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## FINANCE COMMITTEE

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Dan Yarumian, Acting Chair  
Shelly Brooks  
Don Marean  
Janet Gilmore  
Joseph Ponzetti

### **MINUTES OF FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING**

#### **06 February 2024**

**Members Present:** Daniel Yarumian, Acting Chair; Shelly Brooks, Don Marean, Joseph Ponzetti

**Members Absent:** Janet Gilmore

**Other Attendees:** Select Board members - Roger Hicks, Mary Hoffman; Broadcasting Team- Ken Knudsen, Tiffany Dean

**Call to Order:** A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM. Roll Call was done with an introduction of everyone on the board in attendance.

**Review of Minutes:** Minutes for the meeting on 23 January 2024 were approved with a correction on the start time from 7:00 PM to 6:00 PM. Motion made by Ponzetti; seconded by Brooks. Carried by a vote of 3-0-2 (Marean abstained, Gilmore absent).

Minutes for the meeting on the 28 March 2023 were approved with no corrections. Motion made by Marean; seconded by Brooks. Motion carried 3-0-2 (Ponzetti abstained, Gilmore absent).

**Unfinished Business:**

1. **Election of a Chair and Vice Chair:** Motion for Yarumian as Chair by Marean with second by Ponzetti. Yarumian declined nomination of Chair. Ponzetti volunteered. Marean dropped motion of Yarumian and made a motion for Ponzetti as Chair. Seconded by Yarumian. Chair position accepted by Ponzetti. Carried with a 4-0-1 vote. Motion for Brooks as Vice Chair by Marean with second by Ponzetti. Brooks accepted the nomination for Vice Chair. Motion carried 4-0-1.

2. **Review of the Ordinance “Disposal Tax Acquired Property Amended 2021”:** Awaiting for legal review. Motion made by Marean to table the item; seconded by Brooks. Motion carried 4-0-1.



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### New Business

#### ***Review of Budgets:***

##### **1. 0101 Broadcasting:**

Motion made by Brooks with second by Marean to approve the budget for \$9,500.

Discussion: No change from previous budgets. Hicks relates that did not update the notes but is the same budget as last year. Motion approved 4-0-1.

##### **2. 0105 Elections:**

Hicks requested if this budget could be tabled until next meeting. Motion made by Ponzetti with a second by Marean. Committee asked if they had any specific questions to research. Yarumian asked if Hicks was going to update the information about the carry forward. Brooks asked about the increase in training of about \$3,000, why the proposed budget was \$500. Vote on tabling until the next meeting carried 4-0-0.

Motion made by Ponzetti with a second by Marean to approve tabling budget until next meeting. Motion carried 4-0-1.

##### **3. 0150 Legal Fees**

Discussion: Yarumian related that the increase to \$31,500 is a 20% increase or \$6,500. That he realized that it had been cut down in the past. Hicks related that the assessor's office is having to do increased abatements and any changes in state statutes requires legal review of ordinance changes.

Motion made by Brooks to approve the Legal Fees budget of \$31,500 with second by Ponzetti. Motion carried 4-0-1.

##### **4. 0900 Health & Sanitation**

Discussion: Yarumian noted that this budget is listed on his spreadsheet under Trash. Ponzetti realized that we had increased costs due to the increased houses in the town. Hicks reviewed the increase in tipping fees for the next year. Tipping fees for trash will be \$97.50 a ton and for recycling will be \$65.00 a ton. Marean asked if we received any income back since we are a member. Yarumian wondered if we get a discount for being a member. Hicks relates that as far as he is aware there are no specific advantages to being an ECO-Maine member. Hicks explained the request last meeting was for additional funds to pay for the increase in houses in the renegotiated contract. Marean related that he was aware. Brooks inquired if the money that was approved last meeting needed to be included as a budget adjustment. Hicks will include that amount.

Motion made by Marean to approve Health and Sanitation Budget of \$361,150 with second by Brooks. Motion carried 4-0-1.



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### **5. 1000 General Assistance**

Discussion: Hicks reminded members that this is the one budget that we can overspend. Ponzetti asked why in 2022/2023 on line 0006 we received \$71,655.38 in reimbursement but that this year only \$6,447 has been received. Hicks related that the true number so far this year was \$77,121. Marean asked if the money was placed into revenue sharing so that that money would decrease the overall budget amount needed. Hicks related all the types of funds in the revenue account and that that is what would happen. Marean asked why the big increase in the amount from 2022 to the present. Hoffman related that the Town now had 6 asylum seekers who were unable to work until they receive a work permit but get an allowance for housing, heat, electricity, and food. That Hollis was fortunate not to have the problems of the cities who are spending millions of dollars monthly to place individuals. Also related was the problem with some residents with paying for rental apartments in a timely fashion and when they are 5-6 months behind receiving eviction notices. The landlords have been willing to set up payment plans with the residents if General Assistance pays for one month and not evict the individual until they default on the arrangement. This arrangement has assisted individuals to stay in the apartment rather than pay for a homeless individual to reside in a hotel/motel because homelessness is considered an emergency and must be paid for despite income.

Motion made by Marean to approve the General Assistance budget of \$126,690 with a second by Ponzetti. Motion carried 4-0-1.

### **6. 2000 Street Lights**

Discussion: Yarumian related that Gilmore had asked why the increase in the budget. He understands that we receive a bill from CMP, pay the bill or the lights are turned off. Hicks relates that there has been no change in the budget. That the cost for electricity has been fluctuating so he does not want to change the number but rather stay with the trend as set. Marean relates that although the cost for an individual's electricity has decreased the Town pays for the pole rather than the price. Hicks relates that we are on target with the budget.

Ponzetti made a motion to accept the Street Lights budget of \$16,000 with a second by Brooks. Motion carried 4-0-1.

### **7. 2200 Planning Board**

Discussion: Yarumian relates that there is an increase of \$1,400 which is a 7.5% increase. Hicks relates that most of the increase was due to a 4% increase in wages approved by the Select Board. Marean wanted to know what the \$2,357.50 was spent for on line 0010. Hicks stated that he thought it was for the new map that was approved and is hanging in the Code Office.

Motion made by Marean to approve the Planning Board budget of \$18,300 with a second by Brooks. Motion carried 4-0-1.



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### **8. 2205 Finance Committee**

Discussion: Yarumian relates that it is the biggest increase for the smallest budget. Hicks explained that he increased the number of meetings by 2 meetings so that if the Select Board needed to obtain additional funding for an emergency that the money was already there.

Motion by Brooks to approve the Finance Committee budget of \$1,810 with a second by Marean. Motion carried 4-0-1.

### **9. 2210 Appeals Board**

Discussion: Yarumian relates that the budget has remained the same and if individuals do not start appealing everything it should be all right.

Motion by Brooks to approve the budget of \$1,500 for the Appeals Board with a second by Ponzetti. Motion carried 4-0-1.

### **10. 2298 Veteran's- US Flags**

Discussion: Yarumian noted that it has been the same budget for multiple cycles.

Motion by Brooks to approve the budget of \$900 for the Veteran's- US Flags with a second by Ponzetti. Motion carried 4-0-1.

### **11. 2350 Hollis Community Clothing Closet**

Discussion: Marean asked why it was only \$500 if the carry forward was \$6,351 and donations of \$1,047. Hicks stated that it was a protected account and that the \$500 helps to offset some of the shared expenses with the Fire Department for heat and lights. Marean wondered why only \$500.

Motion by Brooks to approve \$500 for the Hollis Community Clothing Closet budget with a second by Marean. Motion carried 4-0-1.

### **12. 2370 Conservation Commission**

Discussion: Yarumian related that he notes that there is some trail maintenance. He feels that they do a really good job. Indian Cellar during the summer is a nice place to walk. He is not sure about during mud season.

Motion by Marean to approve \$600 for the Conservation Commission with a second by Brooks. Motion carried 4-0-1.

### **13. 2400 SRCTV Budget**

Discussion: Hicks notes that the requested budget is 10% of their budget which is what has been done in the past. Yarumian asked what the Franchise Fees for Spectrum have been. Hicks related that so far this year \$21,015 has been received for the first half of the year.

Brooks made a motion to approve the \$20,775 for SRCTV with a second by Ponzetti. Motion carried 4-0-1.



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**Public Comment:** Marean thanked Yarumian for his leadership and willingness to head the committee.

**Schedule for Next Meeting:** Ponzetti scheduled the next meeting for the 13th of February 2024 at 6:00 PM to review the following budgets:

- a. 0100 Administration
- b. 0103 Treasurer
- c. 0104 Town Clerk
- d. 0105 Elections
- e. 0106 Tax Collector
- f. 0107 Assessor
- g. 0300 Fire Department
- h. 0400 Operations and Maintenance
- i. 0500 Snow
- j. 0600 Highway
- k. 0601 Paving

**Additional Discussions:**

Ponzetti asked about the sheet that he had received with numbers over the years for both the General Fund and TIF. Hoffman reviewed that this was information that he had requested showing how much money was in both the General Fund and TIF. Hicks reviewed that he had talked to the auditor today and been told that in the General Fund we have \$5,772,770 and in TIF we currently have \$6,776,447. He reminded that this was for FY22/23 and that both accounts had items that were coming out including a new Ambulance the end of August which cost about \$450,000.

Ponzetti wanted to make sure that the money was in a high interest account, accounts that were insured, and were secure. Brooks related that the money was in a SWEEP account. Hicks unsure about details but will check into that.

Ponzetti inquired about the New Town Hall building funding. Hoffman related that an application for \$2,000,000 in Congressional Grants had been approved by the Appropriations Committee, passed by the Senate and had been sitting in the House of Representatives since the summer. When checked on any progress, Senator's Collins staff was hopeful that we would know by mid-March. Concern has been expressed that the bill will just die and not move forward. Hoffman related that Dave McCubrey had been instrumental in working with the Maine Legislature to get approval to use up to 50% of the TIF fund toward a New Town Hall



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which could not be done previously. That about \$500,000 was in an APRA account set aside for a New Town Hall as well as money that from sale of Town property.

Hoffman related that we are supposed to have an estimate of the cost around the 17th of February from Great Falls. The Select Board would then have a discussion of when and how to proceed to get Town approval of funding of the project.

4. Adjournment: Motion made by Marean and seconded by Ponzetti to adjourn. All were in favor. Meeting adjourned at 7:00 PM.

Minutes submitted by Mary Hoffman  
Minutes approved at 02/13/2024 FC meeting