**Finance Committee Minutes**

**February 14, 2022**

**12:00 P.M.**

**Via Zoom**

John Trickey called the meeting to order at 12:03 P.M. John Trickey, Emily Marriott, Cara Castenson, and Fred Vanderbeck were in attendance.

**Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**Budget hearings for the DPW, Tax Collector/Treasurer, Police Department, and Select Board**

Gary Thomann presented the police department’s budget. The part-time salary line item includes $5,000 for administrative duties, which are currently being handled by one of a part-time officer during off-duty hours. Because the department will no longer have to pay the $1,255 regional lock-up fee, Mr. Thomann moved that amount to training to cover costs of new Police Reform Bill certifications after ARPA money runs out, which is currently covering costs. Costs include trainings, administrative fees, and software. Also included in the budget is $500 annually for a cell phone for the animal control officer.

June Massee presented the tax collector and treasurer budget. Both include a 2% step and 2.5% COLA. The collector’s expenses have gone up appreciably, the cost of stamps being a major driver. On the treasurer side, county retirement has gone up a good bit. Veterans’ benefits went down some, but John Trickey recommended leaving the current figure in place to protect against volatility.

Susannah Carey presented the Select Board’s budget. Under non-annual expenditures, the mosquito control district will be a new line item under the Board of Health. John Trickey recommended using the Select Board’s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ account to pay for the copier. The DEI training ($3,500) would not cover the school, as they do their own. John Trickey also recommended moving the Franklin Regional Council of Governments expense to the Select Board’s budget.

The Highway Department’s budget includes a 2.5% COLA, plus the agreed-upon increase and COLA for Rick Adamcek. $15,000 will be moved from the expenses line item to salaries to cover moving a part-time employee to full-time; savings will be realized for mechanics’ fees, and doing so will allow the department to shore up institutional knowledge for successors. $10,000 will be added to the budget to make up the difference. One-time expenditures include cemetery tree work, planning for the bridge repair on North Valley (ARPA funds may cover some of it), HVAC monitoring equipment at the town library/police/fire complex to determine efficiency, and repairs to the sprinkler system there.

**New business that could not have been anticipated at the time this agenda was published**

**Old Business**

**Member Updates**

John Trickey gave an update about the elementary school playground project, which is being headed up by a group of parent volunteers. They estimate design costs could be as high as $20,000, and installation as much as $220,000. Hopefully the group will be able to pursue grants and fundraising to cover much of the cost.

Emily Marriott moved to adjourn, Fred Vanderbeck seconded, the vote was unanimous, and the meeting was adjourned at 1:02 P.M.