

FINANCE COMMITTEE
Minutes
Zoom Meeting 913 2342 6066

Date: March 22, 2021

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Present: Kupcinkas, Cooper, Cooney, Wells, O'Connell, Kuphal, Gillmore

Absent: None

Meeting called to order at 6:31 p.m.

Justine Caggiano, Human Resources and Sean Hendricks, Town Manager were present at the meeting.

Motioned by Kupcinkas, seconded by Cooney to accept the minutes of 3/15/21 as written.
Kupcinkas, yes; Cooper, yes; Cooney, yes; Wells, yes; Kuphal, yes; Gillmore, yes; O'Connell, yes

Motioned by Kupcinkas, seconded by Wells to accept the minutes of 11/10/20 as written.
Kupcinkas, yes; Cooper, yes; Cooney, yes; Wells, yes; Kuphal, yes; Gillmore, yes; O'Connell, yes

Motioned by Kupcinkas, seconded by Wells to accept the minutes of 1/25/21 as written.
Kupcinkas, yes; Cooper, yes; Cooney, yes; Wells, yes; Kuphal, yes; Gillmore, yes; O'Connell, yes

Motioned by Kupcinkas, seconded by Wells to accept the minutes of 2/22/21 as written.
Kupcinkas, yes; Cooper, yes; Cooney, yes; Wells, yes; Kuphal, yes; Gillmore, yes; O'Connell, yes

Jennifer O'Connell: I spoke to Chet Hanratty. He and Dr. Fitzpatrick will be in at 7:00 p.m. to discuss their budget. I spoke to Denise Marlboro and I will forward what she sent to all the members.

Lawney Tinio, IT Consultant from Worldband, was in to discuss the Computer Budget.

Sean Hendricks: I did not put in a detailed sheet for the FY2020 Purchase of Services because I am responsible for this budget. I took out the fingerprint scanner, as we do not need one. Most of the dollars in this line item is for the conversion to the Cloud for technology.

Lawney Tinio: There are two physical servers in the Town Hall and a third at the Library. There are also some at the Fire Department. The big items are easily moved to the Cloud. You saved money on licensing. It is set up with Office 365. We are always up to date on the latest version. Security is always real time.

Sean Hendricks: I want to get away from physical servers here.

Lawney Tinio: You are becoming totally mainstream. Anyone that had any questions about moving to the Cloud, changed once the pandemic started.

Sean Hendricks: We didn't go out to bid this year.

Charles Cooper: The dollar amount looks pretty low. Is this the correct dollar amount? Is there a breakdown on this?

Lawney Tinio: I can bring it up and send you copies.

Sean Hendricks: We are charged \$4400-\$4500 monthly for a secure IT station.

Charles Cooper: Is work that needs to be done included in this figure?

Lawney Tinio: The time becomes unlimited. The cost is based on the number of devices. This also includes the antivirus. There are no hardware expenses.

Charles Cooper: What is the Azure usage cost?

Lawney Tinio: No applications need to be upgraded. There is no cost as of yet. The migration of the mailboxes will come with a cost. There are 155 mailboxes. The discounts are based on the number of users.

Charles Cooper: If you could share the line items, it would be appreciated.

Lawney Tinio: I will send them out to Sean and he can forward them to you.

Dr. Fitzpatrick, Chet Hanratty and Jenna Rizzo were present to discuss the Blackstone Valley Tech Budget

Dr. Fitzpatrick: Our budget was passed by the Blackstone Valley School Committee on March 4th. We self-finance many of our projects. When we do that, we move closer to the top of the MSBA. We are working at adding a Biotechnology program. There is a grant for \$835,000. We plan to open that program in the next school year.

Jennifer O'Connell: Are there any changes that need to be made due to COVID?

Dr. Fitzpatrick: If it were to be done this year, we might have had changes that needed to be made. We have been in-person since we opened in August. We have asked our neighboring towns to share their CARES Act Grants and also to share their stimulus money. We do receive Regional Transportation from the State through Chapter 71. Millbury has 96 students at our school, which is the same as last year. This is about 8% of our budget. We have 4 years left on our debt. We refinanced after 10 years to reduce the interest.

Chet Hanratty: The roof project will be coming up in the next few years.

Dr. Fitzpatrick: Three sections of our budget have substantial increases. They are Technology, Security and Special Ed.

Jennifer O'Connell: Why is your administrative cost higher than the Town's administrative cost?

Dr. Fitzpatrick: You share the cost with the Town. We have no ability to farm out any of our services. We do the payroll, DPW etc.

Jennifer O'Connell: Last year, when you were shut down, did you continue to pay for transportation?

Dr. Fitzpatrick: We did. We continued paying to keep our cost down and not have the bus drivers laid off. This is what the State recommended. The State pays about 40% of the bills and the communities pay about 60%. We have \$2.7 Million in grants to offset our budget.

Jennifer O'Connell: How often do you work with the municipalities on projects?

Dr. Fitzpatrick: In a non-COVID environment, we do a lot of work with the municipalities. Work needs to be consistent with learning and it needs to be a safe environment.

Jennifer O'Connell: Students that are not accepted into Blackstone Valley Tech, have to find an alternative trade based education after graduation. Is there a reimbursement for this?

Dr. Fitzpatrick: Yes, there is. We have also added many adult programs.

Chet Hanratty: The acceptance into Blackstone Valley Tech has changed. It is no longer based mainly on their grades. It includes attendance, interview and behavior.

Russell Wells: There was a headline in the news last week that selection for vocational schools should be looked at.

Dr. Fitzpatrick: The major issue is that many are not teaching a more diverse amount of students. We are not guilty of what is stated in the article. The recommendation is that students be picked by lottery. We were part of a study and we had already made changes before this became an issue.

Nicole Cooney: You said you went before the MSBA and didn't ask the Town for help. Why not?

Dr. Fitzpatrick: The Towns ask the townspeople for permission. We let them know that we will use our own money for the match. We don't ask the Town to use their money for the projects. We self-fund. We don't ask the Towns to fund. We are not asking you to borrow.

Kevin Kuphal: Where does this additional money come from?

Jennifer O'Connell: This is money that they do not spend on their budget.

Dr. Fitzpatrick: This is a collection of savings over the years.

Russell Wells: This is your version of excess and deficiency?

Dr. Fitzpatrick: It is like our Free Cash.

Russell Wells: You asked the Towns to fund a project and it was voted down.

Dr. Fitzpatrick: That is true.

Jennifer O'Connell: The Public Hearing is scheduled for April 12th at 6:30 p.m. We will be cancelling our meeting for March 29th. The Warrant will be closed on April 6th by the Board of Selectmen. We should have the proforma for our meeting on April 5th. Everything needs to go to print by April 20th.

Motioned by Cooney, seconded by Kucinskaskas to adjourn at 8:07 p.m. Cooney, yes; Kupcinskaskas, yes; Cooper, yes; Kuphal, yes; Wells, yes; Gillmore, yes; O'Connell, yes

Albert P. Kupcinskaskas
Chet Hanratty
Russell Wells
Nicole L. Cooney
Jennifer O'Connell