

**Town of Deerfield Finance Committee
Minutes of the Meeting, March 1 2022
As Amended and Accepted March 8**

Attending: Beth Brown, James Cambias (secretary), Julie Chalfant (chair), Skip Olmstead, John Paciorek, John Paresky, Allison van der Velden.

Also Present: Joint Meeting with Select Board (Trevor McDaniel, Carolyn Shores Ness); Jennifer Gannet (via Zoom), Brenda Hill, Chris Miller, John Paciorek jr., Kayce Warren, Annalee Wulfkuhle (via Zoom).

This was a hybrid in-person/Zoom meeting.

- The meeting was called to order at 5:06 p.m. by Ms. Chalfant.
- Mr. Paresky moved to accept the Minutes of Feb. 22. Seconded by Dr. van der Velden. Ms. Chalfant moved to amend the Minutes to note that SCEMS revenues have rebounded. Seconded by Mr. Cambias. Amendment approved 7-0-0. Motion to accept the Minutes approved 7-0-0.
- Mr. Paciorek moved to recommend \$13,250 for the proposed Select Board and Administrator Expense (account 122-5400), Dr. van der Velden seconded. Ms. Warren explained increases in training and the added cell phone stipend for phones used in town business.
Motion passed 6-0-1.
- Dr. van der Velden moved to recommend \$75,500 for Legal Expenses (account 151-5300). Mr. Paciorek seconded. This includes an increase in the retainer for legal counsel, reduced labor counsel expense and planning counsel. Mr. Paresky noted this has been under-budgeted, based on past numbers.
Motion passed unanimously.
- Dr. van der Velden moved to recommend \$271,435 for Contracted Services (account 159-5410). Mr. Paciorek seconded. Considerable discussion about increases and new items.

[Brief pause to deal with technical difficulties with the hybrid meeting.]

Continuing: Budget adds \$25,000 for planning services ~~from Pioneer Valley Planning~~. Mr. Cambias asked if administration and grant preparation is normally part of budgets for projects anyway, and where savings will come from. Ms. Warren said it will reduce potential legal costs and help get grants we might not otherwise. Mr. McDaniel added that a planner would help coordinate projects. Ms. Gannet also suggested this could help resolve some contradictions in the bylaws. Ms. Wulfkuhle pointed out that the planning budget is reduced by \$5000 to reflect this.

The budget adds ~~\$7500~~ \$500 for Comcast broadband. Mr. Paciorek questioned why that isn't free as was supposedly part of the contract with Comcast. Ms. Gannett said the Comcast people claim it doesn't qualify.

Ms. Chalfant asked why sewer billing is negative -- it is an offset from the sewer budget.
The motion passed 4-0-3.

- Dr. van der Velden moved to recommend \$2800 for Emergency Management (account 291-5400). Mr. Paresky seconded. Laurie McComb is EM director, working part time and also working for SCEMS. Mr. Paciorek asked why the EM director gets stipend at all when the job formerly did not.

Motion passed 6-1-0.

- Dr. van der Velden moved to recommend \$10,000 for Unfunded Sick Leave and Vacation expenses (account 910-5800). Mr. Paresky seconded. Some members asked for explanation of how this works, which Ms. Hill provided.

Motion passed 7-0-0.

- Dr. van der Velden moved to recommend the revised sum of \$63,000 for General Insurance (account 196-5400). Mr. Cambias seconded.

Motion passed unanimously.

- Mr. Cambias moved to recommend \$119,300 for Police Department Expenses (account 210-5400). Dr. van der Velden seconded. Committee member John Paciorek made a public disclosure of a family relationship with Police Chief John Paciorek, Jr.

Chief Paciorek noted that the expense budget remains fixed from last year. He kept in an item for a new copier, carrying over from last year as it was not purchased. He did warn that gas prices may increase so that there may be a line item transfer for fuel.

Mr. Olmstead asked what a line item transfer is, and Mr. McDaniel explained that the select board has broad leeway for shifting funds within a budget line as needed, under new state laws.

Ms. Chalfant moved to amend the recommendation by removing the copier allocation and changing gasoline budget to \$32,000, thereby making the full amount 114,300. Mr. Paciorek seconded. The amendment passed 6-1-0. The motion as amended passed 6-0-1.

- Dr. van der Velden moved to recommend \$55,000 for a new police cruiser (account 210-5800). Mr. Cambias seconded. Chief Paciorek said the new hybrid cruiser authorized last year still hasn't arrived but is in the process of being converted for police use.

Motion passed unanimously.

- Mr. Paresky moved to recommend \$20,954 for Deerfield's share of the three-town Canine Control Officer (account 292-5400). Mr. Paciorek seconded.

Motion passed unanimously.

- Dr. van der Velden moved to recommend \$87,800 for Town Building Maintenance (account 192-5400). Mr. Paresky seconded. This includes an increase in Miscellaneous repairs based on last year's expenditures. Ms. Brown asked which buildings get Miscellaneous Repairs. Ms. Hill explained it covers the Town Offices, the Senior Center building next door and the Library. Mr. Olmstead asked if the structural inspection of the Congregational Church building was ever done. Mr. Paciorek asked what ground maintenance includes.

Motion passed unanimously.

[At this point Ms. Brown had to leave the meeting.]

- 422-5400, Dr. van der Velden moved to recommend \$306,550 for General Highway Expenses (account 422-5400). Mr. Paciorek seconded. The Projects & Maintenance line includes cost of a new mower, partly offset by some cemetery maintenance funds and a reduction of rental expenses. The department is spending money on Safety and Compliance for the first time. Mr. Olmstead asked if it might be cheaper to buy gas retail rather than having a pump at the garage.
Motion passed 5-0-1.

- Dr. van der Velden moved to recommend \$95,000 for snow and ice removal (account 423-5400). Ms. Chalfant seconded.
Motion passed 5-1-0.

- Dr. van der Velden moved to recommend \$23,000 for street lighting (account 424-5400). Mr. Paresky seconded.
Motion passed unanimously.

- Dr. van der Velden moved to recommend \$223,200 for Transfer Station expenses (account 433-5400). Mr. Paresky seconded. Mr. Olmstead requested a breakdown of Transfer Station revenues in the near future.
Motion passed unanimously.

- Mr. Olmstead moved to recommend \$40,000 for Test Well Monitoring and Maintenance (account 439-5400). Mr. Paciorek seconded. This expense has not increased since last year.
Motion passed unanimously.

- Mr. Cambias moved to adjourn. Dr. van der Velden seconded. Motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:23 p.m.