

**Town of Deerfield
Finance Committee
Minutes of the Meeting, February 28, 2023
REVISED VERSION**

Attending: Mark Brennan, Beth Brown, James Cambias (secretary), Julie Chalfant (chair), John Paresky, Dave Sharp

Joint Meeting with Select Board

Also Present: Brenda Hill, Tim Hilchey (via Zoom), Trevor McDaniel, Carolyn Shores Ness (via Zoom), Kayce Warren, Charles A. Shattuck, Frank J. Leone, Francis G. Sobieski, John Paciorek Jr.

Ms. Chalfant called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m. on February 28, 2023, in the Town Offices.

Mr. Cambias moved to recommend the sum of \$11,000 for Assessor Salaries (account number 141-5100). Mr. Paresky seconded the motion. This is level funding from last year. The motion passed 6-0-0.

Mr. Paresky moved to recommend the sum of \$74,322 for the Assessor Administrative Assistant salary (account number 141-5110). Ms. Brown seconded the motion. It was explained that much of the increase from last year results from the new policy of bundling stipends into salary. The motion passed 6-0-0.

Mr. Cambias moved to recommend the sum of \$18,525 for Assessor Expenses (account number 141-5400). Mr. Paresky seconded the motion. After some discussion the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Cambias moved to recommend the sum of \$22,000 for Assessor Quinquennial Recertification (account 142-5400). Mr. Paresky seconded the motion. This represents a drop of \$3000 from last year. The motion passed unanimously.

The Committee members took the opportunity for some general questions to the Assessors, especially about new growth potential, and the tax classification of properties owned by tax-exempt entities which are not being used for exempt purposes.

Mr. Paresky moved to approve the Minutes of the meeting of February 23. Ms. Brown seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0-2, the members who had not been present for that meeting abstaining.

Mr. Paciorek briefed the Committee on the Police Department budget and answered some questions. He warned that the Department will have to add full time officers in the future when State rules forbidding the use of part-time officers come into effect.

Mr. Paresky moved to recommend the sum of \$1,090,917 for the Police Department payroll (account 210-5110). Mr. Brennan seconded the motion. The Department salaries have increased according to the standard schedule, the budget for training increased, as did the line for college tuition assistance ~~to help officers obtain Bachelors or Associates degrees in compliance with new State requirements~~. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Cambias recommended the sum of \$118,100 for Police Department Expenses (account 210-5400). Mr. Brennan seconded the motion. Funding for expenses is mostly flat from last year. There is an increase of \$3000 per year for Police Academy training of new officers, which will likely continue. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Paresky moved to recommend the sum of \$55,000 for a new police cruiser (account 210-5800). Mr. Brennan seconded the motion. This is a reduction from the amount initially requested, as the Department was able to get a good price on a new vehicle. Mr. Paciorek reported on the reduction in fuel use thanks to the hybrid cruisers. The motion passed 6-0-0.

Mr. Cambias moved to recommend the sum of \$21,527 for Deerfield's share of the regional Canine Control officer salary (account 292-5400). Mr. Paresky seconded the motion. Deerfield pays 25 percent of the total for a Greenfield ~~Police~~ Animal Control officer who serves several towns. The motion passed unanimously.

The Committee examined revenue projections, with questions for Ms. Hill.

The Committee reviewed the Financial Indicators report. Ms. Chalfant reported that the figure for tax bill as a percent of per capita income may be inaccurate due to zip code irregularities and the large number of nonprofits in the Town. The Committee considered whether the Town's operating expenditures should be listed as an area of concern rather than a favorable indicator.

Mr. Cambias moved to shift operating expenses to the "area of concern" category on the Financial Indicators executive summary. Mr. Paresky seconded the motion. After discussion the motion was withdrawn.

Mr. Paresky moved to rate operating expenses as "marginal" in the executive summary. Ms. Brown seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-1-1.

The Committee discussed upcoming meetings.

Mr. Paresky moved to adjourn. Mr. Cambias seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:16 p.m.