

Town of Farmington  
Budget Committee Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, April 28, 2021

**Committee Members Present:**

Jodi Connolly, Chairman  
Sylvia Arcouette, Vice Chairman  
Elizabeth Johnson, Secretary  
Neil Johnson, Selectmen's Rep.  
Mary Barron, Alt. School Board Rep.  
Chad York  
Blanche Tanner  
Bob Morgan  
Joe Pitre

**Others Present:**

Arthur Capello, Town Administrator  
Brian Cisneros, SAU Business Administrator

**Committee Members Absent:**

Jeremy Squires, excused  
Tim Brown, School Board Rep.

**1). Call to Order:**

Chairman Connolly called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

**2). Pledge of Allegiance:**

All present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3). Public Comment:** None

**4). Review of Minutes:**

March 24, 2021 – Public Meeting Minutes- No errors or omissions

**Motion:** (N. Johnson, second Morgan) to accept the minutes as written passed 8-0-1 (Pitre abstained).

**5). Review Town Reports- March 2021:**

**Actual & Anticipated Revenues/Actual & Budgeted Expenses & Encumbrance- Parks & Rec.**

Mr. Capello said they have hired a new Rec. Dept. Director, a part time Summer Program Supervisor and a candidate for the Asst. Rec. Dept. Director position will meet with Selectmen on Monday night.

He said a grand reopening event will be held on Saturday, May 22 from 1 to 4 p.m. at the Rec. Center at the Town Hall. They have a lot of good ideas and a lot of things will be happening at the Rec. Dept. so they will start to see expenses on the Rec. Dept. report soon he said.

Mrs. Connolly asked if they budgeted enough money for the Rec. Dept. to start up again.

Mr. Capello said yes and they budgeted about a half year's worth of money for the Rec. Dept. this year figuring that there would only be about 6 months of activities so they should be okay.

Mr. Pitre asked about Hay Day.

Mr. Capello said that there may be something but there probably would be no Hay Day this

year. He said they will bring it back next year and he didn't want to throw something together and have it flop. It takes a lot of planning and right now we are working on getting everything reopened with staffing, etc. he said.

Mrs. Arcouette asked if there were records and information kept the new Rec. Director can use. Mr. Capello said yes.

#### **Actual & Anticipated Revenues- General Fund**

Mrs. Connolly asked about the status of the revenues and if they got any more money from the COVID funds.

Mr. Capello said they are pretty much tapped out from the first round of funding (\$163,000). He said the Selectmen will be getting a notice of approval from FEMA for reimbursement of the 25% of expenses that the Governor's Office for Emergency Relief and Recovery (GOFERR) funds didn't pay for.

He said they expect to receive \$690,000 from the American Recovery Act but they don't have any clarification on what that can be used for. He said the latest information he has received says the Town can only use it for water, sewer and Wi-Fi infrastructure. Once they come out with some guidance we will figure out what we can use it for he said.

Mr. Capello said he spoke with the bridge engineer that day and he said he is keeping an eye on the federal guidelines and their definition of infrastructure and they are prepared to move quickly to get the Town some funds from that if it ever materializes.

He said the \$690,000 will be in 2 payments and they will have 4 years to spend it.

(State Rep.) Joe Pitre said he talked to the Finance Committee Chair today and he said there will be about \$140 million extra in the state budget and it depends on the May revenue amounts.

He said April came in pretty good and May looks like it will be about \$140 million extra and advised that they talk to their Senator because the budget is in the Senate now and all the extras are going to come from that budget.

Mrs. Connolly asked who the Senator is for this area.

Mr. Pitre said it is Jim Gray from Rochester. It's very important that you get in his ear he said.

Mrs. Connolly said then the cities and towns might be getting more money.

Mr. Pitre said the state is going to kick in \$100 million so the towns will only be liable for the \$263,000 so that is a help. He said they may give money to the schools like they did last time but they may not use it to reduce taxes so they decided to do it this way. We will eventually vote on a compromise (budget) but that is what you have coming which is good news he said.

#### **Actual & Budgeted Expenses & Encumbrance**

Mrs. Connolly asked if they are on target with this.

Mr. Capello said everything is on target. He said as they get through the year they may see some of the personnel lines are overspent because they are experiencing a lot of turnover right now because of retirements and it is such a competitive market that we have to increase some salaries in order to attract qualified people. He said Finance Administrator Pam Merrill is

retiring and just in the month of April there are 8 other communities looking for a Finance Director due to retirements. I think what happened is that those people who were going to retire last year waited a year because of COVID and now that we are on the downside of COVID a lot of people are retiring. Ultimately the bottom line will be fine he said.

**Remittance Report – 01/01/21 to 03/31/21**

Mr. Capello said everything is on track and the Town is switching banks to Profile Bank in Alton and he wanted the committee to be aware of it in case some of the paperwork looks different. He said there will be something new in the report once they get it started and within the next week or two they will start to accept credit cards at the landfill and the Planning Dept. office.

Mrs. Connolly asked who would pay the added charges that come with credit card payments.

Mr. Capello said the resident will pay the convenience fees and if the resident is going to the landfill and is getting a dump sticker for \$1.50 the resident would see 2 separate charges on their card, the \$1.50 and then the 2.65% of that \$1.50 and that way the Town does not have to raise the prices to compensate for those fees and the card holder pays the convenience fee.

Mrs. Connolly said some of the fees are different from one card to another.

Mr. Capello said the fee would be same for all the cards.

Ms. Tanner asked if they will still accept cash at the landfill.

Mr. Capello said cash is still good in this country for now but he couldn't guarantee how long it will be worth anything. He said they have had a lot of requests for the ability to use credit cards and they are trying to accommodate them.

Mrs. Connolly asked if there would still be no fee to pay water bills by check.

Mr. Capello said there would only be an extra fee with credit cards.

**6). Review School Reports - SY 07/01/20 to 06/30/21:**

**General Fund 10 YTD Expenditure Report (printed 04/01/21)**

Mrs. Connolly said they are nearing the end of the year and asked how they are doing with this.

Mr. Cisneros said they are doing well and asked the members to refer to the March 2021 School District Budget Update Report that gives them a snapshot from the end of last month. He said they would see that the Anticipated Available Balance column, which is the fund balance shows it is just over \$1 million (\$1,052,419.56) and that so far everything is pretty much in line and barring anything catastrophic or unexpected they would still hold that \$1 million for the end of the year.

Ms. Tanner asked why the line item numbers changed from last month and if it was because things are moving around a lot in the different sections.

Mr. Cisneros said anytime the line is zero such as for an expense that is reimbursed they don't print it out because if he did that the report would be 3 times as long as it now.

Ms. Tanner then asked about the following line items:

Page 14, Line 506, Contracted Services, SAU - Mr. Cisneros said that is for Municipal Resources which is a company that comes in to provide support, training and help with the MS-25.

Page 17, Line 632, Routine Maintenance, HWMS – Mr. Cisneros said this is a purchase order they are putting in for cleaning the air ducts this summer which will actually be funded through a grant and the grant hasn't been officially awarded yet by the state. Once that happens this will get moved over to the grant he said.

Ms. Tanner said she assumed that any line item that begins with COVID is covered by the grant. Mr. Cisneros said that is correct and they need a placeholder because the dept. heads don't have access to the grants so they have to put it into the general fund and then he moves it over the grants.

#### **All Funds-Revenue Report**

Mrs. Connolly asked if they had money coming in.

Mr. Cisneros said they do and so far that is also on track

There were no other questions/comments on this report.

#### **7). Old Business:**

**a). Choose Capital Improvement Plan Committee Rep.**- Chairman Connolly said they need to choose a Bud Com Rep. to CIP Committee.

Mrs. Johnson said they were waiting to see if Mr. Squires wants to remain as the rep and he is still not here and suggested they table this item until next month's meeting.

Mrs. Connolly said Mr. Brown was going to give them more information and he is also not here.

Mrs. Johnson said Mr. Brown mentioned that he planned to talk to the Selectmen and Mr. Capello because he was looking for the CIP Committee to have more meetings.

Mr. Capello said Mr. Brown has not done so yet.

Mrs. Connolly said some of the hesitancy for any member to volunteer to be the rep. was due to not knowing how often the committee would meet. She asked Mr. Capello when the next CIP meeting is.

Mr. Capello said they would not begin meeting until August or September.

Mrs. Connolly said then they have time to decide and tabled the matter until the next meeting.

**8). New Business:** None

**9). Next Meeting:** Wednesday, May 26, 2021 at 7 p.m.

#### **10). Adjournment:**

**Motion:** (Arcouette, second York) to adjourn the meeting passed 9-0 at 7:16 p.m.

Respectively submitted

Kathleen Magoon, Recording Secretary

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Jodi Connolly, Chairman