



CARVER FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES OF APRIL 25, 2024, MEETING

Present: Chairman Alan Germain, Vice Chair Elizabeth Sulger, Walter Cole, Tony Macrina, Patrick Meagher, and Barry Struski.

Also Present: Interim Town Administrator Elaine Weston and Recording Secretary Ashley Swartz. Finance Director Karen Preval was not present.

Mr. Germain opened the meeting for Finance Committee at 7:04 PM.

Pledge of Allegiance.

Public comments are invited during the meeting for any questions.

Hearing none.

Budget review Veterans

Lisa and Mark Seminars and trainings have had an increase – there are now mandatory trainings they must attend that must be paid out of pocket (and reimbursed). There is also a consultant line and services that have been broken out. There is now a gift account that will take donations for things like placing wreaths on veteran's graves (outside the DOR rules and regulations). There is more of a need for the recognition fund – to help pay for names to be added to the monument recognizing Carver Veterans. There are a few other projects that are pending that they would like to get funding for that they are hoping will be covered by donations. Mr. Germain explained that last year they put together a Veteran's Emergency account to help Veteran's who needed financial assistance. He gave an example of someone who needed assistance and Lisa gave them money and it didn't get reimbursed. The law will not allow funds like this unless through a gift account. Mark explained that these problems are becoming more common. Lisa explained said this cannot be completely tax payer funded, they can go through ARPA funds (which is difficult), they can also do gift cards because it can be tracked. There was further discussion about how to use gift cards for this type of emergency related funds. Ms. Sulger asked if they could create a 501C3 – Lisa said this is what they are looking to do. This appeared to be a solution since it wouldn't be a town account. Mark said he was concerned not about the account, but how to access it. The conversation continued about the emergency fund and how to make it work. Lisa said she spoke with Monica from Shane Gives Thanks and they are hoping to collaborate on a project like this. Mr. Macrina asked if anyone can paint the cannon and clean the gravestones – she said anyone can do it but they use special chemicals. It was suggested to request the funds from CPA to take care of some of the necessary funds. Mr. Cole said he is a

member of Rolling Thunder and they have excess funds – he suggested requesting funds through them. Mr. Germain suggested using the funds they have now to fund some projects they are looking to have completed.

Budget review for IT

John from Technology. Mr. Germain asked about funds coming from the school – John said that happened but it was a one-time thing. There was concern that the funds were never sent from the school (since IT was formerly under the school but now is partially under the town). John said the only change made since the last time they spoke was the Vadar and SoftRight funds were moved from the Finance budget to the IT budget. The budget reflects between the schools and the town. Elaine was asked to look into the “shared” costs for these expenses. John clarified these shared costs were just the copier leases. Elaine clarified that the SoftRight fee is simply to access historical data, the school pays their own subscription. It was asked that the “Additional equipment” line be renamed “Maintenance” for clarification purposes. Discussion continued regarding the split between the school and the town in terms of the copier leases. There is continued confusion with whether or not this cost is an “above the line” item. Mr. Meagher said that the percentage between town and school should be calculated every year in order to maintain the fairness of how the budget is split. He continued that having two software systems causes a lack in continuity that makes the budget for particular items very confusing.

There has been a decrease in the Capital expenses – which resulted in getting fewer laptops. John said he is working with Dell to get some final numbers. There are also employees who have two computers who will go down to one. John broke down the licenses and if they are by device or by person – which is why they are looking to get everyone down to one device (since most licenses are issued by device rather than by person). John also plans to have a rolling device replacement to avoid large capital expenses.

Recreation

Mr. Germain said he was going to recommend to Karen to remove “Other Services”. Mary said right now they spend about \$9,000 - \$12,000 for porta-potties for the fields – including those at the schools. Mr. Germain explained that these shared costs should be split with the school instead of having these fees paid directly by Recreation. Mr. Germain said he wants to see recreation flourish but feels they are underfunded. Mary argued a lot more could be offered if some of the funds were covered by the school. Recreation has a revolving account that they try to build up to provide more activities. Karl said they had signed three more invoices for Fuss & O’Neil for the turtle protection program at the potential pickle ball courts. There is also a project that allows people to rent kayaks at Sampson’s pong (\$25 for 2 hours). Mr. Germain asked about a wish list – Mary said they really need a home where they can run programs. Mr. Germain suggested using 44 Lakeview - which is a property in the care and custody of the Conservation Commission.

Budget review Planning

Tom Bott the Town Planner was representing multiple budgets – stating not much has changed since they met in January.

Board of Health

There was a question about whether or not there was a BNA. Elaine said the Select Board approved a shared public health nurse (Carver, Kingston, Halifax, Plympton) that is funded through a grant.

Conservation

Increase in the Conservation Agent salary from the previous year with the change in agents.

Planning

The fees the town charges are not for profit but there is a revenue stream – with this being one of the few departments in town that generate a revenue to the town.

Motion to approve the minutes of April 22, 2024 made by Ms. Sulger, seconded by Mr. Macrina. Motion to amend the minutes made by Ms. Sulger, seconded by Mr. Macrina. Motion to approve the minutes as amended made by Ms. Sulger, seconded by Mr. Macrina, approved 5-0-1 with Mr. Struski abstaining.

Next meeting date: 04/29/2024 Final budget review with TA and Finance director
04/30/2024 Joint meeting with Select Board, budget presentation for warrant.

Motion to adjourn made by Ms. Sulger, seconded by Mr. Meagher, approved unanimously 6-0-0.

Adjournment 8:51 PM.

Minutes submitted by Ashley Swartz.