

Town of Hampton  
Board of Finance  
Budget Workshop Session  
April 26, 2023  
7PM

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7PM.

**Roll Call:** Kathy Donahue, Ed Adelman, Nick Brown, Joan Fox, Diane Gagnon, Judy Buell (7:05), Kathi Newcombe.

Staff and Others Present: Selectman Allan Cahill, Selectman Bob Grindle, Treasurer Ellen Rodriguez, Recording Secretary Dayna McDermott-Arriola.

**Citizen Comments:** none.

**Budget Workshop Session**

Treasurer Rodriguez distributed the most recent draft version of the FY2023-2024 budget with a 5% cost-of-living increments included. Each department's budget request was reviewed. Chairman Donahue reported that, after meeting with the First Selectman, it is recommended that the following items are voted on as separate referendum questions: the Conservation Commission's request for \$25,000 of matched funds for the proposed Little River Grant Project; the use of American Recovery funds to cover the Fire Department's request for eligible equipment and \$10,000 for the alarm system from the Town's reserves; the use of American Recovery funds to cover some of the cost of the ambulance, which has increased to \$90,720. First Selectman Cahill stated that there is discussion of dividing the costs of the service between participating towns on a per capita basis in the future, as well as the possibility of other towns joining KB Ambulance. He noted that the Paramedics' fees also increased exponentially.

Treasurer Rodriguez explained that the cost of the Clerk for the PZC/Building Department has been adjusted per actual expenses and split between the two departments, and that the increase of \$1610 in Building Inspector Supplies is due to the need for a new computer. She stated that the increases in the Sanitation Department, which totals \$10,709, reflect actual costs. Ms. Rodriguez also explained that the Town is now fully covering individual health insurance for the road crew, though members are still paying 15% toward their family coverage. She also reported that she did not receive a budget request for Fletcher Memorial Library, and therefore submitted last year's request of \$34,680.

To Joan Fox's question on the need for the Board of Finance Attorney, Chairman Donahue explained that the fiscal policies and procedures currently under review by the committee will require review by the attorney prior to adoption by the finance board. Ms. Donahue also explained that the Recreation Commission's line item shows an increase of \$6,900 because no funds were requested during the Covid pandemic; officials have some additional questions on their proposal. After discussion of the Seniors' request for \$4000, it was decided, by general consent, to eliminate the organization's funding this year as they have ample in their Treasury to cover next year's expenses.

First Selectman Cahill stated that the 5% increase in utilities impacts the Transfer Station, Highway Department, Community Center and Town Hall. He explained that, with fees increasing for the Northeast District Health Department and a poor return on services, officials are pursuing an alternate plan after the contract ends this year. To Nick Brown's question, Mr. Cahill explained that the decision to decrease Contingency by \$15,000 was based on possible items to reduce rather than actuals from prior years. Chairman Donahue explained that the only items in the Capital & Non-Recurring Accounts funded in this draft version of the budget are \$10,000 in Land Acquisition, per an ordinance of the Town, \$6,010 for mandated Revaluation, and the Fire Department has increased to \$100,000 from \$25,000 due to the impending need for a new truck, which the Fire Chief estimates at \$600,000.

There are two areas of savings: \$30,000 was removed from the Tree Removal line item as the trees identified as dangerous have been removed by the road crew; and there are sufficient funds in the Fire Department Incentive Program to cover that expense next year.

In terms of the school spending plans, Chairman Donahue reported that, though there is a decrease of \$86,529 in our Town's assessment for Regional District #11, there remains a question on the residency of three students as of the October 1 census, as well as the status of last year's surplus funds which, a portion of which, if they exist, must by statute be returned to the towns. Chairman Donahue also reported that the elementary school re-submitted a draft version of the budget with a 5% cost-of-living increment for non-certified staff, which increases their bottom line by approximately \$7000. She suggested that the finance board postpone decisions until the Town receives information on the revenue figures. She explained that, while the Governor's budget reduces the Education Cost Sharing grant by \$74,060, per the formula previously adopted by the legislature which was frozen during Covid, the Appropriations Committee is suggesting that the freeze continue for another two years. Ms. Donahue suggested that finalization of the budgets wait until the Town receives information on revenue. The Town is also waiting for information on the Minimum Budget Requirement per drop in student enrollment.

To Nick Brown's question, First Selectman Cahill stated that the suit with the Solar Park is in court and there is nothing further to report regarding their potential tax payments, totaling \$300,000 to date.

**Citizen Comments:** none.

**Adjournment:** There being no further business to come before the Board, the Meeting adjourned at 8PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dayna McDermott Arriola  
Recording Secretary

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