

TOWN OF GROVELAND

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Board/Committee Name: Finance Board
Date: February 9, 2022
Time: 5:00 p.m.
Location: Town Hall – Main Meeting Room
183 Main Street, Groveland, MA 01834

Present:

Board Members: Ruth Rivard, James Scanlon, Melissa Baker (via Zoom), Sarah McGrath and Susan Yaskell

Absent Members: Theresa Dunn

Other Attendees: Rebecca Oldham, Town Administrator, Elizabeth Cunniff, Town Clerk, Sam Joslin, Building Inspector, Zoning Enforcement Officer, ADA Coordinator, Floor Plain Administrator, Renny Carroll, Highway Superintendent and Tree Warden, Chuck Desrosiers, Cemetery Superintendent

Opening:

The regular meeting of the Finance Board was called to order at 5:00 p.m. on February 9, 2022 by Ruth.

Department Budget Reviews – Town Clerk:

Elizabeth (Beth) Cunniff joined the meeting to present the Town Clerk's budget. Beth reported the proposed budget is an increase over the prior year due to the hiring of the Assistant Town Clerk at a rate and hours higher than currently being paid, higher pay rates for poll workers and higher election related expenses. Beth explained that COVID has resulted in significant changes as it pertains to elections, which resulted in additional man hours as well as mail-in voting and expanded early voting, but during the pandemic there were grants available to offset the additional costs. It is anticipated that the new requirements are here to stay, but the grants will not be available. A discussion ensued regarding her request and when there were no further questions, Beth excused herself from the meeting.

Department Budget Reviews – Building Department:

Sam Joslin joined the meeting to present the Building Department's budget. Sam noted that several increases were being proposed. In addition to new code books, which need to be purchased due to updates, he is proposing increasing the stipends for both the plumbing and electrical inspectors.

Sam indicated that each of the inspectors, who also are inspectors for other municipalities, are paid a stipend that is lower than neighboring municipalities. He also noted his proposed fee increase should offset the increase in the stipends as well as provide a surplus to the general budget. A discussion ensued regarding his request and when there were no further questions, Sam excused himself from the meeting.

Finance Director Updates – American Rescue Plan and Budget Process:

Rebecca reported that the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 ('ARPA'), which is a stimulus bill to replace lost revenue passed by Congress, resulted in \$2 million to the Town of Groveland. She noted that these funds can be used on any general expense but it was strongly recommended to avoid using it to fill-in budget gaps as it wouldn't be available going forward. As such, it was determined to use it for capital expenditures that might otherwise might not be able to be purchased because of budget constraints such as a truck for the Highway Department, a new fire truck, a generator, roofing and fascia boards replacements.

Department Budget Reviews – Highway Department:

Renny Carroll joined the meeting to present the Highway Department's budget. Renny noted that last year there were increases to several line items within his budget, but this year there are some increases to the line items that were flat last year. The largest increase was to the Sick Day Buy Back, which is contractual based on the union contract. Renny noted that two of the three trucks were down for repairs so the new truck, which is anticipated to be funded by ARPA is much needed. Renny noted that he tries to work closely with Groveland Municipal Light Department when it comes to tree maintenance so that the majority of the budget is available for issues during winter storms. A discussion ensued regarding his request and when there were no further questions, Renny excused himself from the meeting.

Department Budget Review - Cemetery:

Chuck Desrosiers joined the meeting to present the Cemetery's budget. Chuck noted that the proposed budget represents an increase from the previous year, primarily due to a salary increase. He noted that the Cemetery Commissioners had review the salary and determined what they felt was a reasonable salary based on a comparison from other municipalities based on his duties, which includes assisting with burials and now plowing the cemetery during the winter. He noted that the cost for seasonal help has increased due to the state minimum wage increasing and that fuel costs had increased as well. A discussion ensued regarding his request and when there were no further questions, Chuck excused himself from the meeting.

Plan Next Meeting and Agenda:

The next regular meeting is scheduled for 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 2, 2022.

The following changes were made to the budget review schedule:

March 2, 2022: Replace Board of Health with Accountant (6:15 p.m.) and Treasurer/Collector (6:30 p.m.)

March 16, 2022: Add Board of Health (6:00 p.m.)

Other Items Not Reasonably Anticipated at Time of Posting:

No items were noted.

Adjournment:

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Sarah, seconded by Melissa, and approved unanimously by a roll call vote. Meeting was adjourned at 6:54 p.m. by Ruth.

Minutes prepared by: *Melissa Baker*

Minutes approved on: March 2, 2022

Meeting Materials:

1. Fiscal Year 2023 Budget Materials

