



Town of Ayer
Joint Meeting of the Ayer Board of Selectmen and Ayer Finance Committee
Ayer Town Hall – 1st Floor Meeting Room
Ayer, MA 01432

Broadcast and Recorded by APAC

Monday March 9, 2020
Open Session Meeting Minutes

RECEIVED
APR 08 2020
TOWN OF AYER
TOWN CLERK

BOS Present: Scott A. Houde, Chair; Jannice L. Livingston, Vice-Chair; Shaun C. Copeland, Clerk

Fin Com Present: Patrick Diamond, Chair; Mark Smith, Vice-Chair; Louis Conrad

Fin Com Absent: Terry Harvell, Clerk; Matthew Selby

Also Present: Robert A. Pontbriand, Town Manager
Carly M. Antonellis, Assistant Town Manager

Shaun C. Copeland

BOS Call to Order: S. Houde called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Fin Com Call to Order: P. Diamond called the Finance Committee to Order at 6:00 PM.

Second Public Presentation of the Proposed FY '21 Budget: R. Pontbriand thanked both Boards for the opportunity to make the second public presentation on the FY '21 budget. R. Pontbriand reported that he is presenting the 3rd version of the budget this evening. R. Pontbriand highlighted the Town's Budget strengths, including the 2019 Free Cash Certification of \$1.7 million, 2019 Stabilization Fund balance of \$2.5 million and the Town's S&P Bond Rating of AA+.

R. Pontbriand then gave an update of the updated revenues, stating that an additional \$44,000 is anticipated, which is largely due to the Governor's Budget for local aid. He stated that the annual omnibus budget has increased on average about 5.1% over the past several years. The average school assessments over the past several years are 3.74% for Ayer Shirley Regional School District and 4.67% for Nashoba Valley Technical High School.

The approximate increase in the Omnibus, using Version 3, is about 3.06%. R. Pontbriand then highlighted the changes from Version 1 of the budget to Version 3. Since Version 1, there have been about \$100,000 in additional reductions, and about \$160,000 in new spending. R. Pontbriand stated that a portion of the new spending comes from the addition of a Deputy Chief position in the Fire Department, which has been discussed for some time. With the Fire Chief recently announcing his upcoming retirement, the opportunity to add the position presented itself. The BOS also voted to recommend 2% COLA increase for non-union personnel.

R. Pontbriand then presented the FY '21 Capital Budget Recommendations totaling \$1.1 million for the General Fund, \$3.9 million for Water Enterprise Fund; and \$1.1 million for the Sewer Enterprise Fund. R. Pontbriand then detailed the Proposed Raise Articles for the upcoming Town Meeting, which includes; 1st year's interest on general fund borrowing; \$30,000 for aquatic weed control,

\$10,000 for ballistic vests for the fire department, and other items.

R. Pontbriand went over proposed uses for Free Cash, including \$230,000 to replenish the UDAG fund in the amount of \$230,000 for the Worthen Dale Law Suit; OPEB funding in the amount of \$170,300; Forward funding of the pension liability for \$300,000; \$50,000 for a compensated balances account; \$900,000 to capital stabilization and the remainder of \$77,000 to stabilization.

R. Pontbriand noted the Water and Sewer Rate Public Hearing will be held on March 30, 2020.

S. Copeland asked about the reduction of \$50,000 in the Police Department budget. L. Gabree stated that it was an error and the funding was being duplicated, which she found by scrubbing the budget with the Police Chief. He then asked about the ballistic vests for the Fire Department. L. Gabree explained that because it was a one-time item, she and the Town Manager moved it from the Omnibus to a raise article.

L. Conrad asked if the Deputy Fire Chief was expected to be a permanent position. R. Pontbriand stated yes.

Public Comment/ Questions: None

Adjournment:

Motion: A motion was made by S. Houde and seconded by J. Livingston to adjourn the BOS at 6:33 PM. **Motion passed 3-0.**

Motion: A motion was made by P. Diamond and seconded by M. Smith to adjourn the Finance Committee at 6:33 PM. **Motion passed 3-0.**

Minutes Recorded and Submitted by Carly M. Antonellis, Assistant Town Manager

Date Minutes Approved by BOS: 4/7/2020

Signature Indicating Approval: 