

**TOWN OF ROWLEY
Finance Committee Joint with
Board of Water Commissioners**

**Minutes of Meeting March 21, 2018
Rowley Town Hall**

Finance Committee Members Present: Lawrence White, Chairman, Sharon Emery, Vice Chairman, Peter Censullo, Paul Jalbert and Theresa Coffey, Recording Secretary

Finance Committee Members Absent: Dennis Roy, Jami Snow

Board of Water Commissioners Present: Bernie Cullen, Chairman, Mark Emery, Vice Chairman and John Manning

Others Present: Deborah Eagan, Town Administrator

1. Call to Order

Larry White, Chairman, Finance Committee, called the meeting of the Finance Committee to order at 7:20 pm with a quorum present.

Mark Emery, Chairman, Board of Water Commissioners, called the meeting of the Board of Water Commissioners to order at 7:22 pm.

S. Emery moved to enter into a joint meeting with the Water Board of Commissioners. Jalbert seconded. The vote was taken by roll call:

*Sharon Emery, aye
Larry White, aye
Paul Jalbert, aye
Peter Censullo, aye*

Manning moved to enter into a joint meeting with the Finance Committee. Cullen seconded. The vote was taken by roll call:

*John Manning, aye
Bernie Cullen, aye
Mark Emery, aye*

2. Water Department FY19 Budget – Cullen opened the discussion with an overview of the process to prepare the FY19 budget. He expressed great appreciation to Bob Gray and Rob Swiniarski for their extensive work providing detail for expenses and maintenance costs. Gray and Swiniarski identified areas for reduction and uncovered many inaccuracies and misallocations. Manning stated that with three years of data to work with, they felt they could tighten and restructure the budget.

- Revenue - Discussion took place on the subject of revenue and the uncontrollable weather events that affect revenue through water bans and water conservation efforts. The Water Board decided to treat hydrant rentals as a cost rather than revenue given the current fiscal climate with Triton. M. Emery commented that estimating revenue from new service commitments is unquantifiable as they have no way of knowing how many homes will come online in the year. Cullen stated that the revenue estimate is conservative and they do expect the revenue to be higher than stated.
- Wages and Salary – Commissioners stated their commitment to fill all positions that are posted. They discussed the difficulty recruiting licensed operators and provided an overview of their recruitment strategy. The superintendent's position was not competitive and to date, there have been no applicants. The position has been upgraded to be more competitive. Discussion continued on staffing and overtime issues. They reviewed efforts to cross train employees to be able to work in both the areas of treatment and distribution which will result in on-call cost savings.
- Expenses - Commissioners reviewed many misallocated items and areas that were identified for reduction. Expense items discussed included costs for staff training, telephone service, filters, engineering services, excavating services, and the plan to replace two types of meters to help ensure revenue is not being lost for unbilled water. In response to a question about replacement of water mains, M. Emery explained the potential costs of this project and stated that with the current tax rate, they felt it was too much burden on the town at this time.

M. Emery provided an overview of the articles for the Special Town Meeting and the Annual Town Meeting. He explained that funds for STM Articles #1, 5 and 6 are coming from a previous article for a dehumidification project. Money allocated for this project was not used as a less expensive solution was found.

Cullen reviewed the stabilization fund stating that a large portion of the free cash was from budgeted positions that were not filled. Manning added that with the restructuring of the budget, free cash will be tightened.

Jalbert moved to approve the Water Department FY19 Budget. Censullo seconded. The vote was unanimous in favor.

Manning moved to adjourn the joint meeting of the Water Board of Committee and Finance Committee. Cullen seconded. The vote was taken by roll call:

*John Manning, aye
Bernie Cullen, aye
Mark Emery, aye*

S. Emery moved to adjourn the joint meeting of the Finance Committee and the Water Board of Commissioners. Jalbert seconded. The vote was taken by roll call:

*Sharon Emery, aye
Larry White, aye
Paul Jalbert, aye
Peter Censullo, aye*

3. Adjournment - Board of Water Commissioners - Manning moved to adjourn. Cullen seconded. The vote was unanimous in favor. The meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm.

4. Next Meeting – The next Finance Committee meeting was set for March 27, 2018 at 7:15 pm.

5. Adjournment – S. Emery moved to adjourn. Jalbert seconded. The vote was unanimous in favor. The meeting adjourned at 9:11 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Theresa Coffey
Recording Secretary

Documents used at or for the meeting:

Agenda, March 21, 2018
Water Department FY19 Budget