

Town of Hampton
Board of Finance
Public Hearing
May 14, 2019
7:00PM
Hampton Town Hall

Call to Order: The Public Hearing was called to order at 7:04 p.m.

Members/Alternates Present: Nick Brown, Ed Adelman, Rick Matejka, Perry Matchinis, Kathy Donahue, Lisa Sanchez, Stan Crawford, and Kathi Newcombe.

Staff and others present: First Selectman Al Cahill, Selectmen Bob Grindle, Treasurer Ellen Rodriguez, Recording Clerk Dayna McDermott-Arriola, and residents.

Presentation of the Proposed 2019-2020 Town Government and Elementary School Budgets and Public Input

There was some discussion as to the authority of the Board of Finance to alter the Board of Selectmen's Town Government Budget prior to the Public Hearing. Kathi Newcombe produced the State statute that confirmed First Selectman Cahill's position that changes could not be made until after the Public Hearing. Kathy Donahue noted, as recorded in the April 23 Minutes, that no motions were made to change any figures presented in the budget, but that by general consent the members agreed that a committee should be charged and appointed to research compensation of all Town employees, an item on the May 14 Regular Meeting Agenda.

First Selectman Cahill presented the Town Government Budget, detailing notable items including: a reduction in the Assessor's Office due to combining the positions of Assessor and Assessor Clerk; a decrease in health insurance with less employees using the benefit, an increase in the Building Inspector Clerk's position due to increased need; an increase to the Recreation Commission's request in order to accommodate Youth Sports; a 10% increase in tipping fees for the Sanitation Department; and increases to the Revaluation and Building and Maintenance Capital and Non-Recurring Accounts. Mr. Cahill also reported that the additional \$60,000 requested by the Ambulance Corps has been removed and won't be needed this year to provide emergency coverage, noting that the First Selectmen of Hampton and Chaplin and the Officers of the Ambulance Corps will meet in the next few weeks to discuss future coverage. Mr. Cahill noted that RD#11's budget is yet to be determined as its first attempt failed in a tri-town referendum on May 7, and that currently, the Hampton Elementary School's proposal is level to last year. Kathy Donahue reported that the Board of Education is aware of potential cuts to the Educational Cost Sharing and its potential impact on the Minimum Budget Requirement, noting that the school board has discussed multi-age models and consequent reductions in staff.

First Selectman Cahill also reported that, because the current proposals represent a 26.24 mill rate, a decrease of more than two mills, the Board of Selectmen is recommending that the mill rate remain level with the difference applied to a flexible, municipal account to use toward capital projects and to compensate for potential losses in State revenue. Discussion ensued regarding paving projects and the need for a new generator at the Hampton Elementary School, as well as future road and municipal parking lot paving projects, with First Selectman Cahill confirming that current amounts in the Capital and Non-Recurring Accounts are insufficient to fund the projects defined in the 5-Year Plan. Kathy Donahue noted the importance of striking a balance between pre-taxing for future projects and seeking taxpayer approval for expenditures, noting that bonding rates are currently low and that the State considers debt when determining the financial health of a Town when awarding funds. Both Ms. Donahue and Perry Matchinis noted that the increase in the Grand List was due in part to an increase in taxpayers' assessments which will result in higher taxes, and suggested that the mill rate be reduced to offset the additional amounts taxpayers can expect to pay. Treasurer Rodriguez noted that the unassigned fund balance is 1.38 million and that there is approximately \$700,000 in assigned fund accounts.

Acting Chairman Brown's invitation to audience members for input on the budgets was declined by residents in attendance.

Adjournment:

Motion: Ed Adelman, seconded by Rick Matejka, to adjourn the Public Hearing at 7:40PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dayna McDermott Arriola
Recording Clerk

This is a draft version of the Minutes until approved by the Board of Finance.