

Marlborough Board of Finance
Marlborough Elementary School
And via Zoom and Speaker Phone
Special Meeting
March 1, 2023
6:00 p.m.

Call to Order

Chairman Nastri called special meeting to order at 6:07 p.m. Present and seated were Mike Nastri, Jack Fidler, Liz Gorgoglione, Ken Hjulstrom, Jeff Plourde, and Robert Mirabal. Alternates Karen Pakulis Paul, Chris Barella, and Sal Sena were present.

Administration Present: Interim Town Manager Amy Traversa, Selectmen members Debbie Bourbeau, Greg Lowry, and Joe Asklar

New Business

BOS Request to Revise Appropriation for Town Manager Search Firm from \$30K to \$10K from Contingency

There was a memo handed out regarding the need to transfer only \$10,000 rather than the previously requested \$30,000 for the Town Manager search firm.

MOTION: Ms. Gorgoglione made a motion, seconded by Mr. Fidler, to appropriate \$10,000 rather than the previously requested \$30,000 for the Town Manager search firm.

DISCUSSION: With new information, the Board of Selectmen realized that they don't need as much money as they thought for the search firm.

VOTE: All voted in favor of the motion.

BOS Request from Contingency for \$60K for Settlement of Pending Employment Litigation

MOTION: Mr. Plourde made a motion, seconded by Mr. Nastri, to approve the request from the BOS to move \$60,000 from Contingency into Legal to cover part of the litigation settlement.

DISCUSSION: The Board had received a letter from the BOS with a note attached with comments from Attorney Ken Slater. There had been a town meeting on 2/1/23 where the residents voted not to settle with the employee. The BOS decided to pay the agreed upon amount in two payments, instead of one, and over two fiscal years. This confused board members. It seemed to some as though the BOS was trying to sneak the money through. The payment will only leave \$5,000 in the Contingency fund. A question was asked what happens if the BOF does not approve this request. The Interim Town Manager said then they would need to find the funds from many accounts in smaller amounts. This way it is just one transfer. The court has said that the town must pay no matter what the vote is. The lawyers have agreed on paying \$237,500 to the employee.

VOTE: FOR: Mr. Nastri, Jeffrey Plourde, Ms. Gorgoglione, and Mr. Fidler

AGAINST: Mr. Hjulstrom, Mr. Mirabel

Motion Passed.

BOS Operating Budget Analysis/Discussion

The Board of Finance asked questions regarding the budget for clarification.

- Were all the proposed salaries approved by the BOS? Yes
- Education and dues are budgeted higher this year in many departments. That is because of new people in positions. (Town Manager, Finance Director, and possibly others)
- Town Clerk budget is up due to contractual obligations.
- Treasurer's department has increased because the town is moving to a payroll company rather than have it done inhouse by an employee.
- Legal is increased by \$127,500 for the second payment for the employee v town lawsuit.
- Assessor increased because of contractual obligations for auto billing. Mapping services is shared with the building department.
- Personnel: Ms. Pakulis Paul has reviewed the pay increases and says there is nothing out of the ordinary with these high raises. The Interim Town Manager said that she is raising up certain positions to keep employees. Ms. Traversa said that if salaries aren't high enough then the town will lose key staff. There was a request for staff names to be removed from the Public Works salaries. Ms. Traversa promised a new sheet for tomorrow night's meeting with job titles.
- Fiber optics – they don't know who will be using it. The maintenance is a 20-year obligation.
- Food Bank – internet can come out of their budget. Non-profits can receive it for free.
- The School Resource Officer and constables need to have the police department accredited. Also insurance is high due to the new position of SRO.
- There is a new position – part-time social worker for the town at the senior center.
- The Board asked what was taken out of the budget that was requested from the departments. Ms. Traversa said everything asked for has remained in the budget.
- The BOF will try to schedule a walk-through with the Public Works department. There was a little discussion about the mechanical lift.
- The legislature is working on a bill to reimburse towns for trees damaged by the weather.
- Dispatch should go down next year. They are working on a new formula to divide the costs.
- There is still a lot of ARP funds remaining. Those funds will be used in place of CNR.

Someone still needs to go back through the entire budget due to incorrect numbers. Any other questions from the Board should be directed to the Chairman and he will send them to the Interim Town Manager. No discussions should be happening outside of meetings.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Adjournment

The Board adjourned at 7:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debby Rihm
Board Clerk