

Joint Budget Subcommittee

April 12, 2021

MINUTES

**Comprised of Members of the:
Town Council, School Committee & Finance Committee**

Members Present:

Town Council: Tom Mercer, Matt Kelly, Melanie Hamblen (ZOOM)

Finance Committee: George Conley, Susan Dewsnap (ZOOM), Nichole Corbsiero (ZOOM)

School Committee: Anne Bergen, Denise Spencer, Jen D'Angelo (ZOOM), Timothy Keenan (ZOOM)

Staff in Attendance:

Jamie Hellen - Town Administrator, Chrissy Whelton - Assistant to the Town Administrator, Sara Ahern - Superintendent of Schools, Christopher Sandini - Finance Director, Miriam Goodman - School Business Administrator, Kerri Bertone - Treasurer/Collector, Alecia Alleyne - Administrative Assistant

Meeting was called to order at 5:31 PM by Councilor Kelly.

Jamie Hellen opened the meeting by identifying the members present from the school and finance committees and opened the floor to any questions pertaining to the FY22 budget.

The Town has been allocated approximately \$3.62 million in federal ARPA funds. The Town has yet to receive any funds relative to the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and does not anticipate any funds until May 2021. The federal money can be spent through FY26, none of the federal monies will be incorporated into the FY22 budget because these grants are in a revenue account and legally have to be kept off budget. This money is more restrictive than the CARES money but it will go beyond COVID related costs and should be able to be used for infrastructure, water sewer, roads etc. and cannot be used to assist pension funds.

The town will use the 10 year new growth average as our new growth estimate which this year will be \$1.19 million dollars so that will be a bump up from the original FY22 proposal. The recommended budget does not include the use of any stabilization funds which was positively received by all in attendance. The town is working on a stabilization account financial policy to encourage the annual funding of these accounts as best practice for years to come.

The school committee voted to close the Davis Thayer school at the beginning of next year and they are in the process of implementing a transition plan, many staff from the Davis Thayer school have been relocated to other schools within the district. The \$770,000 savings in the school budget (from the closing of Davis Thayer) has been reinvested within the school budget to help address other areas of need. The school hasn't declared Davis Thayer as surplus yet because it is

still being used as a school building, but the school committee will be asked by the superintendent to declare the school as surplus at some point in the future. Once the school is closed by the school committee it will still be part of the school department's facilities and is not given back to the town until it is declared as surplus, the school department must have numbers in its budget to keep the school maintained over the course of the year. Money is held in both school and municipal departments budgets to ensure that the building does not fall into disrepair when unoccupied. They are waiting for years end to declare as surplus because the children, furniture etc have to be moved and relocated.

Councilor Kelly made a MOTION to ADJOURN, this motion was SECONDED by Councilor Hamblen, all members present voted in favor of adjourning the meeting.

Meeting Adjourned at 5:57 PM.