

**Finance
Committee
MEETING
MINUTES**

February 17, 2021

Virtually

Paul Flaherty, Rick McGuire, Nick Ensko, Shawn Craig, Stephen Bern

Guests: Lyn Hagerty, Sandy Hakala, Derek Brindisi; Diane Tiernan; Brett Simas, Deb Amorelli, Andrew St. George, David Loeper, Marcia

Kasilowski, Rich Gazoorian

1 The meeting was opened at 7:02 pm virtually.

2
3 Paul Flaherty stated Committee had received minutes. Rick McGuire requested to add the
4 following onto the July 13 minutes: Kenny Costa updated us on the OPEB \$7.6M and pension
5 was \$10M

6
7 Upon motion of Rick McGuire, seconded by Steve Bern to approved the minutes from July 23,
8 2020 (as amended), October 23, 2020 and February 4, 2021. Unanimously approved by rollcall
9 vote.

10
11 Town Manager, Derek Brindisi updated the Finance Committee with new information –In
12 December MURSD discussed looking for \$425k increase for their budget and we projected
13 \$375k. However, this past Monday, the School Committee has requested an increase of \$2.3M
14 where Upton’s portion would be \$1.5M as an override. MURSD will be attending the Finance
15 Committee meeting next week. This will add hinderance to this budget and will be difficult to
16 balance the budget. Paul Flaherty stated the School Committee is meeting on Monday, 2/22 and
17 is hoping for a different amount. This override is a surprise and with little notification. There
18 will more discussion next week.

19
20 Paul Flaherty has spoken to Michael Fitzpatrick; He is discussing a date for BVT to come
21 present. He is projecting an 15% increase even though a decrease of 5 students.

22
23 Board of Health:

24 Paul Flaherty first wanted to recognize the Board for the great way they have handled the
25 vaccine clinics and their hard work.

26
27 Diane Tiernan stated her budget increased by the 1.5% COLA except for the waste removal. The
28 increase of \$20k to the budget and this is the 3rd year of the contract. She is recommending the
29 Town finishes the contract and let the Town people decide next year. Paul Flaherty asked
30 residents and committee members to review the recent article in the Milford Daily News. Paul
31 Flaherty asked if there is an increase in tonnage due to residents being home. Diane Tiernan
32 stated the tonnage has remained constant.

33
34 Paul Flaherty asked about asking crushing up the glass. EL Harvey’s told Diane it would not
35 make a difference in the price. Town is paying for the labor to pick it up and the waste removal.
36 Town moved to a 5 day pick up schedule to save money

37
38 Rick McGuire asked up Grafton having recycling at their new facility in Grafton and if Diane is
39 aware of it. For the town to do this, Town would need to apply for a site assignment and hire
40 personnel and staff it. She is unsure if this will reduce the price overall. Diane spoke with other

trash companies for other resolutions. It was later noted what is happening in Grafton was for residents who do not have the ability for curbside pickup to bring their recycling to Grafton.

Paul Flaherty asked about getting a pro recycling committee together to see if there is another possibility.

Diane Tiernan stated the \$20k is an estimate since she does not have final amounts from EL Harvey and the tonnage rate is not contracted. This past year was \$95 per tonnage and she is unsure when she will have a final number. She is hoping the increase of \$20k in the budget will cover any increase this year. Diane reminded members many of the new developments in Town usually are required to contract for their own trash pick-up.

Further discussion regarding the length of the contract: Town bid it 3 years ago and we are extending each year. EL Harvey was the only company who bid on the contract. Diane noted most surround Towns are contracting with Harvey because they seem to have the best price at this time. Republic (another company) gave us a quote and the amount was much higher than Harvey.

Discussion regarding the Food Inspection stipend. This is paid on a per inspection basis thus monies are budgeted because we can't predict what type of events will need an inspection.

Steve Bern asked about the Hazardous Waste. We did not have it in FY2021, it was done in August of 2021.

Nursing service is still with Blackstone. Due to COVID grants, the monies are covering the extra hours needed.

Nick Ensko looked at some state figures and compared Upton to similar sized towns. Diane is unaware why our recycling rate is so much higher. She is thinking it could be because Upton does not pick-up commercial property.

In regards to the trash bag vendors, Diane was able to resolve the storage area for the bags and thus did not need to change vendors. Revenue for the trash bags is reflected in the local receipts. It is estimated \$245K for FY2022.

Paul noted there is an article for \$10k for a copier/scanner for plans to be shared by all departments.

Recreation:

Andrew St George stated the general fund has 3 budget items. All budgets have been level funded except for the beach program. The increase is to the beach budget is to bring the salary up to minimum wage.

Kids@play operation was successful this past year even due to COVID. Enrollment was down a little but kids from other Towns came to Upton as well since most programs were closed.

Financially it was a success but not as good as the past year. Costs were a little higher due to

86 staffing for small group of kids as well as cleaning materials as needed. Andrew recognized the
87 leadership team for their hard work. Over 200 kids participated in the program.

88
89 Parks revolving is the beach operations such as parking fees. Stipulation on this fund is you
90 cannot pay salary for full time staff or benefits. Andrew noted his salary/benefits is paid out of
91 the Recreation revolving. Parks pays for gate keepers and life guard equipment. If life guards
92 wages is over extended is paid out of parks account. This account has a \$10k limit. Thus,
93 anything above \$10k goes to the general fund. This falls under DPW due to the timing of when
94 this account was established.

95
96 Recreation revolving is traditional. It has a spending limit of \$260,000. This covers the
97 director's salary and benefits, Kids@play staff, programs, and office supplies. Basically,
98 anything to pay for programs is paid out of this account because the revenue from those
99 programs goes into this revolving account.

100
101 Rick McGuire asked if projected revenue of \$260,000 will the expenses match this? On track for
102 FY2021 to have expenses of \$240,000 and this gives Recreation the ability to present programs.
103 This limit was increased a couple of years ago. Program is run for 10 weeks.

104
105 Steve Bern asked about plan for site improvements. Budget amount has not increased
106 Parks revolving does allow for some site improvements but since Commission does not know
107 what is available until the end of the season. Also, some of the budget amount was accomplished
108 through grants. This coming year, projects include tennis and basketball courts need crack repair
109 and resurfacing (painting). If this is not done, major work will need to be done. Basketball court
110 will be done in FY2021 and tennis court done in FY2022. Steve asked why elected officials are
111 not taking their stipends. They stated they did not want to take the money. Noted, Recreation
112 were one of the few boards who do not take the stipends.

113
114 Rich Gazoorian wanted to highlight the work Andrew did this past year during COVID and the
115 tremendous job he did. Paul Flaherty also recognized this work and the fact this program was
116 able to continue under the circumstances due to Andrew and Commission's work.

117
118 Nick Enkso asking about inventory of equipment and when the equipment may need to be replaced.
119 Andrew stated at the end of each season, the equipment is looked at and a determination is made
120 on what is needed to be replaced and budget for it accordingly. Some equipment can be replaced
121 with parks revolving.

122
123 Discussion about future plans and grant opportunities ensured.

124
125 Looking to continue the concert series and ask for donations from local businesses.

126
127 Discussion of draft warrant

128 Paul Flaherty stated 2 citizen petitions were received and the Committee should give an
129 opportunity to proponents to give rationale to the Committee. Does the Committee want to meet
130 with DPW director due to size of budget and warrant article? Derek Brindisi stated he will have
131 proposed funding sources for the warrant article and what the balance of free cash will be.

132 Brett Simas stated he attended the meeting to offer any needed perspective from BOS.
133
134 Turnout gear for Fire was discussed how it was kept the same as last year to keep the budget the
135 same.
136
137 Next meeting is 2/24 with MURSD and DPW. DPW at 7 and School at 7:30.
138
139 Adjourn at 8:39
140
141 Respectfully submitted,
142 Kelly A. McElreath