

Town of Weston

Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, February 28, 2019

A meeting of the Finance Committee of the Town of Weston, which was duly called and posted in compliance with the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, was held on Thursday, February 28, 2019 at the Weston Town Hall. There being a quorum present, the meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M.

Present for the meeting were:

Finance Committee: Lisa Reitano – Chair, John McDonald, James Jarrett, Gerard Jansen, Karen Meslin and Bharath Venkataraman

Also Present: Leon Gaumond, Town Manager (by phone), Susan Kelley, Finance Director, Zoe Pierce, Treasurer/Collector, David Soar, Fire Chief, Justin Woodside, Deputy Chief.

1. There were no resident comments.
2. Gerard Jansen was appointed to serve as Secretary pro-tempore and charged with keeping the minutes of the meeting.
3. The minutes of the meeting of Feb 13<sup>th</sup>, 2019 were unanimously approved.
4. Lisa Reitano introduced David Soar, Fire Chief, and Justin Woodside, Deputy Fire Chief. David Soar passed out the 2020 Weston Fire Dept Staffing Request book. The Fire Dept budget is in section 11-5 of the Fiscal Year 2020 Town Manager's Proposed Budget and Financing Plan.
  - a. The presentation book was a comprehensive review of the changing and increasing demands on the Weston Fire Dept., and the longstanding request for more personnel. In brief, call volume has increased, there are more back to back 911 calls, and the majority of staff now live out of town, leading to significant delay in staff responding to call backs or large incidents. In addition, the closure of the toll booths on the I-90/128 intersection has increased the distance that responders have to travel to accidents on the section of I-90 that runs through Weston. There are more training requirements, new OSHA regulations, and more Federal and State regulations and NFPA.
  - b. There had been no increase in shift staffing since 1968, then last year 2 additional positions were approved. David Soar made the case that in order to have full staffing of 8 per shift, he is requesting 2 additional positions this year. Leon Gaumond did not support this, and wanted to have more data on the effect of the two additional positions that were approved last year, but have not yet had a full year of service.
  - c. There was discussion on the amount that is collected by the service on each Medical Call that the dept responds to, and the increasing number of these calls per year, and the changing nature of insurance reimbursement for these calls. The current population of the town has been stable for many years, but there is a change in that there are more elderly residents who have more need of the ambulance services.
  - d. In the future, with the possibility of having more high density housing, and new projects, will bring increasing demands on the Fire Dept.
  - e. In the capital request (section 17-4-1 of the Town Mangers book), there is \$750,000 requested for equipment, included upgrading a 20 year old radio system. The upgraded systems will also be used by

police, schools and the DPW. The current transmitter will be moved from private property to public land.

5. A review was made of a draft Finance Committee Report for the May Annual Town meeting. Items discussed included:
  - a. Review of the current financial metrics for the town
  - b. To add a new section on the numerous Town Projects that are being undertaken.
  - c. There was a resident comment that committee members should look at the financial reports of other towns.
  - d. Next steps – Susan Kelley to make changes to some financial tables and graphs.

A motion to adjourn was made, duly seconded and the meeting was adjourned at 8.51 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Gerard J. Jansen