

MINUTES  
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT TEAM  
Town Hall 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room  
January 9, 2024

Members Present: Mac Anderson, Kathy Logue, Bruce Stone, Joan Chavez, Jennifer Rand

Meeting was called to order at 10:03 AM.

The minutes of the March 7, 2023 and October 11, 2023 meetings were approved unanimously.

The discussion started with a review of the draft FY 2025 budget, using Bruce's summary handout. Bruce noted that a few budgets were not yet final or were missing. The committee questioned whether the increase in the ZBA legal line was sufficient, given that they needed more than that added to the current year with a reserve fund transfer. There was also a question about the Planning Board, because it was noted the increase was for the Visioning process, but that is scheduled to be completed within this fiscal year. Bruce explained a few other increases.

Kathy questioned why, in a year that the schools were already up an enormous amount, the UIRSD is still insisting on paying MORE than the ADEC figure. She also noted that she hoped that if the health insurance rates went down from what was budgeted, that would yield some reduction in both high school and up island budgets, but final rates will not be available until early February this year. Bruce noted that he had already said, earlier in the year, that we could only accommodate an increase of \$1.2 million without an override, and we appear to be looking at at least a \$2.2 million increase. Jen said that for sure the UIRSD budget increase should be an override question.

Bruce noted that while the TriTown Ambulance budget includes a figure for debt service, this is not a final figure yet. He also questioned whether we would legally be able to do a debt exclusion for TTA debt, as it is 1) not our debt and 2) there is not yet a written and signed MOU. It was noted we should research what the language of the actual TTA vote was.

The meeting then moved to a review of warrant articles known at this time. Jen provided a list of what she had thus far, some of which were not money articles. A few notes:

- New position funding cannot be determined until it is regraded
- Facilities is looking for another \$100,000
- S/T rental and Energy are bylaws – no money
- Fire hydrant amount is not known yet
- Fire equipment stabilization is \$100,000
- Library HVAC – Jen said they would not be out to bid until March, so the full project cost is not yet known, but she was assuming \$127,000 for an OPM and was waiting to hear back for an estimate on the commissioning agent. Kathy noted we should build in some factor for the \$1.2 million estimate from last year not being enough, as another year has gone by. She also raised

the question of whether this would be an additional borrowing authorization, or just a warrant article. It was concluded that it should probably be borrowed, and that research would be done on whether both a ballot and town meeting vote would be required, as Bruce was advising this be a capital exclusion item. If borrowed, the debt service budget will need to be revised.

- For overlap in preparation for Bruce's retirement, he anticipated a need for \$10-12,000
- Richie is working on a figure for paying Old Courthouse Road, which could also be a capital exclusion item.
- The highway pickup appeared to be coming in at \$45-50,000, vs. the \$70,000 anticipated last year.
- Additional articles noted were
  - NStar easement
  - Police cruiser (last year was about \$43,000)
  - ADU?
  - Assessors' reval – the usual \$24,000
  - The usual county articles
  - All the CPC articles
  - Replenishing the reserve fund for terminated employee absence because of both Bruce and Joyce retiring this spring – amount TBD

Kathy and Mac noted that we cannot proceed with any action on the new exemption for renting to tenants meeting affordable guidelines because the DOR does not expect to have rules/regulations ready until nearly the end of the fiscal year. Therefore, it was decided to postpone both this issue and the residential exemption discussion with the Select Board until some time in February, after the warrant has closed.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:58 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Logue

*Approved January 23, 2024*