

Town of Milton
BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
February 18, 2021

ATTENDANCE:

Members: Humphrey Williams (Chair), Peg Hurd, Lisa Gautreau, Bob Carrier, Claudine Burnham, Larry Brown, Danielle Marique

Absent: Mike Beaulieu

Humphrey Williams, Chair, opened the session at 6:00PM.

1.) Pledge of Allegiance: Humphrey Williams, Chair, led the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2.) Roll Call:

a. Mr. Williams, Chair, led the roll call of members to determine if a quorum was present. Humphrey Williams (Chair), Peg Hurd, Lisa Gautreau, Bob Carrier, Claudine Burnham, Danielle Marique, Larry Brown. A quorum was present.

b. Public participation: There was no public participation.

3.) Training Session on Excel Expenditure Reports and Budget Proposal Files:

Mr. Williams, in anticipation of board changes, began training committee members on the Excel reports that are utilized by the budget committee. Mr. Williams is also developing a PowerPoint presentation that will provide step-by-step directions in the creation and use of the Excel reports to provide further explanation and guidance.

4.) Town Expenditure Reports – Final for 2020:

The committee reviewed the final expenditure report for 2020. The net budget includes both the Warrant Articles and the Capital Reserve Fund. Mr. Williams pointed out the difference between default budget and the expended dollars is surplus of \$599,424.47. He hopes to have the Board of Selectmen start to utilize the Budget Committee Expenditure reports to have easier access to over-expended line-items. Mr. Brown said it's important the reports reflect specific numbers and reasons to understand where monies have been allocated and spent.

Mr. Williams stated there are several line-items that will need follow-up with Ernie Creveling, Town Administrator, to get additional explanations or line items adjustments. The expenditure report reflects there were 81 over-expended line-items, with a total Net Budget of \$1,156,379 and total expenditures of \$1,401,293.68, which is \$244,914.68 over-expended, at a rate of 121%. There were also 118 line-items, with a total Net Budget of \$70,670 with no expenditures for the year and, in fact, one of the line-items (TA Postage) actually had \$1,854.37 in negative expenditures for the year. The reports have been posted to the website in both Excel and PDF versions to ensure residents will have easy access to the reports.

A question arose regarding the outside appropriations line items. The reports reflect only 45% of Net Budget was spent. Ms. Marique helped provide background explanation in particular to Wakefield Food Pantry. This past year, due to COVID hardships experienced by towns, the food pantry made the decision not to ask towns to contribute as much, only asking for 50% of the budget. It was also pointed out that several line items were at 0% spent. Mr. Williams explained while the Budget committee appropriates the monies, it is up to the Selectman and individual departments to decide how and if they spend allocated dollars.

Mr. Carrier expressed the need for the Selectmen to examine on a regular basis the expenditure reports. Mr. Williams is hopeful going forward this will not be as huge a deal.

Mr. Williams provided the January, 2021 expenditure report and explained that the Net Budget is not reflected until the Operating Budget is voted on in March. Mr. Brown felt it important to proceed with the assumption that the budget will pass.

5.) School Expenditure, Revenue and Grant Reports:

Ms. Hurd provided an update to the school expenditure reports. She noted the line item for special education is higher than anticipated. This is due to providing additional accommodations ~~to~~ for a couple of new students who needed to receive services at a different school district to meet the requirements of their IEPs. These services are State-mandated and include tuition, equipment and providing bus services. Additional over-expended items include secretarial overtime, attorney's fees, salary increases (which also include benefits), technical assistance with Zoom meetings, and Microsoft updates.

The committee reviewed the Revenue Report for the school. The General Fund reflects the following tax impacts: Current School Appropriation - \$5.11; State Education Tax - \$1.79; for a total Current Tax Rate - \$6.91

A discussion occurred regarding Grant money: Where do those monies come from and if they are not spent during the specific time period, is that money then not available? Mr. Williams recommended future School Board reports include additional notes/information to provide further clarification on Grant allocations. Mr. Carrier stated his understanding is if grant monies are not used, they go into a pool for future utilization. Mr. Williams recommended it's better to utilize those allocated monies before it's lost.

Mr. Carrier questioned information in the General Fund, specifically around Catastrophic Aid item. In the December report, there was no activity in this line item. However, in January the report reflected ~\$44,000. How did those monies get there and where specifically did that money come from?

6.) Review / Approval of Minutes: The following minutes reflect all submitted comments and adjustments. Note: Ms. Burnham left the meeting prior to this item.

a.) Minutes of December 16, 2020:

Ms. Hurd made a motion to accept the December 16, 2020 minutes with all corrections. Ms. Gautreau seconded the motion.

Roll call vote: **Ms. Gautreau, Ms. Hurd, Mr. Brown, Mr. Carrier, Mr. Williams all voted Yes. Ms. Marique abstained. Motion Carried – 5 / 0 / 1**

b.) Minutes of January 7, 2021:

Ms. Hurd made a motion to accept the January 7, 2021 minutes with all corrections. Ms. Marique seconded the motion. There was no discussion.

Roll call vote: **Ms. Gautreau, Ms. Hurd, Mr. Brown, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Marique, Mr. Williams all voted Yes. Motion Carried – 6 / 0 / 0**

c.) Minutes of January 16, 2021:

Ms. Hurd made a motion to accept the January 16, 2021 minutes with all corrections. Ms. Marique seconded the motion. There was no discussion.

Roll call vote: **Ms. Gautreau, Ms. Hurd, Mr. Brown, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Marique, Mr. Williams all voted Yes. Motion Carried – 6 / 0 / 0**

7.) Other Business That May Come Before the Board:

Mr. Williams said Mr. Carrier and Mr. Beaulieu have applied for the 3-year board position on the next Budget Committee. There is still a 1-year open position with some potential write-in interest expressed.

Mr. Williams again thanked the members for their involvement over this past year and believes more has been done in the last year than in previous years and is hopeful all established processes will continue in the future.

A reminder the Town elections are scheduled for March 9th.

8.) Public Comments or Questions:

9.) Next Regular Meeting: The next meeting is scheduled for March 25th. Mr. Williams will develop the agenda for that meeting.

10.) Adjournment:

Mr. Williams stated he would entertain a motion to conclude the meeting.

Mr. Brown made the motion to adjourn at 7:30PM. Seconded by Ms. Marique. All were in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amy Winslow-Weiss, Recording Secretary – Budget Committee

Approved March 23, 2021

