

Town of Northbridge
Finance Committee Meeting Minutes
March 2, 2016 at 6:00PM

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Finance Committee Attendees:

Finance Committee Members in Attendance: Plato Adams, Bob Brochu, Jim Barron, Steve Gogolinski, Chris Thompson, Chris Pilla and Lisa Ferguson

Finance Committee Member not in Attendance: None

Town of Northbridge Administration and Other Attendees:

Ted Kozak, Town Manager - Town of Northbridge

Neil Vaidya, Town Accountant - Town of Northbridge

Walter Warchol, Chief of Police – Town of Northbridge

Gary Nestor, Fire Chief – Town of Northbridge

Dr. Catherine Stickney, Superintendent of Schools, Town of Northbridge
Public Schools

Michael Lebrasseur - Chairperson - Town of Northbridge School Committee

Jamie Luchini, Assistant Director - DPW - Town of Northbridge

Mark Kuras, Sewer Superintendent - DPW - Town of Northbridge

Finance Committee Meeting

The meeting was called to order by the chairman; Plato Adams at 6:00PM.

Prior Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the meeting minutes of February 24, 2016 was made by Chris Thompson, seconded by Bob Brochu and unanimously approved with Chris Pilla abstaining from the vote.

Chapter 70 Resolution

In 2014, a study group known as the Foundation Budget Review was commissioned by the Massachusetts Legislature. The task was to determine the cost of providing an adequate education in current times in Massachusetts. The results were released in two phases, one in June 2015 and the other this past November. They confirmed what educators and local officials have long known to be true: the cost of educating the students in Massachusetts is severely underestimated by the existing funding formula.

A motion to approve the proposed Chapter 70 Resolution as noted above was made by Chris Thompson, seconded by Lisa Ferguson and unanimously approved.

Both the School Committee and Board of Selectman unanimously passed this Chapter 70 Resolution.

Town Manager's Budget Overview

The Town Manager, Ted Kozak reviewed the proposed budget for 2016 - 2017. There appears to be an additional \$1 million dollars of revenue. Compared to last year - the school department will receive an additional \$425,000 (\$22.254 Million compared to \$21.942 million) from the Town.

Compared to the last fiscal year; it is estimated that overall health insurance costs will increase between 2.5% to 3.0%. It is also anticipated that an additional fire fighter and police officer position will be added this fiscal year.

The Town of Northbridge continues to use shared services with other towns. Examples of these shared services include Information Technology and the Veterans Agent.

Police Department Budget

FY 2016 - 2017:

Except for the required / mandated collective bargaining agreements as well as the partial funding of a 20th police officer position at a cost of \$30,030 (1/2 year cost) for this budget cycle, the police budget is level funded for this upcoming fiscal year.

The police budget increased from \$2,592,337 to \$2,664,744; an overall of \$72,407 and a 2.7% increase over FY16.

Fire Department Budget

FY 2016 - 2017:

Except for the required / mandated collective bargaining agreements as well as additional personnel / overtime expenses, the fire department budget is level funded for this upcoming fiscal year.

The fire department budget increased from \$639,738 to \$713,986 ; an overall increase of \$74,248 and a 11.60% increase over FY16.

Ambulance Budget

FY 2016 - 2017:

Except for the required / mandated collective bargaining agreements, the Ambulance budget is level funded for this upcoming fiscal year.

The ambulance budget increased from \$676,553 to \$698,986; an overall increase of \$22,433 and a 3.3% increase over FY16.

Water Department Budget

FY 2016 - 2017:

Except for the required / mandated collective bargaining agreements, the Water Department budget is level funded for this upcoming fiscal year.

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The Water Department budget increased from \$1,645,005 to \$1,648,352; an overall increase of \$3,347 and a 0.02% increase over FY16.

Sewer Department Budget

FY 2016 - 2017:

Except for the required / mandated collective bargaining agreements, the Sewer Department budget is level funded for this upcoming fiscal year. Note that Repairs and Maintenance expenses decreased by \$40,000 over the last fiscal year.

The Water Department budget decreased from \$2,242,656 to \$2,170,000; an overall decrease of \$72,656 and a 3.2% decrease over FY16.

Public Works Department Budget

FY 2016 - 2017:

Except for the required / mandated collective bargaining agreements, the Public Works Department budget is level funded for this upcoming fiscal year.

The Public Works Department budget increased from \$1,097,599 to \$1,109,177; an overall increase of \$11,578 and a 1.1% increase over FY16.

Article 3 (Finance Committee) (Omnibus Article)

A motion to approve the proposed wording of Article #3 as noted below was made by Chris Thompson, seconded by Lisa Ferguson and unanimously approved:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate and/or transfer from available funds in the Treasury and/or transfer from the Health Insurance Stabilization Fund such sums of money not to exceed \$40,699,321 to defray the necessary and usual expenses of the several departments of the Town for FY 2017, beginning July 1, 2016 and ending June 30, 2017 as follows.

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Future Meetings

The next meeting of the Finance Committee will be held on March 9, 2016 at 6:00PM.

Adjournment

Since no further business was to be transacted, a motion to adjourn at 8:04 PM was made by Lisa Ferguson, seconded by Steve Gogolinski and unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. Barron', written over a horizontal line.

James P. Barron
Clerk
Town of Northbridge Finance Committee