

Town of Merrimac
Finance Committee Meeting
FEBRUARY 10, 2020

I. Call to Order

1. Roll Call

II. Town Clerk, Registrar, Census

Town Clerk, Gwen Lay

Census

There hasn't been any changes in spending. First payment has gone out, includes the printing and stuffing, the next payment will be the postage. The budget is up about 7% due to new households and an increase in postage. We have been doing better than usual with the amount of returns. The results have an effect on Gwen's budget for reimbursement for early voting/outside polling hour grant.

Town Clerk

Salary- In FY20 and FY19 there was as budget for \$5,000 for an assistant/office help. Able to use that as well as Senior Work off previously, but the assistant has moved out of town. Instead of a flat rate of \$5,000 for the fiscal year, we are asking for 10 hours a week. The current assistant would take on the extra hours, and this would put the department in a better position in the future to hire someone for set hours. The stipend is new, Gwen was certified as a Municipal Clerk, as well as this year she is eligible for longevity.

Expense- Professional Development went up, all the money went towards receiving the certification. There are two more certifications she would like to achieve. Supplies has gone up to \$1,500 for additional software, a new program to track planning and zoning board applications, and an addition to open records to track nominations and petitions (same software purchased in 2017 for dog tags etc.) Business travel was for traveling to the certification.

Elections

There is a slight increase in Police Details, there are four elections this year and people are very passionate at the polls and a police presence is necessary. Early voting for this election (3/3) was not approved by the Governor until too late, there may need to be a reserve fund transfer if the grant funding is not approved. The Town still uses paper ballots, we would be able to confirm the ballots totaled with the equipment would match the paper ballots on hand. The State as of January 1st has enacted Automatic Voter Registration. When someone moves out of Town and registers in another Town they are notified.

III. Library

Library, Kelly Unsworth

Salary- The salaries are the yearly increase. There is a request for a line item to use extra budgeted money for coverage.

Expenses- There is always a certain amount that the Town has to spend for the match. The slight increase in collection materials has to be 19% of the entire regular operating budget (including salaries and technology). The repair and maintenance additional funding requested is \$2,000 for yearly carpet cleaning for sanitary purposes as well as the life of the carpet. The other increase is for cleaning, after surveying comparable libraries in the area there is a great need to increase our cleaning. The Library Network is a membership based on a complex formula.

IV. Selectmen

Selectmen, Jennifer Penney & Holly Moran

Salary- Third and final year of the contractual increase.

Expense- The increase for the auditor is contractual.

V. Police, Animal Control, Parking Clerk

Police, Eric Shears

Salary- All contracts are up for negotiation, as a placeholder there is 3%. The largest increase is for two more police officers on staff, which for safety reasons would allow scheduling two officers at all times. We will be asking for an override at Town Meeting to support the two officers. The turnover rate is high for part time, once the officer is trained they are finding full time positions. We are going to hopefully apply for a COPS grant that will cover a percentage of a new officer.

Expenses- Operational wise under Town Building Budget is where you will see the increase for the new Police Station. There is a lot of upkeep and maintenance for the new building. Purchase of services increase of \$20,000 is based off estimates for a cleaning service, HVAC inspections and maintenance, Fire Alarm inspections and maintenance, and Generator inspection and maintenance. Licensing increase is for getting the system up and running at he new building. Fuel cost is for vehicles and the new generator.

Animal Control

Salary- Regular increase

Expense- No increase. New vehicle being used very often.

Parking Clerk

Level funded.

Meeting Close 9:08PM Mike first, Rob second.