

Marlborough Board of Finance
Marlborough Elementary School
And via Zoom and Speaker Phone
Regular Meeting
March 16, 2023
7:00 p.m.

Call to Order

Chairman Nastri called regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Present and seated were Mike Nastri, Jack Fidler, Ken Hjulstrom, Jeff Plourde and Robert Mirabal. Alternate Chris Barella was present and seated for Liz Gorgoglione. Alternate Karen Pakulis-Paul was also present.

Public Comments

None

RHAM Budget Discussion

Superintendent Colin McNamara joined via Zoom to discuss the revised budget with the Board. When first presented, RHAM had a 4.71% increase. It is currently at 3.4% increase. They used their surplus from FY 21/22 for capital items. Revenue for ECS is going to be higher than expected. Some towns were locked into a lower price for diesel fuel. Not yet reflected in the lower figure is the revised insurance cost. Three percent was used in the first presentation. Mr. McNamara just learned that the increase will only be 1.5% increase. RHAM is also doing some pre-purchasing from the current year operational budget for equipment, materials, and furniture. Marlborough's levy was \$11,269,295. It is now \$11,121,787 and could go down a little more.

Local Board of Education Budget Discussion

Superintendent Holly Hagman was present and said they have not made any changes to their budget. It remains at a 4.96% increase. They don't expect a surplus as the reading program will utilize most of the remaining funds this year.

Capital and Town Operating Budget Discussion

A few members of the BOF showed up to visit the Public Works garage earlier this week. Mr. Hjulstrom suggested the Board have Public Works give an estimate to finish their metal building. It needs heat, insulation, and a lift. This will allow the mechanics to work on the trucks inside, instead of out in the cold. On the tour, Mr. Grossman estimated it would cost around \$100,000-\$125,000 to complete. They have \$70,000 sitting in the reserves account. HVAC at the town hall for \$300,000 sounds high, said Mr. Hjulstrom. Interim Town Manager, Amy Traversa, replied that it is being assessed currently and she has one estimate for \$265,000. There will always be roads to work on. There was a road study done a few years ago. The culverts in the proposed budget are needed now. They were all installed around the same time so it makes sense that they would deteriorate around the same time. There is still around \$10,000 in ARP funds available. They must be used by December 2024.

MOTION: Mr. Hjulstrom made a motion, seconded by Mr. Plourde, to request an estimate from Public Works to implement the remaining features needed for the metal building, and to receive clarification on the \$70,000 in the reserve account. **DISCUSSION:** Public Works should have requested this when the departments were meeting with Ms. Traversa while the budget was being put together. Ms. Traversa said the plans for that building keep changing and they have worked on it over the past few years. It was not requested, why would the BOF add to the budget at this time.

VOTE: In favor: Hjulstrom, Barella, Plourde, Mirabal

Against: Fidler

Abstain: Natri

Motion passed: 4-1-1

Reports

RHAM – Mr. Plourde reported that RHAM paid \$3,500 to drill for a well down 700 feet, but there was not the yield needed for the fields. Another place was found to drill a well to hydro-frack, but they haven't tried that yet.

Local BOE – Mr. Hjulstrom reported they project their surplus to be around \$45,000.

February Financial Reports – There is miscellaneous state revenue of \$219,761. That is over by 380%. Ms. Traversa will find out what this is for. Contracted services are over budget. That is for the financial department consultant that came in to do work on weekends and evenings to help get things done in that department.

Approval of Minutes

Motion: Mr. Hjulstrom made a motion, seconded by Mr. Plourde, to approve the minutes from the February 15, 2023, meeting as submitted. All voted in favor of the motion.

Motion: Mr. Hjulstrom made a motion, seconded by Mr. Plourde, to approve the minutes from the 2/16/23, 2/23/23, 3/1/23, 3/2/23, and 3/8/23 meetings with the following changes:

- 3/1/23 – Mr. Foley should be referred to as a **former** employee;
- Bottom of page 1, should read "The **board** has said that the town **will** pay no matter what the vote is;
- Page 2, Personnel: and says there is nothing out of the ordinary with these raises. (omit the word **high** before raises)
- Page 2, Fiber Optics: The **senior center** uses the fiber optics. The maintenance is a 20-year obligation **from 2021**.

All voted in favor of the motion.

Correspondence

None

Public Comments

None

Adjournment

The Board adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debby Rihm

Debby Rihm
Board Clerk