

ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

December 20, 2022

6:30

Virtual, via Zoom

Members present: Brian Boyle, Bob Guerriero, Greg Myers and Bill Nickles

Call to order: Chairman Boyle called the meeting to order at 6:31 PM. The entire meeting can be viewed by going to:

[Bolton Access TV – Advisory Committee Meeting](#)

Agenda Item #1: Purpose of meeting

- Purpose of this meeting is to do a run through of the proposed budget.
- Brian Boyle would like for specific questions to the department heads to be recorded in the minutes.

Agenda Item #2: Overall budget numbers

- To get to this budget years levy limit we begin with last year's levy limit, add 2.5% for Prop 2.5 and a projected revenue growth number. This next fiscal year's levy limit is \$24,794,180.
- The revenue growth number may change based on internal discussions.
- There is a projected \$150k in cannabis revenue based on revenue coming in on a project that is underway.
- The building permit number does not include anything from 580 Main Street as they do not have construction costs yet.
- Overall, the preliminary budget deficit is \$646,529. This number does not include any adjustments for energy costs and a COLA.

Agenda Item #3: Questions for specific departments

- Moderator budget
 - Is the \$50 needed as it does not get spent?
- Selectboard budget
 - Purchase and Services has been less than actual spent, so can it be reduced?
 - Dues actual spend has been less as well, so can it be reduced?
- Town Administrator
 - Money is put into a reserve fund every year to cover any potential contract negotiations, etc.
- Reserve fund
 - Was increased to \$150k last year to reflect uncertainty over energy costs.
 - We might be able to lower that if we incorporate the new model for energy costs.
- Board of Assessors
 - \$7,500 increase in Purchase and services is higher than expected due to contract increases.

- MIS budget
 - Level funded now but may increase due to requirements for cyber security insurance concerning two-factor authentication.
- Conservation commission
 - Fairly significant increase in both Land improvement and Land maintenance. May be explained by a private donor no longer being available but we need clarity.
- Town hall
 - Heating and electric increased by 25%.
 - Bob Guerriero suggested we should be consistent across the board with heating and electric costs.
- Public safety
 - Need to find out if the outstanding contract will affect the wages and overtime numbers. It will be best done in advance.
- Fire / EMS
 - The plan is to add one to two permanent firefighters to the staff so that 24/7 coverage could be provided.
 - This will not happen immediately, but it will be helpful to hear the Chief's plan.
 - This will be discussed with the Advisory and Select board.
- Tree Warden
 - Actuals have been quite a bit lower than the request, so is the requested number needed.
- Transfer station
 - Switching to paid-for bags as opposed to tags to improve compliance.
 - This could result in increased costs upfront but should level out over time.
- Council on Aging
 - Increased costs in wages and a supporting memo that explains this but we can discuss when they come in.
- Employee benefits
 - Large increase in retirement benefits which needs some explanation.

Agenda Item #4: Energy modeling

- Discussion on how to better model heating and energy costs going forward with a suggested 20% increase.
- Bob Guerriero agreed to take this on as a separate project.

Agenda Item #5: Review of Warrant articles

- Quick review of the non-finalized warrant articles.
- Includes requests from the school district.

Agenda Item #6: Overall budget

- Should have over \$1 million in free cash.
- There is remaining ARPA funds available that have not been allocated.
- New growth could be higher and has never been less than \$200k

Agenda Item #7: Committee business

- Motion to approve minutes from November 22, 2022 by Bill Nickles, seconded by Bob Guerriero; **VOTED AND PASSED UNANIMOUS (5-0).**
- Adjourned at 7:33pm.

Approved by the Advisory Committee