6/13/2016

Finance Committee

Committee called to order.

The committee opened discussions on the subject of alternate year end transfers. Mr. Heffernan expressed hope that this would be the last session for late-year transfers.

The first transfer request was from Police salary to Parks & Recreation to finance the parade on 6/14/2016. This transfer was unanimously approved by the selectmen.

Mr. Hughes asked if this transfer covered the total cost of the parade. Mr. Stanley explained that the budget originally allocated $15,000 for the parade and an additional sum is generated through fundraising. The 50th anniversary of the Parade is coming up in the next year so they plan to increase financing even more.

Ms. Hanlon noted that the next year’s budget has been increased to 20,000 dollars. Ms. Baker explained that the cost will likely increase in the next year as they plan the parade. They also explained that with the 50th anniversary they may be able to get additional funding from the state.

Ms. Hanlon explained that she has not seen as much fundraising efforts in recent years as she used to. The majority of the committee disagreed with her assessment.

Mr. Stanley explained that the Flag Day director runs all of the fundraising efforts, and he does not get involved.

Ms. Hanlon asked if any salaries were paid out of this fund. Ms. Baker explained that this money is all for the parade. Ms. Hanlon asked if all manpower for the parade was volunteer. Mr. Stanley answered that yes, the money all goes to expenses, not salaries. Ms. Baker explained this money is handled outside of the town.

Ms. Carney asked if the $5,000 transfer was for this year or next year. Mr. Heffernan noted it was for this year.

Ms. Carney moved to transfer $5,000 from police salary to the parks and recreation parade fund. Mr. Hughes seconded. It was voted 9-0.

Mr. Heffernan then raised the next transfer request. This is a transfer from the police salary to cover conference and travel expenses for the Veteran’s Affairs office. Ms. Baker clarified that the veteran’s affairs director attended an additional conference this year.

Mr. Heffernan opened the floor to questions. There were none, and Ms. Hanlon moved to transfer $600 from police salary to the meetings and conferences item in the Veteran’s department. Mr. Robert’s seconded. It was voted 9-0.

Ms. Baker put forward a request from the Town Clerk’s office to transfer money from their Meetings & Conferences item to purchase special voter ID cards and Vital Record paper. This is an internal transfer.

Ms. O’Donnell asked about the nature of the special voter ID cards. Ms. Baker explained that they are for voters without any other potential form of ID from the state or otherwise.

Mr. Lindemann asked if voters require ID cards, since he is never asked for an ID at the voting booth.

Ms. Hanlon motioned to transfer 580 dollars from TC Meeting Conferences Dues and Memberships to Office Supplies. Ms. Emery Butler seconded. It was voted 9-0.

Mr. Heffernan raised the next transfer request. Ms. Baker explained that the HR director has requested additional funds to cover the high level of extra work resulting from the upcoming Munic Software implementation.

Ms. Hanlon asked why this was not already budgeted for. Ms. Baker explained that it has been, but the implementation turned out to be a busier time than was expected and the HR director has been out of the office on training more than was anticipated.

Ms. Carney noted that Miriam has been helping with the Library project as well.

Ms. Hanlon motioned to transfer $2500 from HR Printing to HR Wages: Temporary. Ms. Carney seconded. It was voted 9-0.

Mr. Heffernan explained the final alternate year-end transfer. From Facilities:Heat to Facilities:Maintenance/Overtime. Ms. Baker explained that this money is requested for support for in-house tool repairs and emergencies. Facilities has been budgeted for another HVAC position to try to reduce the amount of contracting they do. They are trying to take $5000 savings from the Heat budget into the Maintenance/Overtime budget to continue funding in-house repairs.

Mr. Heffernan noted that the line items seem unusual to him. Ms. Terkelsen explained that the Schools budget operates differently than what they are used to.

Ms. Carney motioned to transfer $5000 from Facilities Heat to Facilities Maintenance/Overtime. It was voted 9-0.

Ms. Baker brought up one last alternate year-end transfer. This is a transfer from Parks and Recreation’s Supply account to its Seasonal fund. Mr. Stanley explained that his seasonal account has hit 0 and still requires additional funds to finish out the year. He is requesting a transfer of $3500.

Mr. Roberts asked what the seasonal account funded. Mr. Stanley explained that it is for seasonal personnel payroll.

Mr. Hughes asked if they have added 2 more seasonal employees added to their budget this year. Mr. Stanley explained that a lot of the seasonal budget comes from revolving accounts from income, and so can be unreliable.

Mr. Lindemann asked how the revolving funds work for funding Parks and Recreation. Mr. Stanley explained that the goal of these revolving accounts is to allow some town projects to finance themselves in part. By the end of the year, the town funding has typically run out, forcing him to rely entirely on the revolving fund. Mr. Lindemann pointed out that he hopes they will be able to better estimate the budget next year in order to avoid this transfer next year. Mr. Stanley explained that he does his best, but the money can be difficult to estimate.

Ms. Hanlon noted that she would prefer they spend out of the revolving fund before spending town funds. Mr. Lindemann agreed.

Mr. Lindemann asked who was above Mr. Stanley in financial oversight. Ms. Terkelsen explained that the Town Manager is responsible for that.

Mr. Stanley explained that the Assistant Parks and Rec Director is being paid through the revolving fund. Ms. Hanlon pointed out that this position was supposed to become self-sustaining.

Mr. Stanley explained that it is difficult to quantify the value of the Assistant Director, because cuts that are made are influenced by the presence of the Assistant Director.

Ms. Terkelsen explained that the revolving fund is created out of fees and charges to use town property, and there is only so much that can be generated through the revolving fund without increasing fees to townspeople. She warned against cutting our excellent parks and rec program. Mr. Heffernan assured her that they are not currently considering cutting positions.

Ms. Carney moved to transfer $3500 from Parks and Rec supplies to Parks and Rec Seasonal. Ms. Emery Butler seconded. It was voted 9-0.

Mr. Heffernan moved to discussion of the reserve fund transfers. Mr. Stanley warned the committee that this segment could get a bit confusing. He explained that the town has made a deal with a gas company to cut a pipeline through Gonzalez field. The company offered to repair the field themselves or pay the town 325,000 to fix the dug trench. This has resulted in the displacement of local soccer teams, which incurs janitor fees and sometimes transportation fees. However, due to the nature of the arrangement, the $25,000 for parks and rec were not put into his hands. Therefore, the expenses incurred from the soccer team displacement are mounting and are being spent out of the Parks and Rec budget. It is difficult for that money to be transferred to parks and rec in a legal way, and so they are requesting transfers over time to cover their expenses after paying them. This requires transfers into specific line items.

Mr. Heffernan clarified that these transfers would cover until the end of the year. Mr. Stanley confirmed it.

Mr. Stanley explained that the additional paperwork is covering the work done to repair the field. He explained that seasonal expenses will continue until the new field is built, and all the teams will have to go to the high school. When he has expense in the future, he will return to request additional funds.

Ms. Carney asked Ms. Terkelsen if the reserve fund was still at healthy levels. Ms. Terkelsen explained there is over $400,000 in the reserve fund.

Mr. Lindemann asked why this financial process was so convoluted. Ms. Terkelsen explained that this is largely due to the fact that the funds came from a company in the name of mitigation, and there are very strict laws for managing that money. Mr. Lindemann asked if this $25,000 was going to be used incrementally for multiple budgets. Ms. Terkelsen explained that this money is strictly for the Parks and Rec department. However, this reserve fund transfer is coming out of the reserve fund, not the Mitigation funds, technically.

Ms. Terkelsen clarified what money would move to Free Cash at the end of the year and what will stay in the reserve fund. She explained that the reserve fund is for unforeseen expenses.

Ms. O’Donnell asked how much authority the soccer teams had about where they transferred to. Mr. Stanley explained that he is doing his best to keep tabs on what money they spend so it can be covered by the appropriate funds.

Mr. Lindemann asked about the use of a community center that was offered as recompense for funds for helping the construction of the center. Mr. Stanley explained that this group has not been forthcoming with usage of their fields, and they may look into sanctions against them.

Mr. Lindemann expressed strong agreement with the plan to demand usage of those fields.

Ms. Carney moved to transfer $3363.50 to Parks and Recreation’s seasonal accounts from the reserve fund. Ms. Hanlon seconded. It was voted 9-0.

Ms. Carney moved to transfer $3640.00 from the Reserve fund to the Parks and Recreation Grounds Funds. Ms. Hanlon seconded. It was voted 9-0.

Mr. Hughes asked about a posting on the Dedham Website about the Finance and Warrant committee. He reminded the committee that some of their terms were coming up, and they would need to reapply.

Ms. Carney motioned to adjourn, Ms. Emery Butler seconded. It was voted 9-0.