

Town of Hubbardston

Finance Committee – Remote Meeting Minutes April 7, 2021

Remote meeting called to order: 6:31 PM via Zoom
Members present remotely: Susan Rayne, Peter Russell, Maria Tourigny
Other remote attendees: David Nixon, Acting Town Administrator; Laurie Reed, Town Clerk

Ms. Reed facilitated the remote meeting via Zoom and introduced the meeting as being conducted remotely consistent with Governor Baker's Executive Order of March 12, 2020, due to the current State of Emergency in the Commonwealth due to the outbreak of the "COVID-19 Virus."

- 1) *Review and approval of minutes: 03/02/21.* Upon motion made by Mr. Russell and seconded by Ms. Tourigny it was unanimously by roll call vote

VOTED: To approve as submitted the minutes of the meeting of the Committee dated March 2, 2021.

2) *Town Administrator Report:*

- a) *FY2022 Budget Status* – Mr. Nixon reported that Mr. McLane had presented a balanced budget that addressed the Town's structural deficit to the Selectboard at their March 15, 2021 meeting, addressing structural deficit. In Mr. Nixon's view, the budget as presented met the Selectboard's goals of only necessary operational increases and wage increases consistent with union compensation; Mr. Nixon noted that free cash was not being used as an offset for operating expenses in this budget. Mr. Nixon also noted the following:
- i) Projected new growth in FY2022 was increased to \$128,000.
 - ii) This budget offered a QRSD assessment contribution of about \$150,000 less than that requested by the District. Mr. Nixon reported that the other member towns in the District were not prepared to fully fund their respective assessments requested by the District and that he would be meeting with their representatives to discuss negotiation strategies.
 - iii) Mandatory retirement contributions increased by \$50,000.
 - iv) The proposed FY2022 capital budget draws down free cash by \$182,000 but Mr. Nixon was uncertain whether that number was realistic, and stated that he would have more information in the coming week.

The Committee reviewed the expenditures proposed by the Community Preservation Committee. Mr. Nixon noted that the CPC's source of revenues is a surcharge on the

Town's real property tax of properties valued at over \$100,000 plus matching funds from the Commonwealth, and that borrowing against those revenues was permissible.

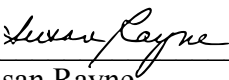
- b) *Other operational and capital budget, revenue, and expenses matters* – With respect to FY2021, Mr. Nixon reported that the Town was currently at 80% of revenues (should be at 75%) and expenses are at 75%, on target for the period ending March 31, 2021.
- 3) *CIPC representative report.* Due to Mr. Reed's absence no report was available.
- 4) *Review of anticipated FY2022 Annual Meeting warrant articles and discussion of provisional recommendations.* It was agreed to table this review and discussion until all members of the Committee were in attendance.
- 5) *Other/new business:*
 - a) Mr. Nixon informed the Committee that he had been informed unofficially by the Massachusetts Municipal Association that under the American Rescue Plan Act the Town would receive \$1.4 million, staged in two tranches (2022 and 2023) and to be spent by 2024 (calendar or fiscal year unknown). To date there are no regulations or specific guidance, but it appears that the Town can use these funds for recovery and economic development associated with COVID as well as for infrastructure.
 - b) Mr. Nixon informed the Committee that he is working part-time and available by telephone.
- 6) *Adjournment.* Upon motion made by Ms. Rayne and seconded by Ms. Tourigny, it was unanimously by roll call vote

VOTED: To adjourn.

Adjourned at 7:04 PM.

Minutes submitted by:
Minutes approved by:

Susan Rayne, Clerk *Pro Tem*
Susan Rayne, Chair



Susan Rayne

June 7, 2021

Date