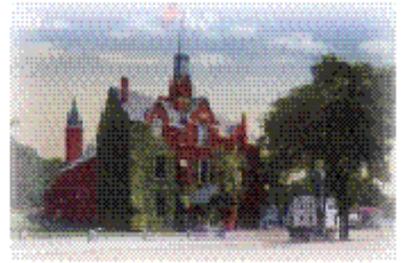


Town of Ayer

Finance Committee

Ayer Massachusetts, 01432



Location: Ayer Town Hall, Great Hall
Finance Committee Minutes

Monday December 5, 2011

Present: Brian Muldoon; Chairman, Scott Houde; Vice Chairman, John Kilcommins; Clerk, Michael Pattenden; member Mary Spinner.

Called to order at 7:00 pm by Brian Muldoon

- Vicksburg Square
 - BM Led a discussion of Vicksburg Square.
 - BM-Should we add more bullet points to the FinCom VBS memo?
 - SH-We should keep it straightforward without too much detail.
 - JK-Agreed. Too much detail will only detract from the message. These are not our numbers to defend.
 - BM-Attended Trinity's presentation in Shirley. One new development concerns changes to their plan. Once the plan is passed at the super town meetings it can be changed with just BOS approval.
 - SH-Will get our VBS position memo onto the website. A copy of the memo has also been sent to Mary Arata for publication.
 - JK-Any feedback from the regional school committee?
 - BM-There is a leadership meeting this week and I hope to attend the RSC meeting this week.
- Budget Memo
 - BM Led a discussion on free cash. We had thought free cash would be around +400K but it looks like it will come in at -68K. I'm thinking we need to ask the department heads to come to us with budgets at -3% and -5% scenarios.
 - MS-It is the smaller departments that are most impacted. We also need to do something about contracts (new hires) while grandfathering current benefits. This is the only way to save anything.
 - BM-We'll need to prepare a 3-5% cut memo.
 - JK-How does this compare with years past?
 - MS-It's consistent.
 - BM-The key to this is that the general fund is negative.
- Delinquent Taxes Update
 - BM Provided a copy of the open real estate taxes that the town accountant prepared.
 - MP-When did we last have a tax sale? We don't seem to have them.
 - MS-You need someone to send out the letters. Ann (the prior town clerk) used to do this.
 - BM-I asked the town clerk/collector and treasurer to attend our 12/14 meeting. In order to explain the tax collection process efforts. There has been no feedback. The town administrator is pursuing this as well.
 - MP-Would it be OK to bring up the open real estate taxes at the selectmen's meeting in order to ask what we are going to do about it?
 - JK/BM/SH Agreed.
 - BM-Will follow up with the town accountant for the full listing of open taxes in order to post them on line.
- Zero Based Budgeting
 - JK-The feedback that I'm getting is that there is too short a runway to convert all budgets to zero based in this cycle.
 - JK- The zero based committee is recommending that two departments, one union and one non-union, be selected for zero based budgeting this cycle. These budgets would be run offline in parallel with the MUNIS budgets. We are thinking of doing this with the BOS and fire department budgets. The committee is concerned that if we ask all departments to convert then many will simply use their prior year actual to 'fill in the blanks' for this year's zero based templates.

Town of Ayer

Finance Committee

Ayer Massachusetts, 01432



- SH-We need to see what MUNIS can give us.
- JK-It is on my plate to schedule the next committee meeting. I also need to prepare a memo defining zero based budgeting as there is some difference in interpretation of that term.
- BM-To my thinking you start with the fixed known costs and then bring in the rest.
- SH-Yes, it should start with the fixed costs. We should also look to boost the amount allocated into the reserve fund. In year one there are bound to be mistakes or unanticipated expenses on the budgets.
- JK-The next step then is for me to schedule a committee meeting after your (BM/SH) meeting with the town accountant.
- SH-Are we meeting with all departments?
- BM-I think we are meeting with just the larger departments.
- SH-The library, police, fire, and parks should all be met with along with brining in the town clerk and treasurer.
- MS-Our rates and fees are not being enforced.
- SH-I will see the town clerk on Monday to discuss that.
- BM-I will also email the town administrator to check on his status in regards to rates and fees

- Motion to adjourn at 8:12 pm

Motion	SH
Second	JK
B. Muldoon	Aye
S. Houde	Aye
J. Kilcommins	Aye
M. Pattenden	Aye
Vote	4 - 0

Brian Muldoon, Chairman _____ Date _____

Scott Houde, Vice Chairman _____ Date _____

John Kilcommins, Clerk _____ Date _____

Michael Pattenden, member _____ Date _____