

Approved: 01/21/16

**Amherst Finance Committee Minutes
Thursday, January 14, 2016, 4 PM
Town Room, Town Hall**

ATTENDANCE: Kay Moran (Chair), Marylou Theilman (Vice Chair), Tim Neale, Janice Ratner, Anurag Sharma. Absent: Steve Braun, Bernie Kubiak.

SELECT BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Alisa Brewer (Chair), Douglas Slaughter, Andrew Steinberg, James Wald. Absent: Connie Kruger.

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

David Ziomek, Interim Town Manager; Sandy Pooler, Finance Director; Deborah Radway, Human Resources Director; Sonia Aldrich, Comptroller; Claire McGinnis, Treasurer/Collector; Geoff Kravitz, Economic Development Director; Amherst Media.

Joint Meeting of the Finance Committee and Select Board was called to order at 4:02 pm.

AGENDA AND DISCUSSION

1. Joint meeting of the Select Board and Finance Committee with the Town Manager and Finance Director to hear an overview of the FY17 Municipal Budget Proposal, with questions from board members and answers.

Presentation, Questions and Discussion of Town Manager's budget

Ziomek presented the Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2017 which is dedicated to the memory of John P. Musante. FY17 is a year of transition and this budget sustains core services without the use of reserves. Ziomek pointed out the items mentioned in his transmittal letter.

Steinberg thanked Ziomek for stepping up when needed after the death of Town Manager Musante. Steinberg also hoped that the community service officer position, which is currently grant-funded, would be continued. It has affected the relationship between students and their neighbors in a positive way. Brewer asked about the need for additional funding to complete the current sewer expansion project. About \$3 million will be needed but will not show up as sewer debt until FY18. Sharma questioned the need for a 10 cent raise in water rates. This increase is requested to maintain sufficient fund balances to cover future operating and capital needs when there are revenue changes mostly due to reduced usage caused by weather. Moran pointed out that this is the fifth year with no rate increase for municipal health insurance.

The Finance Committee will begin examining the budgets at its next meeting, January 21.

The meeting adjourned at 4:45 pm.

Janice Ratner, acting clerk

Documents used:

Town of Amherst Proposed Budget Fiscal Year 2017