

Pownal Budget Committee

April 5, 2022 Public Proceeding Minutes Approved

Members Present:

Bo Chesney, Gennifer Giuliano, John Green, Brian Stornelli, Andy Wyatt

Guests:

Andy O'Brien of the Select Board, Town Administrator Becky Taylor-Chase, Fire Chief Jesse Peters, Paul Schumann

1. A quorum was established (all committee members present). The meeting was called to order by Chairman Green at 6:33PM.
2. Mr. Wyatt had provided draft minutes of the March 22, 2022 meeting. Mr. Green moved to approve them as written. Mr. Chesney seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
3. The Public Comment period was skipped as none had any comments to bring forward.
4. In the Town Officials Comment period, Mr. O'Brien reported that the Road Commissioner is no longer employed by the Town. Public Works employee Matt Neilson will serve as interim Road Commissioner. Mr. O'Brien also reported that at the last Select Board meeting, the Capital Improvement Plan committee had requested that an article be included on the Town Meeting warrant to transfer a sum of money from undesignated fund balance to the capital reserve account. After some deliberation, the Select Board agreed and will recommend a transfer of \$200,000.
5. Mr. Green reported that the budget comparison spreadsheet is still a work in progress and is not ready to share at this time. He will provide this to the committee at the next meeting.
6. When Mr. Green asked for reflections on last meeting's budget presentations, Mr. Schumann and Mr. Wyatt offered thanks to Mr. Stornelli for his thought-provoking questions regarding the transfer into the capital reserve account. This prompted the CIP committee to consider other amounts of undesignated fund balance to be transferred to capital reserve.
7. Fire Chief Peters led the committee through a review of the proposed Public Safety budget. Notable changes in the FY 2023 budget include:
 - i. Electricity, propane and natural gas for the facilities with a \$1,240 increase.
 - ii. The Compensation expense is increased by \$5,107 (11.95%). Most of that increase (\$3,987) is because the employer FICA and Medicare expense is shifted to this budget from the General Government budget where it has been in previous years.
 - iii. Expense for the Buildings department is increased by \$1,690, \$1,240 of which is electricity, propane and natural gas for the two stations.

Mr. Peter's proposed budget represents a \$7,382 (5.1%) increase over current year. More than half of that (\$3,987) is attributed to shifting the FICA and Medicare expense lines from the General Government budget..

8. Mr. O'Brien led the committee through a review of the Pownal Center Water Association budget. The proposed budget is unchanged from the current-year funding at \$3,200. Mr. O'Brien also reported that he will request that an article be included on the Town Meeting warrant to transfer any

unexpended appropriations from current year to be used to replenish the PCWA sinking fund which is reserved for significant PCWA expenses.

9. Ms. Taylor-Chase provided a view of the Cemeteries budget. She had spoken to Craig Vosmus of the Cemetery Commission to confirm that the current year \$5,000 appropriation will be sufficient for the next fiscal year as well. Of that \$5,000 appropriation, \$4,000 is for wages.
10. The next meeting of this committee will be on April 19, 2022 at 6:30 PM. The budget proposals for Solid Waste and Recycling, County Tax, Debt Service and Revenue Projections will be reviewed.
11. Mr. Green made a motion for adjournment. Mr. Chesney seconded. The motion passed with all in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 7:42 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Andy Wyatt