

Bernardston Finance Committee

Bernardston Selectboard

Meeting minutes for 4/10/2023

Present; Jane Dutcher, Brian Hervieux, Stephen Nestanpower

Absent; Jody Coleman

Selectboard present; Stan Garland, Brian Keir, Ken Bordewieck

Called to order at 6:34pm

Review of minutes dated 3/20/2023

Moved By Mr. Nestanpower and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Bordewieck. Minutes accepted as corrected.

Review of minutes dated 4/3/2023

Moved by Mr. Bordewieck and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Keir. Minutes accepted as corrected.

Review of Budget worksheet #7:

- 1) This committee has moved the dollar amounts from the requested column to the recommended column with the exception of some of the following budgets as they require further discussion. Also noted below are changes these committees made.
- 2) Noted, these committees have changed the town officer bond account to \$1,000.
- 3) Council on Aging payroll reflects a 4.4% increase as well as an increase in hours. Jane noted that when we add additional personnel to at least 20 hours we must also add monies for additional benefits. An example Jane had pointed out was if the new employee were to take the most expensive plans, we would need to add \$18,000+ for Insurance and other employee cocts. When they had presented their budget, it indicated that the COA would like to add an additional employee (Program Assistant) at 20 hours. Stan noted that a new employee was not in their budget. Jane noted a \$16,000 increase over FY23.
- 4) Library budget has increases the required 2.5%. That plus the 4.4% increase in wages, Jane has determined their budget should read \$84,594.26 and not the \$91,231.32 requested with the operating cost of \$21,249.00.
- 5) Reserve Account was moved to \$75,000.
- 6) A discussion on the accounting program and the move to not use the FRCOG for accounting. Jane and myself think this could be a little late in the game for move. As an email from Bob Dean indicates a 3–6-month timeframe and a cost of \$40,000 for deployment of the software. Jane suggested a presentation from the accounting company. Ken has assured us that the new company can have us up and running on time, safely and correctly. So, these committees have left the dollar amount as is in the worksheet.
- 7) Town Council fees have gone up, so we increased that to \$15,000.

- 8) A discussion on the Town Clerk and her impending retirement. We need to look at increasing that budget to allow for training of the clerk's replacement. We also removed the request for Software.
- 9) Mr. Keir wanted to discuss the fuel the town uses. He recommends that we pull the fuel (automobile) all departments' budgets and make it its own line.
- 10) A review of the Capital expense budget for the schools. There were questions about some of the repairs that need to be addressed, and Jane will reach out for the answers. Mr. Keir also indicated he would look for answers with Jordan Burns, Director of Finance for the PVRSD.
- 11) A question arose about the Emergency Management budget. The budget shows stipends but no line for payroll. Perhaps stipends should be changed to payroll?
- 12) It was noted that the stabilization monies would have to be R&A if we want to put money in that account.
- 13) We did not move the Recreation budget into the recommended column as there are still questions.

Moved by Mr. Keir and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Bordewieck to adjourn meeting.

Adjourned at 9:11pm.

Next meeting is on 4/17/2023 at 6:30pm in the Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted

Brian Hervieux