

## **BUDGET ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Wednesday April 12, 2023 – 4:00 PM – Hybrid**

**PRESENT:** Bob Gniadek, Chair/BAC; Bob Youdelman, BAC; Pat Callahan, BAC; Eileen Martin, BAC; Roger Manzolini, Chair/Board of Selectmen; Al Hanson, Selectman; Neal Pilson (via Zoom), Selectman; Danielle Fillio, Town Administrator

Bob G. opened the meeting at 4:05 PM.

**Previous Minutes:** Voting on approval of the Minutes was deferred.

**Total Budget Review and Vote:** Pat raised concern about some of the cuts made in the budget that she felt left the town vulnerable to unexpected problems in the future. Discussion continued on how to add monies back into those line items without increasing the estimated 4.9% tax rate increase.

Danielle noted that Tax Title expenses should be a general fund item rather than creating a Revolving Fund, which she felt was too complicated. Bob Gniadek suggested that \$4,000 could be moved out of the Tax Title Line item and \$4,000 from the Library Rent line item and then create two new warrant articles using free cash to fund those.

The result would retain the 4.9% tax increase but have \$8,000 additional funds available in the budget. \$5,000 would be added back into to the Town Hall Line and \$3,000 added into the Town Counsel Line to make that level funded.

A discussion of how to describe the changes in Line amounts for the Town Hall Line resulted in Danielle agreeing to rewrite the explanations to make it easier for the public to understand the addition of \$18,000 from FY23 due to anticipated increased costs for the new building.

Bob G. noted that in the Budget Summary on the first page of the Explanations the proposed budget is listed as increasing by 1.1%, but the tax rate could be 4.9%, which is misleading. Danielle clarified how the tax rate is computed, which Bob acknowledged as technically correct, but said that the two numbers are confusing. He suggested that a column be added for FY2023 in addition to FY2024 which would show the real estate property tax revenue increase by 4.9%, while the non-property tax revenue decreased by 8.6% and make it clear why the tax rate is estimated to be 4.9% despite only a 1.1% increase in budget spending.

A motion was made to approve the modifications made to Budget Line Items 13 – Tax Title ,18 – Town Counsel, 20- Town Hall, 83- Library Rent and the addition of two new warrant articles: (Free Cash for Tax Title Expenses and Library Rent).

The motion was seconded and passed by unanimous vote.

The Committee then reviewed the explanations document line by line. It was suggested that all lines say either "No Change" or what the Change was so that it is consistent throughout the document. It was also suggested to change "reflect town spending" to "reflect actual town spending" and to keep the Library Rent as a line item explaining it has been moved to an article. All other minimal wording changes were given to Danielle to be used at her discretion.

There being no further business before the Committee, Bob G. moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:55. He was seconded by Bob Y and the motion was carried by unanimous consent.