



**Finance Committee**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**02/09/21**

- I. Call to Order
  - 1. Roll Call
- II. Appointments
  - A. Town Clerk, Registrar, Census

Gwen Lay, Town Clerk

Biggest change is requesting an Assistant. Right now have someone who has been working 10 hours a week (5 paid, 5 tax write off). Due to COVID and because she has moved she has been unable to do that, requesting additional hours to make that assistant role 10 hours a week, and an additional Assistant 15 hours per week (25 Assistant hours total). The person in the position currently does not want to do the full 25 hours, but will eventually like to transition to that/run for Town Clerk. The office is very busy year round, currently the census are rolling back in. With Elections the State has mandated absentee voting for everyone, this will stay in place, creating more difficult situations going forward. The turnout for the 2020 Election was about 80%, and these mandates going forward are unfunded and will continue to increase the amount of work for each election.

Expenses the Election budget is significantly down because this is not a presidential year. Due to COVID and Grants we were able to save money this year and have approximately \$4,500 left.

**B. Library**

Kelly Unsworth, Library Director

Salary, cost of living increases. The head of Youth Services retired after 30 years, and the Assistant moved into that position.. Currently hiring to fill the Assistant position.

Expenses, despite COVID, are very much on track. Was able to focus some of the other line items that were under spent on things like eBooks and audio books. One line item for collection materials budget for \$3,060 to meet the state requirement based on the 19%. Maintenance and Repairs were what was expected, it appears overspent but it shows under Building Systems. IT right now looks like it hasn't been spent but new computers are arriving later this week as part of the technology upgrade plan.

Capital expenses coming up are one of the HVAC air conditioning units, the rooftop unit is about \$14,000. The HVAC unit for the special collections room \$10,000. The two heat pumps are currently both limping along at \$3,500/each.

**C. Board of Selectmen**

Jennifer Penney, Executive Assistant Board of Selectmen

Salary, contractual increase.

Expense, increase of \$50 for printing the Town Report. Annual Audit is a three year contract, increase is due to using a new audit firm as our current auditor is not going to continue.

**D. Police, Animal Control, Parking Clerk**

Eric Shears, Police Chief

Salary, looking for another officer in order to have two officers on duty for approximately 93% of the time. Have changed the way staffing is done, with longer shifts to keep the Officers primarily safe from COVID exposure. Based on the projected turnover and retirement of current staff likely a few people would need to go to the Academy (22 weeks or 880 hours) prior to starting. Reserve budget can not go down just from getting a

new office, that is mainly due to not being able to fill the shifts- these will still be covered by Reserves. The Reserve line is under funded to begin with, and decreasing it could result in coming back for more funds/a transfer.

Expenses, telecommunications and legal line items are both over. Legal is over due to employee investigations, telecommunications is over due to a new phone system being installed- this is a one time expense showing in this line, from now on it will go on the Town's line item.

No changes to Animal Control or Parking Clerk.

#### **E. Finance Director Updates**

Met with the Pentucket schools this week, due to the amount of home-schooling the state money has been cut. They are going to start working on other funding and working within their 3% in order to not need an override. Groveland and Merrimac's assessments are up, West Newbury has gone down. Whittier numbers are down.

For the next meeting we will Finance Director's Recommendations.

Upcoming meetings:

2/23 BOH, COD, Discussion/Voting

3/2 No Meeting

3/9 Schools, Discussion/Voting