

## ***Town of Saugus Finance Committee***

### ***Kenneth DePatto, Chairman***

Ronald Jepson  
Stacy Billingsley  
Theresa Katsos

### ***George DeDomenico, Vice-Chairman***

Steve Verone  
Frank Perella  
Steven DiVirgilio  
Stephen Horlick

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**MARCH 27, 2019 7:00 P.M**  
**TOWN HALL CONFERENCE ROOM**

The regular meeting of the Finance Committee was held on Wednesday evening, March 27, 2019, at 7:00 P.M. in the Town Hall Conference Room.

**Members present:** Chairman Kenneth DePatto, Vice-Chairman George DeDomenico, Frank Perella, Terry Katsos, Steve Horlick, Steven DiVirgilio and Stacy Billingsley.

**Absent from the meeting:** Rocky Jepson and Steve Verone.

**Minutes:** The Committee voted 7-0 to accept the minutes from March 13, 2019.

**Chairman's Update:** The Chair told the Committee that we're continuing with the budget review of the proposed FY2020 budget. He said we will also take up three financial articles on the Special Town Meeting tonight. He noted that Mr. Jepson and Mr. Verone would not be present tonight.

**Manager's Update:** No update.

### **Review of FY2020 Operational Budget - Town Boards**

#### **Moderator:**

Chairman DePatto said the Committee will let the moderator keep his \$1 budget.

#### **Board of Selectmen:**

Salaries – Chairman DePatto said it's only the cost of living adjustment and the .3 of a week. He said they are level-funded.

Expenses – Chairman DePatto said expenses are level-funded.

#### **Conservation Commission:**

Salaries – Chairman DePatto noted it's just the cost of living raise.

Expenses – Chairman DePatto said expenses are level-funded.

#### **Planning Board:**

Salaries – Chairman DePatto said there is a slight decrease.

Expenses – Chairman DePatto said there is a slight increase, probably for advertising.

#### **Board of Appeals:**

Salaries – Chairman DePatto said salaries reflect the cost of living increase.

Expenses – Chairman DePatto said the increase of \$1,000 in professional and technical advertising must be advertising.

**Council on Aging:**

Chairman DePatto wished Mr. Barry well.

Salaries – Chairman DePatto said it looks like the cost of living adjustment and .3 of the week as well.

Expenses – Chairman DePatto noted they are level-funded. He said they do a nice job over there.

**Veterans Services:**

Salaries – Chairman DePatto said we share this with two other communities and Melrose is the employer. He said they must have increased the salary and we are sharing our 33%. Vice-Chairman DeDomenico said he believes it's a new person. The Town Manager said he's been here about a year.

Expenses – Chairman DePatto said they are level-funded at \$397,000. He said he remembered when that number was \$100,000 or less, so we're really reaching out to the veterans.

**Handicap Commission:**

Chairman DePatto said this item is level-funded at \$950.

**Fair Housing Commission**

Chairman DePatto noted it's level funded at \$300.

**Library:**

Salaries – Chairman DePatto said there is a bump in the department request from the Selectmen and Manager. The Town Manager said this is for the director. He said there is a request for additional salary. He said the director's position was extremely low when we brought him on, so we put in what they requested, which is 5% plus 3%, which is still considerably low. The Town Manager said this is difficult because if it's not brought up, the person in this position may look elsewhere in a couple years. Mr. DiVirgilio asked what the director's salary is. The Town Manager responded \$71,000, and he added that most library directors are making over \$100,000 in other communities. Vice-Chairman DeDomenico asked if this is the adjustment, to which Ms. Hatch and the Manager said yes.

Expenses – Chairman DePatto noted there is a slight increase under books and supplies. The Town Manager reminded the Committee that the library has a formula where you have to make an increase each year by a certain percentage to this line item.

**Youth & Recreation**

Salaries – Chairman DePatto said there is a slight difference between the department request and recommendation by the Selectmen and Manager. He said it's not significant. He thought maybe the department head did not account for the cost of living. The Town Manager confirmed that is what the difference is.

Expenses - Chairman DePatto said the expenses are level-funded at \$15,000 and the revolving funds run the rest.

Mr. Horlick asked if the Youth and Recreation Director could come to Town Meeting to tell us all about his existing programs, or potentially new programs.

**Review of Special Warrant Articles****Article 1:**

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate a sum of money for reconstruction of existing sidewalks and construction of new sidewalks with granite curbing, including the payment of costs incidental or related thereto; to determine whether this appropriation shall be raised by borrowing or otherwise; or to take any other action relative thereto. Chairman DePatto noted this is \$310,000 by borrowing, and the Town Manager is the sponsor.

The Town Manager explained to the Committee that the Town is building a new middle-high school, and some of the discussion of the neighbors was the sidewalks. He noted that on Highland Avenue, they have partial sidewalks on one side and no sidewalks on the other side, so this area is definitely in need so students and kids can walk and use the sidewalks. The Town Manager also said there is an opportunity for the Town to continue with capital infrastructure improvements and replace the water main to increase flow to the school. He noted that water flow was identified as an issue on Highland Ave., and there is an opportunity for the Town to continue with capital infrastructure improvements and look at the master water main replacement program to replace that water main in this area to increase the flow to the school. The Manager said this article's appropriation deals specifically with sidewalks, concrete and granite curbing, and some of the reclamation. He said replacing the water main and a full reclamation has already been appropriated, so this would be part of the project.

Ms. Katsos asked if this includes Pearce Memorial. The Town Manager said no, but that is included in the cost of the overall Middle-High School project. Vice-Chair DeDomenico asked who conducted the initial estimate. The Town Manager said he believes it was Arcadis. Vice-Chair DeDomenico asked when bids will be back. The Manager said they are either out or back already. Mr. Horlick asked what happened with the SAFER grant program for sidewalks around schools. The Town Manager explained that is the TIPS program, Safe Routes to School, which is a different program. He said it did not include those schools.

Mr. DiVirgilio asked if this is just for the sidewalks. The Manager said it's for sidewalks and some paving. Mr. DiVirgilio asked if the sidewalk will be on same side as the water main. The Manager said the water main is under the street. Mr. DiVirgilio asked how many years of borrowing this would be for. Ms. Hatch answered that we max out at 10 years.

Vice-Chairman DeDomenico made a motion to recommend that \$310,000.00 is appropriated for reconstruction of existing sidewalks and construction of new sidewalks with granite curbing, including the payment of costs incidental or related thereto; that to meet this appropriation the Treasurer with the approval of the Board of Selectmen is authorized to borrow said sum under G.L. c.44, §7(1) or any other enabling authority; that the Board of Selectmen or the Town Manager is authorized to take any other action necessary or convenient to carry out the projects; and that any premium received upon the sale of any bonds or notes approved by this vote, less any such premium applied to the payment of the costs of issuance of such bonds or notes, may be applied to the payment of costs approved by this vote in accordance with Chapter 44, Section 20 of the General Laws, thereby reducing the amount authorized to be borrowed to pay such costs by a like amount. Chairman DePatto seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion carried 7-0.

## **Article 2:**

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate a sum of money for designing, constructing, repairing and replacing parks and playgrounds in the Town, including the payments of costs incidental or related thereto; to determine whether this appropriation shall be raised by borrowing or otherwise; or to take any other action relative thereto. Chairman DePatto noted this article is \$500,000 through borrowing, and the sponsor is the Town Manager.

The Town Manager said he is looking to continue the Town's investment in improving the parks and playgrounds. He said we identified parks and playgrounds areas in need of capital improvements from decades of neglect. He reminded the Committee that we discussed this at the last Town Meeting, and we were looking at doing where the basketball courts are at Evans and ice rinks. He said we've done some analysis. After looking at the courts and the rest of the park

and center of the Town, it is really disastrous, so the plan has evolved. He said the total project will cost somewhere in the neighborhood of \$640,000. He told the Committee that one of their handouts is a breakdown of the capital expenditures of what has been appropriated in the past and what we've spent it on.

Part of this, the Town Manager noted, is to look at reconfiguring the portion of the park in the middle, behind the Veterans Memorial, and look at taking the tennis court and put in two regulation-size basketball courts with power, lights, security, grading and drainage with sidewalks and curbing. He emphasized the importance of investing in security, since we are making a big investment in these cameras. The Manager said it's a lot more for security than we originally anticipated, and that we have spent close to \$150,000 with security in other parks and playgrounds. He noted that he was able to incorporate the older analog cameras at some schools as well. He said the Police have access to the cameras, and we're in process of putting monitors at the Station so they can pull up the cameras in real-time. He noted that this really fits into their ALICE program. He said the cameras are on some of the Town's streets. The Town Manager told the Committee that this article would also include the security. He said we've had a few incidents caught on camera where we've had the police address the problem. Vice-Chairman DeDomenico asked if the cruisers will have access to view the cameras. The Town Manager said they don't currently, but they can pull up the secured site with the proper password to view them. The Manager said eventually, everything will be view-able in live-time on officers' cell phones in their cruisers or in dispatch.

The Town Manager gave the Committee a demonstration of the cameras by pulling them up and viewing them in real-time.

Mr. DiVirgilio asked if the cameras can grab plates. The Manager said some can. Mr. DiVirgilio asked if kids play basketball past 10 p.m., if that can be seen and reported to the police. The Town Manager said yes. The Town Manager said we brought some of the old analog system cameras into our viewing platform. He said a converter was needed to bring those online, but now we have inside and outside views at some schools.

Chairman DePatto said this is something to protect our investment. The Manager said he's looking to add this security at Evans. The Manager said work at Evans will alleviate the issue of middle schoolers going to takeover the Vets playground after school, which is used by younger children. Chairman DePatto said he thinks this is great and he's looking forward to what can be done.

Town Meeting member Jean Bartolo commented that Town Meeting appropriated money for these courts last year. The Town Manager explained again that we're looking at doing a larger project. Chairman DePatto said the Committee was given a printout shows exactly where any money spent has gone and what the remaining funds are, and that all the money is accounted for. Ms. Bartolo was given a copy of the printout.

Mr. DiVirgilio asked if the money that was appropriated was spent. Chairman DePatto said there is a balance of \$199,000. Mr. DiVirgilio asked what the \$583,205 figure represents. The Town Manager explained that Evans School is a different project than the Vets School. The Manager

said that's why he put everything together for a capital investment overview for the parks and playgrounds. The Town Manager said it shows we have an approximate \$200,000 balance from all appropriations and including all design work for Evans School. The Manager explained that the \$500,000 is to allocate to be able to use towards estimate in everyone's package for \$640,000.

Mr. DiVirgilio asked if the \$500,000 figure is what it costs to re-do the entire park. The Manager explained that it's the section of the park, not the entire park, shown in the diagram that was distributed. Chairman DePatto explained that the hash marks on the diagram outline the scope of the job. Ms. Bartolo asked the Town Manager to consider paying for the veterans panels where the soldiers' names are displayed. The Manager said he authorized that two years ago. Ms. Bartolo thanked the Manager and said she will take care of it.

After a bit more discussion, Mr. Horlick made a motion to recommend the sum of \$500,000.00 be appropriated for designing, constructing, repairing, and replacing parks and playgrounds in the Town, including the payment of costs incidental or related thereto; that to meet this appropriation the Treasurer with the approval of the Board of Selectmen is authorized to borrow said amount under G.L. c44, s7(25) or any other enabling authority; that the Town Manager is authorized to contract for and expend any federal or state aid available for the projects; and that the Board of Selectmen or Town Manager is authorized to take any other action necessary or convenient to carry out this project; and that any premium received upon the sale of any bonds or notes approved by this vote, less any such premium applied to the payment of the costs of issuance of such bonds or notes, may be applied to the payment of costs approved by this vote in accordance with Chapter 44, Section 20 of the General Laws, thereby reducing the amount authorized to be borrowed to pay such costs by a like amount. Chairman DePatto seconded. A vote was taken and the motion passed 7-0.

#### Article 3:

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate a sum of money for repairing or replacing HVAC in a town and/or school building, including the payment of costs incidental or related thereto; to determine whether this appropriation shall be raised by borrowing or otherwise; or to take any other action relative thereto. Chairman DePatto said this is \$30,000 from free cash, and the sponsor is the Town Manager.

The Town Manager explained that the compressor on one of the units at the Veterans School went at the end of last year, so it is a timing issue to obtain funds before the weather gets warm as the school operates in the summer. He said the compressor needs to be replaced. He informed the Committee that when a compressor is down, the other compressor units are strained, so it is important to replace so that there are no further issues. The Manager told the Committee that this is a one-time cost.

Ms. Katsos asked how old those units are. The Town Manager said it is between 19-20 years old, and that the life-span is about 20 years. Vice-Chairman DeDomenico asked if that's why we're going to use a remanufactured unit. The Manager said we can get a remanufactured unit directly from the supplier with a 3-year warrantee.

The Town Manager said Ms. Katsos brings up a good question. He said through the Green Communities program, we've been really fortunate that we've had over  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a million dollars to replace boilers at the Town Hall, a rooftop unit at public safety building and another one on its way out, as well as other improvements at the library. The Town Manager said at Vets School, there is no air conditioning in the entire building. He said it's boiling in the gym.

Vice-Chairman DeDomenico made a motion to recommend the sum of \$30,000 to be appropriated for the repair or replacement of HVAC at the Veterans Memorial School. The source of funding is free cash. A vote was taken and the motion passed 7-0.

Chairman DePatto reminded the Committee that next week is Town departments, and the week after is the regional school budget and other small departments.

Mr. Horlick began to discuss specifics on Article 4 of the Special Town Meeting, the building moratorium on multi-family dwellings. Chairman DePatto said the Committee should not discuss a zoning article at Finance Committee, as it is not financial.

The meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m.