



Finance Committee

Meeting Date: October 13, 2021

Present: Chairman Dowd, Vice Chairman Conley, Clerk Corbosiero, Riley, Hansen, Keophannga

1. **Call to Order:** 6:34 PM
2. **Election of Officers:** Chair, Vice-Chair, Clerk – **Passed 6-0**
3. **Public Comments - None**
4. **Approval of Minutes 6/16/21 – Passed 6-0**
5. **Senior and Veterans Tax Workoff Programs:**
 - a. Resolution 21-59 – Amending the senior citizen property tax work-off abatement program
 - i. \$14.25/hour (minimum wage) – 100 hours max.
 - ii. Effective calendar year 2022
 - iii. Passed 6-0
 - b. Resolution 21-60 – Amending the Veteran's property tax work-off abatement program
 - i. \$14.25/hour (minimum wage) – 100 hours max.
 - ii. Effective calendar year 2022
 - iii. Passed 6-0
6. **Human Resources Department and Employee Benefits Presentation (Karen Bratt, Human Resources Director)**
 - a. Health Insurance – schools cover their health insurance costs within their budget however retirees are included in the benefits budget
 - b. OPEB
 - c. Worker's Compensation
 - i. Non-Public Safety - worker's compensation
 - ii. Public Safety – covered by chapter 111F – town pays full salary not taxed
 - d. Medicare Tax – 1.45% of employee wages
 - e. Unemployment – covers both town and schools; capped at \$974 per week for up to 30 weeks
 - f. Compensation Reserve – used for unexpected salary expenses
 - g. HR Accomplishments
 - i. Implemented minimum wage standards
 - ii. MA Equal Pay Act – audited wages to ensure equal pay
 - iii. Collective Bargaining Agreements
 - iv. Redrafted employee manual
 - v. Redrafted HR bylaws
 - vi. Switched from Tufts Health Plan to Harvard Pilgrim
 - vii. Significant reorganizations in Police, Fire, and DPW
 - h. Strategic Initiatives
 - i. Compensation study
 - ii. Remote work policy
 - iii. Collective bargaining
 - iv. HR Application Software – have applied for a grant
 - v. Succession planning for the future
7. **American Rescue Plan Act Update**
 - a. CARES Act - \$2.92M – account is mostly used up and expires EOY 2021.

- b. FEMA – current reimbursement amount is approx. \$600K – not received to date – expected to take some time
- c. Franklin Public Schools have their own infusion of federal funds
- d. ARPA – signed in March of 2021 – approx. \$10.2M of additional federal money
 - i. Already received \$1.78M; expected \$1.78M in June of 2022
 - ii. County allocations (\$3.3M anticipated Oct/Nov 2021)
 - iii. Funds expire 12/31/2024
 - iv. Allocation #1 – will be saved in the short term for unanticipated costs related to uncertainties around Covid – no other resources in the town budget right now

8. Future Agenda Items

- a. Public Works – Road Improvement Program/Recycling
- b. Facilities
- c. Contracts
- d. Community Preservation

9. Adjourn – 8:36 p.m.