

BOARD OF SELECTMEN / SEWER COMMISSIONERS MEETING

Wednesday January 25, 2023 – 6:00 PM – Hybrid

PRESENT: Roger Manzolini, Chair; Neal Pilson (via Zoom); Alan Hanson (speaker phone)

Roger called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM

Review of Budget Scenarios and Plans prior to BAC Meetings: Danielle offered explanations of the budget items. She noted she was attempting to be creative with funds on hand. (See attached spreadsheet) She saved Chapter 90 monies to fund portions of the big pieces of equipment needed. We have done this successfully for the last three years. Therefore, we will need to ask the Town for only half the cost of each of our large pieces of equipment and can take the rest from Chapter 90 funds.

Free Cash Allocation: (See attached). The Increase in Highway salaries reflects the addition of one 40-hour per week hire at \$40,000.00 of which \$20,000.00 will come from the loss of one person from the summer season. The new hire will need a truck to be able to plow at Town Hall and the School and mow at the beach. He will also have janitorial responsibilities at night at the school. This system of shared personnel is based on one West Stockbridge has been using successfully for many years.

Danielle noted that the Budget Advisory Committee has seen these figures at the Finance Cte. Meeting. The BAC will be meeting again on February 1, 2023.

The next item was the Longevity Bonus and the One-Week Vacation Buy-Out option. If everyone took advantage of the buyout, with the longevity bonuses, that total would be \$9,568.50. However, it has not happened in the past that all employees took advantage of that option. Danielle was asked to include a third column to indicate what she anticipates the actual total will come to.

Danielle advised the Board that the main accounting software we use had never previously been budgeted for at all. She added the \$23,000.00 into technology/hardware, creating a new, single line item to pay for that technology.

The Town Hall budget increased by \$12,000.00. This included the \$1,800.00 the library cut out of their electricity budget and the \$3,000.00 the library deleted from their heating costs. An additional \$8,000.00 is usually budgeted in the Library Expenses line for Rent. Danielle kept \$20,800 for Utilities when we move and is keeping the total amount for heating.

Neal asked about the disposition of the current Town Hall building. He suggested that the Town set up a committee to discuss the available options and asked what costs Danielle estimated the Town will incur from September to December if we are unable to sell it. Danielle advised that turning off the water, blowing out the lines and shutting off the heat would save a great

deal of money. However, electricity must remain on and insurance costs will increase on an empty building.

The next discussion was about language needing to be added to the Town Meeting Warrant concerning joining the Dynegy Municipal Aggregate for electrical service. Colonial Power does the negotiation to get a Town into a Plan. Once the Town Meeting Warrant is approved, the Town Select Board can sign an agreement with Colonial Power. They will come up with an amount and get a proposal from different electric companies, discuss those with the Town and get the approval of the Dept. of Public Utilities.

The discussion resulted in the consensus to get the wording created for the Town Warrant and get the process started. Danielle said that a representative of Colonial Power would be willing to come to a meeting to explain the process in detail. Roger asked her to arrange for him to attend a Board meeting.

TOWN CENTER DISCUSSION

Invoices – No invoices or change orders

Status of Building – On schedule – on budget – no issues – no items requiring BOS approval

Pat reported that an on-site building meeting had been held to discuss the problem of rainwater runoff from the roof. A 42-inch overhang is being planned to direct the runoff into an area with a drain and a corner pipe. The problem is being dealt with.

Electrical Easement – The Town has to grant EverSource an easement to run the electric lines from the road up to a transformer at the front of the building. A site plan is being worked on for the electric company. Once they agree with the proposed plan, they will write up an easement that will require a vote by the Select Board.

Public Comment: Jay Phelps expressed his concern about the new building's fire system and the lack of attention in the past to certain details that could have reduced the Town's insurance risk by lowering the Fire Department's rating by the ISO. Jay said he worked on changing the rate from a 9 to a 5 and that information is available from the ISO. The cistern that supplies water to the system needs to be enlarged so that sprinklers in the building will have a capacity to supply more water to a fire than thought necessary. Roger suggested Jay speak with Pat and attend the next Building Committee meeting to make his concerns heard. Danielle will email the date of the next Building Committee meeting to Jay.

Town Administrator Updates: Danielle was pleased to report that Jodi, the new Tax Collector/Treasurer has been working out extremely well.

February Budget Advisory Committee meetings will begin at 4:00 PM, prior to Board of Selectmen meetings.

Sewer Matters: Danielle noted she will be ordering the pumps Tom wanted.

There being no further business before the Board, Roger moved that the meeting be adjourned at 7:00 PM. He was seconded by Neal and the motion was adopted by unanimous consent.

Signed:

Roger Manzolini, Chair