval of Meeting Minutes

The committee reviewed draft minutes from November 16, 2020 and December 9, 2020.

Mr. Rossi made a motion to approve the minutes of November 16, 2020 as drafted; Mr. O'Neill seconded. No discussion. ROLL CALL VOTE: 7-0-2 (Alessandri, aye; Cowan, aye; Hillery, aye; Lane, abstain; O'Neill, aye; Rossi, aye; Schrader, aye; Segarra, abstain; Sullivan, aye).

Mr. Rossi made a motion to approve the minutes of December 9, 2020 as amended; Mr. O'Neill seconded. No discussion. ROLL CALL VOTE: 6-0-3 (Alessandri, aye; Cowan, aye; Hillery, abstain; Lane, aye; O'Neill, aye; Rossi, abstain; Schrader, abstain; Segarra, aye; Sullivan, aye).

Upcoming Meetings

Chairman Alessandri will send out an email with a meeting plan with the extra meetings. Alternate meeting locations will need to be determined if Sanford Hall is not available.

Selectman Crowley reported that the Facilities Study is available. He suggested Chairman Alessandri schedule a meeting with the Town Manager after which a meeting with the Finance Committee can be scheduled for later in the spring or summer.

Adjourn

At 7:43 PM Mr. Rossi made a motion to adjourn; Mr. O'Neill seconded. No discussion. ROLL CALL VOTE: 9-0-0 (Alessandri, aye; Cowan, aye; Hillery, aye; Lane, aye; O'Neill, aye; Rossi, aye; Schrader, aye; Segarra, aye; Sullivan, aye).

*Respectfully submitted,
Jeanette Galliardt*