

Finance Committee
Reading of Town Meeting Warrant Articles
Tuesday, March 21, 2017

Chairman Theresa M. Manganelli called the meeting to order at 7:53 PM. Members present were John F. Doherty, Marianne Gallezzo, Michele Kincaid, Robert P. Palmer, Bernard P. Nally, Jonathan R. Eaton, Leigh Martinson, and Kevin Stokes. Excused: None

Article 1: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Questions/comments: None

Article 2: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Mr. Hull reported that two (2) reports will be presented: Yentile Farm Recreational Facility and Facility Master Plan

Questions/comments: None

Article 3: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Questions/comments: None

Article 4: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Mr. Hull reported this article is for paying bills from the previous year and no unpaid bills are expected.

Questions/comments:

Mr. Kevin MacDonald, 40 Andover Street asked for a report from the Treasurer on money in the banks and the interest rates of those accounts. He asked if the interest on the account was less than 1%. Mr. MacDonald asked how much free cash was available.

Mr. Hull responded there is \$50,000,000 held in a number of different banks, including Citizens and Bank of America.

Mr. MacDonald asked if the amount of free cash increased from last year.

Mr. Hull responded that free cash is currently certified at \$15,529,000.

Mr. MacDonald stated he is concerned with increase of free cash over the years and that the Town is over budgeting.

Ms. Manganelli stated this is not the article we are discussing.

Mr. MacDonald stated that he would like to publicly request all bank account balances.

Article 5: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Mr. Hull stated this is the annual article to allow the Town to enter into agreements for various banking services.

Questions/comments:

Mr. Kevin MacDonald, 40 Andover Street, asked how much budget is over estimated from how much has to be spent?

Mr. Hull responded that the budget is not over estimated. He explained that budgeting is not an exact science.

Mr. MacDonald responded that a \$3,000,000 increase in free cash is a lot of money.

Article 6: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Question/comments:

Mr. Kevin MacDonald, 40 Andover Street, asked about the amount of money for police cruisers?

Chief Michael Begonis, Chief of Police, stated the budget is \$270,000. He reported there is an additional cost for two (2) laptops, estimated at \$5,000-\$6,000 each, and ballistic side panels. The Chief discussed the need for the Animal Control vehicle.

Mr. MacDonald asked the Chief how much is anticipated to be over budget.

Chief Begonis explained that the Department uses the best estimates available when creating the department budget.

Mr. MacDonald explained the concept of reverse bidding and asked if Chief Begonis uses this method.

Chief Begonis responded, "No."

Article 7: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Mr. Hull stated that \$45,000 is requested for continuing efforts to upgrade the infrastructure.

Questions/comments: None

Article 8: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Mr. Hull stated \$45,000 is requested for network switches for IT because these have to be switched out continually.

Questions/comments: None

Article 9: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Mr. Hull stated the Town is requesting \$30,000 to switch out computers on a regular basis.

Questions/comments: None

Article 10: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Questions/comments: None

Article 11: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Mr. Hull stated the Town is requesting \$32,500 for the 2nd year to equip the Police Department with Tasers, which are a less lethal means of apprehending a suspect.

Questions/comments:

Ms. Marianne Gallezzo asked if the entire Police Department will be outfitted with Tasers.

Mr. Hull replied that the program will be funded over a three (3) year period for the entire police force.

Ms. Gallezzo asked about the cost of the program over (3) years?

Deputy Chief Robert Richter responded that the total cost of the program is \$118,080 for the purchase of 51 Taser units, 51 holsters, 51 smart batteries, 100 performance cartridges, data download kit, and Taser insurance plan.

Ms. Gallezzo asked if the total cost is \$130,000.

Deputy Chief Richter responded that this question arose four (4) months ago. He stated the Taser program has changed over the last couple of years. The Deputy explained the different plans. He reported the Tap program is warrantied for five (5) years. He stated that Taser will send out new units at no additional cost after five (5) years.

Ms. Gallezzo asked about the cost of the straight program.

Deputy Chief Richter responded that the straight program would allot 50 not 51 Tasers and there would be an additional \$15, 912 for the extended warranty.

Ms. Gallezzo asked if the Town has anything in writing from Taser with these amounts.

Deputy Chief Richter responded the Town has three (3) quotes as of today for all plans.

Ms. Gallezzo asked if the Town receives Taser cartridges up front.

Deputy Chief Richter responded the Town would receive 100 training cartridges.

Ms. Manganelli asked Deputy Chief Richter for copies of all three (3) quotes.

Mr. Kevin MacDonald, 40 Andover Street, asked if the Town is purchasing Tasers for all officers. He further asked if the Tasers are worth the liability and if the Police Department uses rubber bullets.

Chief Michael Begonis, Chief of Police, stated the Department has reviewed studies on the use of Taser. He cited the incident at the train station a couple of years ago and explained that the Police had to wait 20 minutes to get a Taser.

Mr. MacDonald asked if the department use rubber bullets.

Chief Begonis explained the current use and the limited effect of rubber balls, and how they do not work on everyone.

Ms. Judy O' Connell stated the Board of Selectmen recommended a total of \$65,000 for the payment and rollout of the program. She asked about the future financial funding plans?

Mr. Hull responded that the assumption is that \$118,000 will be paid over three (3) years.

Mr. MacDonald stated it is disturbing to find this to be financed, when the Town has funds. He is opposed to Tasers due to liability and people dying due to heart attacks.

Mr. Hull responded that the financing is a zero interest arrangement.

Article 12: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Mr. Hull stated the budget request for \$25,000 is for increased capacity for storage of evidence.

Questions/comments: None

Article 13: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Mr. Hull stated the request for \$20,000 is for a storage unit for the Police Department for non-weapon storage.

Mr. Kevin MacDonald, 40 Andover Street, stated he sees storage units on internet for \$4,000.

Questions/comments: None

Article 14: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Mr. Hull stated the request for \$30,000 is for video surveillance for exterior of public safety building.

Questions/Comments: None

Article 15: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Mr. Hull stated that the request for \$35,000 is to replace the existing building management system. He explained the Middle School was constructed in 2001 and the system has not been upgraded since then.

Questions/comments: None

Article 16: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Mr. Hull stated the request for \$125,000 is to replace a 23 year old chairlift with repeated mechanical issues.

Questions/comments: None

Article 17: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Mr. Hull stated the request for \$355,000 is to continue the long standing program to replace roofs that were installed in the 1980's.

Questions/comments: None

Article 18: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Mr. Hull stated the request for \$10,000 is to start a multi-year program to remain in compliance with storm water management.

Questions/comments: None

Article 19: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Mr. Hull stated the request \$100,000 is for continued efforts to upgrade walkways and drop-offs at schools.

Questions/comments: None

Article 20: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Mr. Hull stated the request for \$40,000 is to begin the process to create maximum availability of space at the cemetery by purchasing a columbarium.

Mr. Kevin MacDonald, 40 Andover Street, asked if the Town has approached abutting land owners.

Mr. Hull responded the Town has approached abutters and the answer was "no".

Questions/comments: None

Article 21: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Mr. Hull stated this request for \$15,000 is to address the interior sidewalks at the Town Common.

Questions/comments: None

Article 22: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Mr. Hull stated the request for \$30,000 is to purchase a heavy duty vehicle lift for the DPW mechanics' garage.

Questions/comments: None

Article 23: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Mr. Hull stated the request for \$30,000 is to purchase two (2) solar powered flashing pedestrian beacons.

Questions/comments: None

Article 24: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Mr. Hull stated the request for \$67,500 is to upgrade the computer lab which is original to the Middle School.

Questions/comments: None

Article 25: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Mr. Hull stated the request for \$72,000 is to replace computers purchased in 2009.

Questions/comments: None

Article 26: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Mr. Hull stated the request for \$40,000 enables schools to be ready for the next round of computerized state testing.

Questions/comments: None

Article 27: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Mr. Hull stated the request for \$50,000 is for the 2nd year of 3 year program for upgrading the Wilmington Public Schools phone system.

Questions/comments: None

Article 28: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Mr. Hull stated the request for \$36,000 is to replace network switches that are over 10 years old.

Questions/comments: None

Article 29: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Mr. Hull stated the request for \$25,000 is to replace computer servers purchased in 2008.

Questions/comments: None

Article 30: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Mr. Hull stated the request for \$30,000 is to replace laptop batteries throughout the school system.

Article 31: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Mr. Hull stated the request for \$275,000 is to borrow for the Middlesex Ave water main reconstruction project.

Questions/Comments: None

Article 32: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Mr. Hull stated the \$1,000,050 request will be funded through a 10 year, zero-interest loan from MWRA.

Questions/Comments: None

Article 33: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Mr. Hull stated this request is to continue the practice of dedicating funds to Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB).

Questions/Comments: None

Article 34: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Mr. Hull stated this a request to transfer \$3,000,000 to the capital stabilization fund.

Questions/Comments:

Mr. Kevin MacDonald, 40 Andover Street, asked the Town Manager to define the wording of the article.

Mr. Hull stated the capital stabilization account has over \$6,000,000 balance.

Mr. MacDonald asked about the interest rate of the account.

Mr. Hull explained the importance for the Town to have a capital stabilization account.

Mr. MacDonald stated the Town owns scattered lots around town. He asked why no effort is made to sell these lots.

Article 35: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Mr. Hull stated the request is for \$500,000 to be transferred into the stabilization account.

Questions/Comments: None

Article 36: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Mr. Hull stated the purpose of this request is to transfer \$100,000 for early/advance payment for pension liability. He explained this is financially advantageous for the Town.

Questions/Comments:

Mr. Kevin MacDonald, 40 Andover Street, asked if there is prudent oversight to the retirement system. He asked how the Town knows that the Retirement Board is not playing the casino with our money.

Mr. Hull responded that the retirement board is regulated by the state and there are restrictions on how money is invested and controlled by the state.

Mr. MacDonald asked for a public records request of the investment management fees

Mr. Hull stated the Mr. MacDonald must speak directly to the Middlesex County Retirement Board.

Mr. MacDonald stated he did not like that response. He stated that he needs to get information on retirement operations and will request those numbers for Town Meeting.

Mr. Hull stated the request needs to be made to Middlesex County Retirement System.

Article 37: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Mr. Hull stated this request is to supplement the snow and ice budgets.

Questions/Comments: None

Article 38: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Mr. Hull stated the request for \$25,000 is to cover the overtime cost for Police, Fire and Public Works for 4th of July celebration.

Questions/Comments: None

Article 39: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Mr. Hull stated the request for \$6,000 is for Memorial Day and Veterans Day observances.

Questions/Comments: None

Article 40: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Mr. Hull stated the request of \$1,500 is for the lease of VFW & American Legion Clubhouses.

Questions/Comments: None

Article 41: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Mr. Hull stated this article is for the establishment and reestablishment of revolving accounts.

Questions/Comments: None

Article 42: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Mr. Hull stated the Municipal Modernization Act signed into law by the Governor last year addressed revolving accounts. He explained there is an additional year to prepare language, make an effort to comply, and allow the Town to adopt this article.

Questions/Comments: None

Article 43: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Mr. Hull stated the Town has maintained an interest in purchasing the Ristuccia Rink. This article would authorize \$500,000.

Questions/Comments:

Mr. Kevin MacDonald, 40 Andover Street, stated he is opposed to the Town purchasing the rink and putting money into an account without purchasing the rink. He feels a class action suit will happen.

Mr. Hull responded that for the record, the Town has not spent any money on the rink.

Article 44: Ms. Manganelli read the Article.

Questions/Comments: None

Other Business:

There being no further business, a motion was made by John Doherty, seconded by Jonathan Eaton, and by the affirmative vote of all, it was.

VOTED: That the Finance Committee adjourned.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m. The next meeting of the Finance Committee is scheduled for Thursday, March 23, 2017.

Respectfully submitted,

Recording secretary