Date: 3/7/2024

Time: 7PM

Location: Holbrook Town Hall

Members in Person: Barry, Brian, Scott

Members on Zoom: Anne, PJ, Susan

**Meeting Minutes**

* Motion to approve meeting minutes for 2/15 Brian/Scott 5-0-0

**Reserve Fund Transfer**

* To be voted on it next week
  + Library Directory
  + Workers Comp Audit
    - Peter to provide the reason for the overage.



**Assessors Officers**

* Principal Clerk has been elevated to Administrative Assistant.
* Certification credits in expenses.
* Increase of 12,141, 4% increase overall.
* Salary increase is contractual.
* Patriot systems
  + A 15K upgrade will be needed next year to go to the next version, which is in the cloud.
* Most of the Expenses increase is due to the fly over software, 4 times a year.
* Legal expenses due to actions due to not granting an abatement, mostly for commercial properties.
  + Most costly situation is when an appraisal is required.
  + Anne asks for a history of these expenses.
  + PJ notes that the amount was higher, and it has been reduced to 10k.



**Accountant**

* Reducing the salary of Town Accountant to $125,000
* Added 3% to Admin Clerical
* Level funding the rest of the budget.
* Request last year 272,881 FY25 Request 268,086

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**Debts**

* To be finalized
* Treatment plant could substantially change debt.
* The treasurer is reviewing.

**Library**

* Amount Change needs to reverse from negative to positive on budget sheet.
* Condition Assessment, Add $5,000 maintenance line.
  + To fix everything it is $3M.
    - The HVAC System needs to be repaired.
    - Elevator Repair needed again.
* 2 staff members that qualify for Longevity pay.
* Expenses in OLN Fees have increased.
* Take Average of last 3 years and add 2.5%.
* Materials expenditure $102,600
* Received 14k for state aid.
* Potential raise to be removed, can be covered by the RTF.



**Inspectional Services**

* Review of the history of the permitting
* Conservation agent position currently not filled.
* 4 Alternate building inspectors
* 24 certificates of occupancies
  + Going to the tax roll
* Directors’ salary, flat
* Inspectional clerical
* 2% for wiring inspector
* Removed Health inspector, moved to the board of health budget.
* Moved Conservation Agent to FT from PT, was original $54,707, $72k Budget requested by the Selectboard, so that it is comparable to the Health Agent.
  + Selectboard Chair Goldrick, intent is to have the flexibility. Market price is higher. The lowest market rate that is out there. 7 Municipalities.
  + Anne asks if this is a fully benefited role and Selectboard Chair Goldrick confirms. Interim Town Administrator confirms that this position would be pension eligible.
  + Anne suggests that the addition be an RTF.
  + The Selectboard Chair Goldrick expresses how difficult it is to recruit without the money in the budget.
  + PJ asks if a salary study has been done town wide.
    - Selectboard Chair Goldrick confirms that they are considering but are finding that the salaries are insufficient.
  + Anne raises that pensions are a large benefit and cost to the town.
* Expenses
  + Removed 25k and moved to BOH.
  + Sharing other expenses
    - Travel and classes.
  + Removed Public Nurse
* Change of $-49,940.72, 105k moved to board of health. Most of the change is accounted for by the Conservation agent.



**Board of Health**

* Review of Services, required by law.
* Full time Health Agent, $72k, has a master's in public health.
* Hazardous Waste Day, $22k
* Shared Public Health Nurse, 11K.
* Vaccines & Supplies $13k
* Shared Expenses with Inspectional Services
* $11 per capita cost for the current budget
* Looking to make changes to the department.
  + Shift from having a health agent to a health director.
    - Working on grant funding to supplement services.
  + More leadership in the shared grant
  + Add a Health Coordinator Role
    - Administrative tasks
* Total Proposed Budget 177k, $15 per capita.
* Reduces the liability to the town.
* Anne points out that Abington has 17k inhabitants.
* 33% increase, over last year
* PJ notes that we used grants during the pandemic to provide supplemental staffing.
* Increase in building code reports.
* Budget to be in standard format.
* Grouping services with communities with the excellence grant
  + Switching to electronic permitting expense
  + Shared resources
* Susan requests gaps and the estimated cost of the gap and the risk
* PJ comments that historically all the inspectors had their own budget.
  + Consolidated to Inspectional Services into one group.
* Selectboard member Conway commented, Projected Holbrook population will be closer to 12k, Abington is not an environmental justice community.

**Town Clerk**

* Increase of 5k for elections
* Increase of general expenses
* Registrars have gone up because the population has increased, $600.
* Clerical Salaries have gone up 10k.
* Going to ask 90k for the Town Clerk at town meeting, one of the lowest paid Town Clerk
  + 14-20 hour day on election day
  + 80 this last week
  + Certified municipal clerk
    - Should be paid a stipend.
* Grant funding annual for 10k
* Brian asks the interim town administrator to make sure the salary is as town meeting voted.
* PJ noted what can be done so that the Town Clerk's office can be more efficient.
* The Town Clerk notes that she is comparatively low paid compared to other communities.



**Selectboard Oversight**

* Increase of 13.7%, consolidating work in the human resources budget.
* Consolidating two positions into one.
* Proposing increase in Town Administrator's salary and Assistant Town Administrator
  + 170k - 185k is the high end of the offer.
    - Comparison to 3 communities, Hull, Rockland & Hanover.
    - Need professional leadership.
  + 70-90k Range, human resources aspect to the job.
    - Not going to get an experienced HR director.
* Keep floating at level funding.
* Level fund Sick Leave buyback.
* $380,591 total budget.
* HR 3% for administrative.
* Sana Banks raises questions about the gap in pay of the Assistant Town Administrator and Town Administrator.
  + Interim Town Administrator said that responsibilities are different.
    - Looking for to learn and be mentored.
    - Competitive with other towns.
* Susan comments that there has been a significant increase over time.
  + Were there changes to the role?
    - Interim Town Administrator comments that the role needs to be expanded.
      * To include hiring and other roles.
  + Would a person be able to succeed?
    - The Interim Town Administrator will propose changes to the Town Administrator bylaws.
      * Provide support functions for the Select Board.
      * A more active financial role.
        + Helps inform the decisions.
      * Less active role of hiring by the selectboard.
        + More active supervising employees.
* Selectboard member Conway comments that the board took a different approach.
  + Contracted with the Collins center to attract the best level of candidates.
    - Looked at the market.
    - Drastically below market rate
  + Selectboard is overburdened.
    - Not able to do what the residents want us to do.



**HCAM**

* Town needs provide the difference to pay the difference between revenue and $250,000.
  + Shortfall of $75k in FY25



**Opioid Settlement**

* Settlement funds are from manufacturers, distributors, and Pharmacies.
  + Over the next 6-18 years, $460k.
* Advisory committee created.
  + 7 members.
  + Planning process.
* Evidence based practices, non-duplicative, permissible uses.
  + Impacted by the opioid crisis.
* Special Purpose Stabilization fund created.
  + Long process.
  + Can revoke and establish a revenue account.
    - Don't need to certify free cash.
* Looking for a few things for town meeting.
  + Revoke special stabilization fund.
  + Vote any certified money into a special revenue account, should have 63k.
* Can be down outside town meeting.
* Anne points out that we wouldn't be able to find the amount for what is currently received.
  + The Interim town accountant to find the appropriate dollar amount.
* Town Accountant to establish an account for the special revenue account.



**Next Meeting**

* Next Meeting 3/14

**Adjourn**

* Motion to adjourn Brian/Scott 6-0-0