

Town of Blandford Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

November 25, 2020

Open Session: 2:00pm

Present: ~~JLombardo~~ - Chair, ~~Cathy Smelcer~~ - member, ~~JGarcia~~ - Town-Administrator, ~~RSenecal~~ - Highway-Superintendent

ACTION ITEMS

1. **Minutes from August 26** – motion below
2. **Minutes from October 26** – motion below
3. **Reserve Transfer Requests** - Garcia reported to the Board progress of executing the Streamline Permitting Program which was funded by a state IT grant. Garcia shared there is an annual recurring cost that the grant does not cover and was unbudgeted for because we were not sure at the time what the costs would be. The annual recurring cost this year is \$2,830 and Garcia requested a Reserve Transfer to the IT budget to cover this cost.

New Business

1. **Overview of FY22 Budget Process and Timeline** – Garcia reported to the committee communication went out to departments for capital project requests. He also reported he received the budget document from the accountants sooner than anticipated. Originally, he was expecting to have them later and distributed to departments in mid-December. Now that the documents were received sooner, he would like to send them out as soon as possible if the committee desires. Lombardo and Smelcer both agreed they should be sent out as soon as possible. Garcia said he'll get them out by December 1. Garcia explained coming January and as budget requests are being collected, the committee can expect to start meeting with departments heads to go over their requests and start prioritizing. Garcia shared with the board a timeline documents of the tasks ahead between now and town meeting through the budget process.
2. **Review Local Receipts** – Garcia shared with the board estimation of receipts to collect and actual receipts collected for FY20. He explained some of these need to be reduced slightly below what was actually collected to keep with DOR guidelines. He also explained that other receipts can be raised to keep up with what was actually collected. Garcia and the committee discussed recommendations by him and the accountant for possible reductions and increases. Garcia looks forward to also go over these with the Select Board on Monday and will share feedback/recommendations from Finance Committee with the Select Board. It was requested for detailed information of collection on meals tax. Committee members were interested in assessing how much was collected from each establishment to better determine an accurate estimated amount to collect. Garcia said he'll look into it. He did say because of issues of COVID, we can expect a lesser amount to be collected so we are recommending to reduce the anticipated amount to a much more conservative figure – Motion below.
3. **Discuss Capital Projects** – Garcia briefly went over a capital project request coming soon from the Water Department to upgrade the Water Plant operations system. A SCADA assessment report was done by Wright and Pierce that highlights the need and cost scenarios. Without getting too much in detail, Garcia explained to the board he believes we can make the funding work for the Water Dept. to proceed forward with the upgrade. Garcia said, more on this will be shared when we meet with Water Department to go over the report and the need but just wanted to keep the committee in the loop.

Other Business

1. Rene reported to the board they are ready for winter. They spent a lot of time upgrading equipment, sanders, and plows. Rene reported he has spent 74.43% (\$11,165.86) of Plow Blades/Nuts/Bolts Winter account line item from Snow & Ice. There is a remaining balance of \$3,834.14. Rene explained to the committee there is one more job he needs done to be prepared and it's getting the old-550 plow truck ready. The plow situation on the old-550 is a 'make-shift' situation between two manufactures. Since what's done is not designed for the framing of the truck, Rene explained we would have to refurbish which can cost \$4,600 to \$4,800. He also mentioned that instead of refurbishing a make-shift situation, we can pay \$5,240 for complete unit and replace the right way. Rene explained we have two options, 1) with only \$3,834 left in the account, we can deficit spend of \$1,413 as allowed for snow and ice. Or 2) he can spend what's left and supplement the remaining balance from one of his other budgeted highway account line items. The only concern Rene shared about that option is that we would have to keep an eye on the budget as we get to year-end in case so we don't over spend depending on the need between now and end of fiscal year as budgeted for. Rene suggested we go with option 1 since it's allowed and will give us flexibility with the other accounts and can balance later at year-end. Lombardo and Smelcer agreed with the recommendation. Garcia said he plans to share with Select Board on Monday as well just to be sure Finance Committee and Select Board agree with the strategy for purposes of transparency and checks and balances. See motion below.

Motion:

1. Lombardo made a motion to approve the August 26 meeting minutes as written. Smelcer seconded. **All were in favor.**
2. Lombardo made a motion to approve the October 26 meeting minutes as written. Smelcer seconded. **All were in favor.**
3. Lombardo made a motion to transfer from Reserve Account line item to External IT account line item the amount of \$2,830 to pay for the full circle technology invoice for annual recurring cost. Smelcer seconded. **All were in favor.**
4. Smelcer made a motion to support the reductions and raises recommended except for the meals tax until more information is collected. Lombardo seconded. **All were in favor.**
5. Lombardo made a motion to support deficit spending from the Snow and Ice account 015422.009 to supplement cost to purchase full unit plow assembly on the 550 plow truck. Smelcer seconded. **All in favor.**

Next Meeting: No meeting scheduled yet.



Meeting Adjourned at 3:30 pm

Cathy Smelcer, member
Jon Lombardo, Chair