**Minutes of the Finance Committee March 8, 2018**

Members attending: Mr. Fenton (Chairman), Ms. Herron, Ms. Lennon, Mr. Love, Mr. Linton, and   
Mr. Runstrom

Members not attending: None

Additional Attendees: Peter Bogren (Selectman), Jack Malone (Selectman) Carol Riches (Town Administrator), Dee Malone (Treasurer/Collector), Jay Conte (Fire Chief) Mike Pingitore (Emergency Management Director), Deborah Bailey (Head Librarian) Trish Dawson (Library Board Chair), Jeff Kent (Capital Improvements Planning Committee Chair).

Meeting called to order at 7:30pm.

**Motion** to approve the minutes of the February 28, 2018 meeting made by Mr. Love, seconded by Mr. Linton.   
**Approved unanimously**.

### Dee Malone (Treasurer/Collector)

Ms. Malone presented information to the committee on the requested FY2019 budget for the Treasurer/Collector and Notes and Bonds budgets.

* What is temporary loan interest used for? This is in case we need to do short term borrowing. We don’t expect to use it but need to have it in the budget just in case.
* What is a title V betterment grant? It’s a program that helps residents repair septic systems. It’s a loan that we give them and they pay back along with their mortgage.

### Jay Conte, (Fire Chief) and Mike Pingitore (Asst. Fire Chief)

Chief Conte presented information to the committee about the Fire Department and the requested FY2019 budgets for the Fire Department, EMS, and Public Safety Building.

* The only changes in the budgets are for changes due to the union contract. Salary and education step raise.
* Assistant chief does qualify for COLA raises in the town budget.
* 7 employees in the union are getting 2% raises per year.
* Fire fighter 2 line item is partially covered by the union contract ($1,315). All other call firefighters should receive the regular COLA given to other town employees.
* Recruitment stipends are used to recruit new firefighters. It is working. We are looking into having contracts with people who receive the stipend so that people stay at least 2 years after they receive the stipend.
* Equipment does not belong to individuals, it’s owned by the PFD.
* Last year money was transferred from fire to EMS. Why did we have extra money? We had to limit repairs and training during the last two months to save money so we could transfer.
* Equipment maintenance. We are asking to have the ladder truck refurbished. Will this allow us to decrease the maintenance costs? No, refurbishment just means they are repairing the frame – which is rotting out. It won’t help with any other maintenance costs.
* Training – is that academy, or what is it for? That is for on-site training, sometimes speakers or required training for certifications. Fire academy is actually free for us. The state pays for it.
* What are dues? For fire chief organizations that we belong to.
* Software service contract – why is not part of MIS budget. No, it’s part of fire/police software (IMC) required for reports. Fire pays much less than police.
* Purchased services/administrative… Used just for supplies… paper, envelopes, etc.
* Portable radio – used for pagers. Mobile radios for base radios and repeaters… having people come out to repair. Typically we buy a couple pagers a year. We have 43 with pagers.
* Why beepers? Why can’t people just use their cell phones? Pagers are hooked into our radio frequencies. Much more dependable. Cell phones go out of service.
* EMS budget – only increases are due to union contract. Salary plus uniforms (7 people).
* EMS is all full time people now. We have one shift that is sometimes covered by part time, but typically is covered by overtime instead.
* EMT training and certs does not exist in the budget anymore.
* A-2 lease shortfall. This should be the last year. It was purchased with Holden Hospital funds. This amount is the difference between the payment and what we get from the hospital funds.
* Ambulance contract is for billing service.
* AMB licenses – there are no more BLS licenses anymore, they are all ALS.
* Salary “PFD EMT part-time” is for 7 full time and 1 part time EMTs.
* EMS budget of 605,822 is partially offset by revenue (approximately 332,790).
* We are going after bad debts. We switched billing companies to help improve. We were at one point about 200k in bad debt but that has improved (maybe about 37k).
* Is it really a delayed receivable? It’s a delayed receivable that could turn into a bad debt.
* How often is the 2nd ambulance used? In month of January it was used 10 times. All second calls.
* Public safety building – HVAC Maintenance/Inspection. This is all for maintenance issues. We spend more in boiler/HVAC repairs than what is here. We kind of mix/match from these budgets.
* Custodial costs are more for this building than other buildings combined. We have 6 bathrooms, locker rooms, etc.
* Emergency Management – what would constitute an emergency that would involve this dept? Power outages, large snowstorms, active shooter situations, tornadoes. It depends on the scale of the incident. FEMA recommends towns be self-sufficient for 72 hours, so we plan to be active during this period. Preparation, response, and recovery.
* 2 shelters in town – fuller activity center at AMC is the primary, and then PCS.

### Deborah Bailey (Head Librarian), Trish Dawson (Library Board Chair)

Ms. Bailey and Ms. Dawson presented information to the committee on current renovations at the library, and the requested FY2019 budgets for Richards Memorial Library.

* Carpets are being replaced ($26k), plus $17k for installation and moving books. Wiring repairs are going on. We’re spending the library trust fund money to pay for this.
* Increase in maintenance due to a mouse problem and furnace repairs.
* During recent storm there was some water getting in, we may need a roof repair.
* Travel budget is used to attend meetings/training.
* No new computers this year. We have 4 staff computers and 4 public computers.
* Still have 2 clerks and 2 pages.

### Jeff Kent (Capital Improvement Committee Chair)

Mr. Kent presented information to the committee on capital projects requested for FY2019.

* 12 projects were proposed for 1.3M.
* Several items from WRSD. Several from fire department.
* The committee has met with BOS, WRSD, and fire. We did not meet with DPW.
* Committee has met since the beginning of February to review projects, and have ranked the proposed projects in the following order:
  + DPW Backhoe Loader Replacement ($149,300).
  + PFD Ladder 1 Refurbishment ($111,000).
  + COA Shuttle Van Replacement ($34,850).
  + PFD Tanker Truck Replacement ($360,000).
  + PFD Car #4 Replacement ($48,000).
  + WRSD Parking Lot Paving/ECC-Jefferson Building ($50,000 total, $4,850 Paxton share).
  + PFD Forestry 1 Refurbishment ($25,000)
  + WRSD Athletic Field Artificial Turf Replacement ($600,000 total, $58,200 Paxton share).
  + PFD Ambulance A-2 Replacement ($275,000).
  + BOS Senior Center Heating System Repairs ($11,072).
* Fire department equipment items they have applied for FEMA funding. We believe there will be money available.
* The big challenge is how we fund these items. We want to propose items that are both reasonable and financially feasible.
* Committee will meet next week to recommend which items to go forward with, and then send that list to selectman for inclusion on the warrant.

### Budgets/Voting

No budgets were voted on during this meeting.

The next meeting of the Finance Committee will be March 15, 2018.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:00pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Scott Runstrom, Secretary.