

MINUTES OF THE WARRANT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

June 2, 2020 – 7:00 PM

**Salisbury Town Hall, 5 Beach Road, Salisbury, MA 01952
Colchester Auditorium**

Present: John Moak, Chairman; Ronald Guilmette, Tom Pease, Susan Bartlett, Tom Treat
Also present: Town Manager Neil Harrington and Finance Director Karen Snow

1. Call to Order

Chairman Moak called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM

2. Discussion of FY2020 and FY2021 Budgets

Chairman Moak asked the Town Manager and Finance Director to talk about the current status of revenues and expenses for the FY20 and what things look like for FY21. Mr. Harrington said there was concern, with the Covid situation, about State aid and uncertainty about how well local property tax revenues, local meals taxes, etc. will come in. He said it was likely that the Town will be looking to adopt a tentative budget at Town Meeting, with a final budget to be adopted by the Fall. He said that the tentative budget is balanced, but there are revenue uncertainties.

Ms. Snow provided the Committee with an update on FY20 revenues. The good news is that property taxes are still coming in at a good rate, even though the property tax deadline was extended until June 1. Motor vehicle excise revenue is also coming in strong. The retail marijuana revenues were doing fine until the pandemic, when ATG was closed for about two months, so 4th quarter revenue will be less than expected. Penalties and interest on taxes were waived, so these revenues may be lower than budgeted. She expected that all extraordinary expenses related to Covid will be reimbursed by funding by the federal CARES Act.

In terms of the FY2021 budget, the Manager said he did not anticipate having to adopt a 1/12 budget, although many communities and the State may do so. The Finance Director has used conservative revenue estimates for the next fiscal year, and the Manager noted that the budget is currently expected to increase by about \$1.3 million, of which \$911,000 is an increase in the Town's assessment to Triton. All new salary increases related to newly-negotiated collective bargaining contracts are included in the budget.

3. Review Warrant Articles for Special and Annual Town Meeting

Before reviewing the proposed warrant articles, Mr. Pease asked the Finance Director about the status of Free Cash. She informed the Board that the balance is about \$671,000 and that the warrant articles are seeking a total of \$370,000, leaving a total of about \$301,000 in Free Cash. Chairman Moak then read through each of the proposed warrant articles for the Special Town Meeting and the Annual Town Meeting and asked the Town Manager to give a brief summary of each article. There was some discussion and questions about Article 5, which proposes to seek a \$5.2 million bond authorization for the construction of a new visitors' center and public restroom at the beach center.

4. Schedule Upcoming Meeting and Public Hearing

Chairman Moak suggested that the next meeting, which would include a public hearing on the warrant articles, be held on Tuesday, June 9. The meeting would be held remotely and SCTV will televise the meeting, with a Zoom link being made available to the public.

5. Adjournment

Ms. Bartlett moved that the meeting be adjourned at 9:30 PM. Mr. Guilmette seconded the motion, and it was adopted unanimously.

Respectfully submitted:

Neil J. Harrington, Town Manager