**Minutes of the Finance Committee March 06, 2019**

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

Members not attending: None.

Additional Attendees: Carol Riches (Town Administrator), Peter Bogren (Selectman),
Mark Savasta (Chief of Police) Laurie Becker (Town Clerk).

Meeting called to order at 7:35pm.

### Minutes

**Motion** to approve the minutes of the February 28, 2019 meeting made by Ms. Herron, seconded by
Mr. Linton. **Approved unanimously**.

### Mark Savasta (Chief of Police)

Chief Savasta presented information to the committee on current Police Department activities, as well as the requested FY2020 budget for the Police.

* In general, things are going very well.
* Activity is extremely high.
* Cruiser Maintenance and Cruiser Equipment. Why are these different?
Maintenance is for purchased service… equipment is for supplies.
* Dispatch… there is talk of regionalization. How far along? Would that affect the budget?
We are in negotiations… the Selectboard has approved… if we receive a grant it will move forward. They say it’s about a 3 year process to fully integrate.
In a year or two, the 16,500 would be reduced. Initial cost would be covered by grant. We would still pay for maintenance.
Our goal would be to staff the public safety building from 7 to 7… 7 days a week. Right now there is always a dispatcher on site. After regionalization if there is nobody on site there would be a phone outside that rings in Holden, who would either dispatch an officer or let them into the building to wait for an officer.
* What we do with our current equipment?
We would keep it in place, but it would not be too useful. Much of it is out of date... it’s 10-11 years old. So it wouldn’t be much use.
* Administrative Stipend… what is that?
It was negotiated as part of the AMC agreement. Currently one of the Sgts receives that stipend to run dispatch.
* What will happen with the current dispatchers? Will they move to Holden?
We will pay an amount to Holden based on the number of 911 calls. Holden will have to hire dispatchers… if they are interested and qualified they can apply for those jobs.
* What will the cost be?
We expect it to be approximately $72,000. We will see savings in that we don’t need to pay dispatchers and also we will not need to upgrade our equipment… which is forcast to cost almost $1M. A lot of the smaller towns are struggling with these costs.
* Who will be in the building to answer questions during the day?
There are a lot of walk-ins. We expect that we will have someone on site, at least in the day. Certainly 7-3, hopefully 7-7.
* What about burning permits and such? Firearm permits? We think the fire department will move to an online system. Firearm permits won’t change.
* Career Incentive line item… why isn’t it broken out by person/position?
It’s the total amount for our department.
* Phones and Pagers – why did it go down?
We now pay for internet and tv… we no longer pay for phones. That saved quite a bit of money
* Training Services… what is that?
It’s for outside training. All sorts of specific police training activities.
* Administrative Assistant... is that a full time position?
Yes.

### Laurie Becker, Town Clerk

Ms. Becker presented information to the committee on the activities and FY2020 budgets for the Town Clerk, Elections, and Registrars.

**Town Clerk Budget:**

* The budget for Assist Clerk was increased from 7,492 to 8,424. Is that enough to hire an assistant?
I increased this number recently hoping to get a more qualified person. The number is for $18/hours and 9 hours per week. I would prefer 10 hours but didn’t want to increase the budget too much.
* Currently, the assistant is just doing clerical work… they don’t really perform the duties of the town clerk. One idea is to offload the dog licenses to the asst clerk, which takes quite a bit of time.
* We’re also trying to move a lot of things online, which should save time. We’re hoping that gets up and running next week.
* We are exploring the idea of a Municipal Assistant, shared between Town Clerk, DPW, Water, and Treasurer/Collector.
* How would that work? If the DPW needs someone for a week, then they are not available for the Town Clerk? There are core hours in each department. It becomes a full-time job split between departments… and when one department needs extra time, then they can borrow time from others.
* It’s difficult retaining people for a 10-hr a week job. Easier with full-time job. Also, some of the duties (payroll) are the same across each department.
* You mentioned you want to take advantage of training opportunities, but the training budget got zeroed out?
I combined it with Meetings/Conferences/Training as one line item.
* Ms. Riches: Laurie sat down after she first started and went through all the budgets to see what was actually expended in the past. Then restructured the budget around what she actually needs.
* Record storage changed. What is that?
I’m bothered by the vital record storage. Right now we put each certificate into a plastic sleeve… the older records are just paper so they get tattered as they are handled. Over time, I would like to upgrade so we move everything into the newer system.

**Elections**

* Nice description of election workers and wages. What is EV?
Early Voting.
* What is Local election services?
It’s things like ballot printing.

**Registrars**

* How many registrars do we have?

Four, including myself.

* What is the $50 for voting list?
We will look it up.

### Budget Consideration

**1541: Council on Aging.** Motion to approve the budget for COA (#1541) in the amount of $61,704 made by Ms. Lennon and seconded by Mr. Linton.
**Discussion:** The budget has been increased since our previous discussion. Event speakers and Senior Programs were increased.
**Motion Approved 5-0**. (Mr. Love and Ms. Herron recused themselves from the vote.)

**1171: Conservation Commission**. Motion to approve the budget for Conservation Commission (#1171) in the amount of $7,266 made by Ms. Herron and seconded by Ms. Lennon.
**Discussion:** Mr. Love: Special Revenue Funds… there is a conservation trust expendable fund. In the March 2018 minutes, we talked to the town accountant about the special revenue fund, and she said this fund is being spent to pay for the conservation agent. If so, should it be in this budget?
Ms. Riches: The special revenue funds supplements the budget… when it goes over the budgeted amount it comes out of the special revenue fund. When there is more workload, usually... If she needs to investigate or gets involved in an issue. It’s an hourly rate.
Mr. Love: So, there isn’t room to reduce the budget? Ms. Riches: No.
**Motion Approved Unanimously**.

**1177: Central Mass Regional Planning Commission.** Motion to approve the budget for CMRPC (#1177) in the amount of $1,377 made by Mr. Runstrom and seconded by Mr. Love.
**Discussion:** Who or what is this?
Central Mass Regional Planning. We pay in every year and they give us support. We use them to help with grants. We can use them for support when we’re working on planning issues. They also created the scenic byway thing.
Now that I know what it is, it seems really inexpensive.
**Motion Approved Unanimously.**

**1161: Town Clerk**. Motion to approve the budget for Town Clerk (#1161) in the amount of $51,429 made by Ms. Herron and seconded by Mr. Peters.
**Discussion:** Modest increase… she increased hours which is good. They do a lot of work in that office.
**Approved Unanimously**.

**1162: Elections**. Motion to approve the budget for Elections (#1162) in the amount of $13,240 made by Ms. Herron and seconded by Ms. Lennon. **Approved Unanimously**.

**1162: Board of Registrars**. Motion to approve the budget for Board of Registrars (#1163) in the amount of $4,200 made by Ms. Herron and seconded by Mr. Linton. **Approved Unanimously**.

**1210: Police**. Motion to approve the budget for Police (#1210) in the amount of $1,157,888 made by Mr. Runstrom and seconded by Mr. Peters. **Approved Unanimously**.

**1241: Building Commissioner**. Motion to reconsider the budget for Building Commissioner (#1241), that was previously approved in the amount of $29,132 made by Mr. Love and seconded by Ms. Lennon.
**Discussion:** We originally did not receive an updated budget, and believed that this budget was level-funded. However, the Building Commissioner has since submitted a new budget, along with the note:
“Because of increased regulations and changes in a number of requirements, it’s necessary to increase the budget for training and standards.”
**Motion Approved Unanimously**.
Motion to approve the budget for Building Commissioner (#1241) in the amount of $29,382 made by Mr. Love and seconded by Mr. Runstrom. **Approved Unanimously**.

**1183: Historic District Committee**. Motion to approve the budget for Historic District Committee (#1183) in the amount of $200 made by Ms. Herron and seconded by Mr. Linton.
**Discussion:** This budget was not submitted, therefore it is level-funded..
**Approved Unanimously**.

The next meeting of the Finance Committee is scheduled for Wednesday March 13.
The Library director will come in for the next meeting.
The Fire Chief will come in to discuss Fire and EMS the week after.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:38pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Scott Runstrom, Secretary.