

Milford Budget Advisory Committee
Approved Minutes
December 26, 2019

Present: Karen Mitchell, Chris Pank, Paul Bartolomucci,
Wade Campbell, Bob Courage, George Skuse and
Peg Seward

Absent: Jason Cillo, Claudia Lemaire

Guests: Kevin Stetson (Director of Water Utilities) and Mike Putnam
(Milford Selectman)

Business: Meeting called to order at 6:32 by Chris Pank

Water Utilities

The upcoming year's Water budget is projected to be up 6.7% at \$1,607,007. This includes an increase in PT hours for the billing clerk (17 ½ hrs/week). There are no upcoming warrants for the Water Department. The capital reserve fund was used to fund water main work, water source exploration phase III and the Ford Ranger replacement. How to spend the capital reserve fund is determined by the Water Commissioners and as of 11/30/19 the balance is \$381,406.

There are 3600 water service users (households) in Milford. Last year there was a 25% increase in water rates (approximately \$5.60 per month). It is possible to have two different water meters on a household. One would be for water/sewer and one would be for just water. This would make it possible to use just the water meter to water a home-owners lawn. The meter would be a cost to the user to have installed.

The expenses for 2020 are not matching the reduced expected revenue, therefore there will be less going into the capital reserve fund this coming year. To make up for this shortfall, the Water Commissioners will be putting in \$222 instead of \$240k.

For years, Milford has been searching for other water sources and it is not going well. We are using more from Pennichuck Water Works than ever before. People who are supplied by Pennichuck pay them directly. All of Milford's wells are located in Amherst.

Wastewater

The upcoming year's budget for Wastewater is down 6% from last year at \$2,024,735. This includes an increase in PT hours for the billing clerk (the other half of the PT position mentioned above in the Water Department). There will be a warrant this year for the WWTF Auto Improvement and Collection System Capacity Management Operation and Maintenance (CMOM). It will be a bond for \$218,305. There are no capital reserve projects this upcoming year and the balance of the capital reserve fund as of 11/30/10 is \$196,487. The capital reserve fund contribution is down this year from \$240k to \$120k.

The CMOM warrant includes SCADA PLC improvements, Aeration basin return and Plant Aux. Equipment motor replacement (for the control center). This needs to have a 60% voting approval to pass.

CIP – Peg

The final CIP will next be presented to the Planning Board and then to the BOS. The top two CIP articles (sidewalks) were removed by the BOS by a 3-2 vote. There will be a petition warrant article for these sidewalks.

Warrant article 9 – Reconstruction of Town Roads (\$400,000 bond)

Discussion around whether or not this warrant should stand as is or whether it should be part of the general operating budget (every year).

\$400,000 in the budget:

Pro's

- Fiscally responsible way of doing business
- No interest charges
- Work completed in that budget year

Con's

- Anything remaining will be lapsing at the end of the year to the General Fund
- Depending on how much it raises the Operating Budget this year, could get voted down in a default budget and then will have nothing appropriated to this line item.

\$400,000 in the Warrant:

Pro's:

- Can only be spent on roads
- Non-lapsing

Con's:

- Could get voted down – and “no means no”
- Not a good way to do road business in Town – should not have to keep asking the voters for large sums of money to fix roads – should be regular operational business in each year's budget.

Bridge Capital Reserve

Looking for clarification of expenses for the next three years – do we really need 75k this year?

The next meeting will be Thursday, January 2, 2020

Budget and Bond Hearing will be January 13, 2020

Deliberative Session is February 1, 2020

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted by, Karen Mitchell, Secretary

