

Town of Ayer

Finance Committee

Ayer Massachusetts, 01432



Location: Ayer Town Hall, Great Hall
Finance Committee Minutes

Thursday January 13, 2011

Present: Brian Muldoon; Chairman, Scott Houde; Clerk, and Andrew Crowley, member

Absent: Jesse Reich

One committee position open

Called to order at 7:03 pm by Brian Muldoon

- Mail
 - Updated budget sheets from Lisa Gabree
- Minutes
 - Outstanding minutes are 12/8/10, 12/16/10, 1/4/11, 1/5/11, 1/6/11, and 1/11/11
- Budget Review
 - Kathleen O'Connor from the Library Board of Trustees presented a budget of \$454,542 which represents a 2.5% increase from FY2011.
 - The budget is increased due to required minimal funding of libraries per state mandates. The library must be funded at a factor of 1.025 of the prior 3 year average.
 - The minimum funding allows the library to keep its accreditation with the state, This allows Ayer residents to visit and borrow from regional libraries. Failure to minimum fund will result in loss of accreditation for 3 years and no interlibrary borrowing. Return to accreditation is not guaranteed after 3 years.
 - Grants are available for the library but only for specific one time projects. The library has a fund with \$30 – 40K in it from left over grant money. This fund was used to pay for the parking lot sealing this past summer.
 - Can the library receive a waiver from the state for the minimal funding? – Yes they can but the board does not wish to pursue that right now. The waiver requires that the library budget be cut at the exact same percentage as the other town budget items. Even then there is no guarantee of a waiver.
 - The proposed budget at a 2.5% increase is \$20,280 more than a 3% cut and \$29,239 more than a 5% cut. The town administrator requested all departments submit budgets with 3% and 5% reductions. The library did level fund wages per town administrator's request.
 - The library is currently open for 35 hours per week. Member SH expressed disappointment with the current schedule. The library is currently open during non working (M-F 9-5) hours for 6 of the 35 hours. The weekend hours are only Sat 10 – 1. The hours should make the library accessible to all taxpayers evenly across the week. Kathleen O'Connor agreed the hours are not ideal but they are set by the employees. She will express the FinCom's concern to the board of trustees.
 - The FinCom chair will write the Library director and Trustees about pursuing a waiver to meet the Town Administrator's budget memorandum.
 - Facilities Manager Dan Sherman presented a budget for Building Maintenance of \$218,637 with a 3% decrease and \$214,129 with a 5% decrease.
 - The immediate impact of the budget cuts is the wages for part custodian who was added in the last fiscal year but hiring was delayed 3 months. The loss of the custodian will eat into facilities manager's time to maintain the buildings as needed.
 - The budget has utilities level funded from last year and minimal amounts of repair and maintenance. Dan maximizes energy conservation within the building. The town hall, fire department and police department have been fitted with energy saving light fixtures. The town hall is in the process of receiving a new temperature control system that will take away employee's individual control for a set temperature through the building.

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- Most facilities are heated with natural gas. The lone exception is the waste water treatment plant. That plant is scheduled to utilize the Essco grant for energy savings on an oil fired facility. This will help manage the costs of heating the building.
- The cost of rising oil will increase cost of supplies as freight expenses rise and the cost is passed to the consumer.
- The Services line item is primarily for fire extinguisher, sprinkler testing and elevator. The services utilized have been reduced in FY11 but there has been no affect on public safety.
- Repairs are self explanatory. In addition to unforeseen repairs, there are some that are planned such as plaster and painting for the town hall.
- All costs for repairs and services are watched by Dan Sherman for all departments in town. Dan manages the vendors to ensure the quality of work and price.
- The custodian cleans town hall and police station. The fire department cleans their own building. If the custodian could become full time it will allow Dan more time to attend meetings, increase energy conservation and perform maintenance.
- The buildings in Ayer are aging. The town hall is a historical building that was refurbished 8 years ago. The fire station is 5 years old and poorly constructed. The police station is 14 years old.
- The only grant available is the one current received from the state for weatherization and updating the waste water treatment plant.

- Motion to adjourn at 8:22pm

Motion	SH
Second	AC
B. Muldoon	Aye
J. Reich	Absent
S. Houde	Aye
A. Crowley	AC
Vote	3 - 0

Brian Muldoon, Chairman _____ Date _____

Jesse Reich, Vice Chairman _____ Date _____

Scott Houde, Clerk _____ Date _____

Andrew Crowley, Member _____ Date _____