**TOWN OF WENHAM**

**Finance & Advisory Committee**

**Meeting of March 5, 2015**

**Town Hall, 138 Main Street**

Pursuant to the Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. Chapter 30 A, §§ 18-25, written notice posted by the Town Clerk delivered to all Committee/Board members, a meeting of the Finance & Advisory Committee (FinCom) was held on Thursday, MARCH 5, 2015 at 6:30 PM in the Selectmen Chambers.

1. **Call Meeting to Order**

With a quorum present, Mr. Lucy called the Finance Committee (FC) meeting to order at 6:34 PM

Committee Members present: Michael Lucy, Chair; Hilliard Ebling, Vice Chair (A 6:42 PM); Ned Flynn; Michael Therrien; Rick Quinn. Also present Angel Wills, Finance Director

Public information

This meeting was recorded with permission by HWCAM; the minutes were prepared from this recording

Agenda

Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 Budget

2015 Special Town Meeting Warrant Articles

Minutes – February 25, 2015

1. **Chair Updates**

The FinCom requested an update from the Assessors regarding the request for $60,000 in the FY 16 proposed budget.

Assessor Tom Tanous was present to explain the details of this financial request to hire an outside company to do a total evaluation of the town. He informed the Committee that has not been done in the last 25 years, adding that the State of Massachusetts requires a complete evaluation every 10 years.

The Assessors collectively feel strongly that this be done considering a variety of reasons including changes to properties, abatement requests, and values of homes; the process takes 3 to 6 months. Mr. Tanous stressed the importance of having the evaluation done all at one time in one fiscal year, citing equal property value comparisons.

Mr. Lucy suggested $10,000 be carried in the FY 16 budget and if the first section of the evaluation goes well, the evaluation be competed and the funding be carried in FY 17. The FinCom observed that the fee for this service appears to vary from $36,000 - $60,000 and questioned the significant spread in cost estimates and why the highest estimate was being requested. Mr. Tanous said the $60,000 was requested to assure the service would be covered in its entirety. He went on to explain that this is a preliminary estimate, and once the money was in the budget, quotes would be sought through an RFP for actual bids.

It was the consensus of the FinCom that the Assessors provide additional information including a definite cost a total evaluation and the details of the service to be provided. A set of questions was to be provided to the Board of Assessors ? Staff for written responses and further discussion at a subsequent Fin Com meeting. Ms. Wills was asked to provide the FinCom with the State requirements for evaluations and authorized her to consult with Town Counsel if necessary.

Mr. Flynn asked the Assessors to provide the revenue provision for new growth over 5 years, noting that last year the town received $108,000.

1. **FY 16 Town Budget** -- Finance Director; Final review, discussion, questions:

a. Ms. Wills reviewed the changes in the budget from the last meeting:

* + Decrease legal retainer $1,000
  + Increase town hall floater position $17,800
  + Decrease Free Cash from $450,000 to$ 425,000

The tax rate on the FY16 Budget as presented is $16.83; this is an increase over FY 15 of $.58 (3.09%)

b. Approval of FY 16 Budget Accounts, by Department

Mr. Lucy read the line item budget totals for Article 1 and called for a motion to approve each line item, noting the Assessors, Library, and Vocational School were placeholders and smaller budgets were moved into departmental budgets.

General Government

114 MODERATOR: $50

*Mr. Quinn moved to approve the budget for the Moderator and it was unanimous to do so.*

122 SELECTMEN: $12,812

*Mr. Ebling moved to approve the budget for the Selectmen and it was unanimous to do so.*

1. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR: $106,941

*Mr. Ebling moved to approve the budget for the Town Administrator and it was unanimous to do so.*

131 FINANCE COMMITTEE: $250

*Mr. Ebling moved to approve the budget for the Finance Committee and it was unanimous to do so.*

132 RESERVE FUND: $175,000

*Mr. Ebling moved to approve the budget for the Reserve Fund and it was unanimous to do so.*

Moved: 135 TOWN ACCOUNTANT to Finance Department

130 FINANCE DEPARTMENT: $197,626

*Mr. Quinn moved to approve the budget for the Finance Department and it was unanimous to do so.*

139 MUNICIPAL AUDIT: $27,000

*Mr. Therrien moved to approve the budget for the Municipal Audit and it was unanimous to do so.*

141 ASSESSORS: $82,603

*Mr. Ebling moved to approve the budget for the Assessors and it was unanimous to do so.*

Moved: 145 FINANCE DIRECTOR/ TREASURER / COLLECTOR to Finance Department

147 TOWN COUNSEL / LEGAL: $7,000

*Mr. Ebling moved to approve the budget for Town Counsel/ Legal and it was unanimous to do so.*

155 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY: $71,036

*Mr. Ebling moved to approve the budget for IT and it was unanimous to do so.*

160 TOWN HALL: $136,180

*Mr. Ebling moved to approve the budget for the Town Hall and it was unanimous to do so.*

161 TOWN CLERK: $75,756

*Mr. Ebling moved to approve the budget for the Town Clerk and it was unanimous to do so.*

Moved: 162 ELECTIONS / REGISTRATION to Town Clerk

PLANNING & LAND USE: $75,233

*Mr. Therrien moved to approve Planning and Land use and it was unanimous to do so.*

192 BUILDING AND GROUNDS MAINTENANCE: $155,524

*Mr. Flynn moved to approve Building and Grounds Maintenance and it was unanimous to do so.*

195 TOWN REPORT: $5,000

*Mr. Flynn moved to approve the budget for the Town Report and it was unanimous to do so.*

Moved: 198 SENIOR CENTER to COA

1. IRON RAIL: $56,604

*Mr. Therrien moved to approve the Iron Rail and it was unanimous to do so.*

Protection of Persons and Property

210 POLICE: $1,336,472

*Mr. Flynn moved to approve the budget for Police and it was unanimous to do so.*

Moved: 215 POLICE STATION to Police

220 FIRE: $732,906

*Mr. Flynn moved to approve the budget for Fire and it was unanimous to do so.*

Moved: 226 FIRE STATION to Fire

1. PERMITTING & INSPECTIONAL SERVICES: $38,763

*Mr. Ebling moved to approve the budget for Permitting & Inspectional Services and it was unanimous to do so.*

Under discussion the analysis on the fee structure is forthcoming a recommendation is anticipated after town meeting.

Moved: 249 MUNICIPAL FIRE ALARM SYSTEMS to Fire

Moved: 291 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SERVICES to Fire

Moved: 292 ANIMAL CONTROL to Police

294 TREE WARDEN: $31,879

*Mr. Therrien moved to approve the budget for the Tree Warden and it was unanimous to do so.*

Terminated: 299 EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION CENTER

Schools

310 HAMILTON WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT: $8,010,930

*Mr. Therrien moved to approve the budget for the HWRSD and it was unanimous to do so.*

320 REGIONAL VOCATION SCHOOL: $185,079 (Placeholder Subject to final number)

*Mr. Quinn moved to approve the budget for the Regional Vocational School and it was unanimous to do so.*

Department of Public Works

422 HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT: $777,842

*Mr. Ebling moved to approve the budget for the Highway Department and it was unanimous to do so.*

423 SNOW REMOVAL: $106, 050

*Mr. Therrien moved to approve the budget for Snow Removal and it was unanimous to do so.*

424 STREET LIGHT: $52,000

*Mr. Ebling moved to approve the budget for Street Lights and it was unanimous to do so.*

Moved: 429 VEHICLE MAINTENANCE to Highway

433 REFUSE COLLECTION & DISPOSAL (Contract) $233,659

*Mr. Therrien moved to approve the budget for Refuse Collection & Disposal and it was unanimous to do so.*

491 CEMETERY: $10,847

*Mr. Therrien moved to approve the budget for Cemetery and it was unanimous to do so.*

Moved: 495 GASOLINE /OIL to Highway

Health & Human Services

510 BOARD OF HEALTH: $26,990

*Mr. Therrien moved to approve the budget for the BOH and it was unanimous to do so.*

1. COUNCIL ON AGING (COA): $104,409

*Mr. Ebling moved to approve the budget for the COA and it was unanimous to do so.*

Moved: 542 COA VAN to COA

543 VETERANS: $21,400 (Assessment for Regional Veteran Agent)

*Mr. Flynn moved to approve the budget for the Veteran and it was unanimous to do so.*

Culture & Recreation

620 LIBRARY: $872,860 (place holder pending data from Hamilton Salary survey)

*Mr. Therrien moved to approve the budget for the Library and it was unanimous to do so.*

640 JOINT RECREATION: $70,000

*Mr. Ebling moved to approve the budget for Joint Recreation and it was unanimous to do so.*

*Moved: 650 PARKS TO Police*

691 HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION EXPENSE: $200

*Mr. Therrien moved to approve the budget for the HDC and it was unanimous to do so.*

Moved: 693 TOWN CLOCK to Buildings & Grounds

Moved: 699 BAND to Town Hall

Fixed Charges

840 INTERGOVERNMENTAL (Emergency Center retirees assessment) $19,250

*Mr. Therrien moved to approve the budget for Intergovernmental Assessment and it was unanimous to do so.*

911 RETIREMENT: $580,420

*Mr. Therrien moved to approve the budget for Retirement and it was unanimous to do so.*

914 EMPLOYEE BENEFITS: $624,154

*Mr. Quinn moved to approve the budget for Employee Benefits and it was unanimous to do so.*

916 FICA MEDICARE: $53,455

*Mr. Quinn moved to approve the budget for the FICA/ Medicare and it was unanimous to do so.*

945 GENERAL INSURANCE EXPENSES: $120,000

*Mr. Therrien moved to approve the budget for the General Insurance Expenses and it was unanimous to do so.*

Town Debt Principal & Interest

710 PRINCIPAL: $462,800

*Mr. Therrien moved to approve the budget for the Principal and it was unanimous to do so.*

751 INTEREST: $91,828

*Mr. Ebling moved to approve the budget for Interst and it was unanimous to do so.*

450 WATER FUND: $423,365

*Mr. Therrien moved to approve the budget for the Water Fund and it was unanimous to do so.*

The Selectmen will review the line item budget in Article 1 as voted by the Finance Committee, and vote on making a recommendation to Town Meeting, before it goes to the printer.

c. Positions on any remaining Warrant Articles STM

The BOS took no action to recommend the STM article as this time, pending action by the Finance Committee.

ARTICLE 1: FY 2015 Budget Account Appropriation Transfers

The Selectmen voted unanimously to place Article 1 on the STM warrant on February 17, 2015.

Ms. Wills provided an addendum to #5 – To request $15,000 be transferred from employee group insurance back into the Reserve Fund; there is no impact on the budget.

*Mr. Flynn moved to recommend favorable action on Article 1 of the STM warrant to Town Meeting.*

ARTICLE 2: Water Department Funding

The Selectmen voted unanimously to place Article 2 on the STM warrant on February 17, 2015.

*Mr. Therrien moved to recommend favorable action on Article 2 of the STM warrant to Town Meeting.*

1. **Reserve Fund Transfers (RFT):** Vote

**a. Unemployment Expense: $5,000** – RFT Request dated: March 4, 2015 - To pay the current obligation to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for unemployment expenses; invoice dated March 2015.

*Vote: Mr. Flynn moved, and it was seconded, to transfer $5,000 for unemployment expenses. The motion carried unanimously.*

**b. Legal Expense: $10,590** – RFT request dated: March 5, 2015 amended from $10,000 to $10,590 - To pay for unforeseen legal expense

*Vote: Mr. Ebling moved, and it was seconded, to transfer $10,590 for legal expenses. The motion carried unanimously.*

1. **Minutes: February 25, 2015 – Vote**

*Vote: Mr. Quinn moved to adopt the February 25, 2015 minutes and it was unanimous to do so.*

1. **Next Meetings:** 
   * Canceled: Placeholder Wednesday, March 11, 2015; determined not to be needed.
   * Monday, April 6, 2015 -- Warrant Hearing, Town Hall @ 7:00 PM

**7) Other matters as may not have been reasonably anticipated by the Chair (discussion only) –** There were none.

1. **Adjournment –** *Mr. Therrien**moved to adjourn at 8:20 PM and it was unanimous to do so.*

Respectfully submitted by

Catherine Tinsley

3.6.15