

Town of Washington
Board of Finance
December 20, 2021

Present: Members: Craig Schoon, Michael Jackson, Sally Cornell, Matt Cain, Ted Bent

Alternates: Liz Fenton, Phyllis Allen

Selectmen: Jim Brinton, Jay Hubelbank, Dean Sarjeant

Treasurer: Linda McGarr

Guest: Michelle Gorra, David Varnish, Rev. Dr. Robyn Gray, Joan Lodsins, Rebecca Rebillard, Erica Ryland, Andrew Carron, Stephen Taylor

Press: Linda Zukauskas, Voices

Interim Chairman, Craig Schoon called the meeting to order at 5:00p.m.

Minutes: A motion to approve the minutes of November 15, 2021 by Ted Bent, seconded by Sally Cornell and unanimously approved.

Tax Collector Report: No Comments. A motion to approve Tax Collectors report by Ted Bent, seconded by Craig Schoon, and unanimously approved

Treasurer's Report: The Ambulance Building Fund is an accumulated fund and more funds have been received since the report. The After-School Fund is fund that is mostly a wash account. The parents pay tuition and the staff is paid from that fund. This fund has nothing to do with the proposed Child Care. A motion to approve Tax Collectors report by Ted Bent, seconded by Phyllis Allen, and unanimously approved

Selectman: James Brinton, First Selectmen

- Bridges:
 - Calhoun, Rabbit Hill and Whittlesey will be done in 2022.
 - Tunnel Road bridge will be done in 2022 -2023 year due to the costs.
- It will be a tricky budget season due to the increases of expenses i.e. fuel, medic program, etc.
- Washington Ambulance Building Fund pledges are just about 30-40 thousand dollars short of the million-dollar purchase price of the building. More fundraising is still going on. A small group has been targeted so the annual fund of the Ambulance is not affected. The annual cost is estimated about \$30,000 which will be in the general fund budget next year. There is not an estimate for the renovations yet. A local architect has done the work pro bona. Because it is a wide-open floor plan it should cut down with the cost. The building is 6,600 square feet. Hopefully they will be in by summer but that may be a little aggressive of a timeline.

Financial Reports: Comments:

- The Land Use Enforcer line item will be over budget due to having to pay the unemployment on the previous enforcer. We are self-insured for unemployment.
- The cost of the monthly fee for emergency towers that we pay Frontier is over what was budgeted. It has double what was estimated to be the monthly fee.

- Many items are under.
- Taxes are over from last year at this time.
- Transfer Station will come under budget. The cost of recycling has come way down from last year. The transfer station is handled inhouse now so no longer have a contract which has saved money.
- Net income is about 286,000 over last year at this time.

Education: Jay Hubelbank reported that The Agri – Science project is to be closed soon. The program has been doing great. Regional School District #12 Financial Review was sent out. There were no comments.

Old Business: None

New Business:

- Michelle Gorra spoke about the Daycare proposal which the Economic Development Committee has been working on. It started with the “NOW “Committee which is the subcommittee of the Economic Development Committee working on having young families come to Washington.
 - The superintendent of Region #12, Megan Bennett, would like to move central office up to Shepaug so that would leave that facility open. Because of it being next to the primary school the thought is that that would be a perfect spot for a daycare.
 - The current after school program would not be part of this child care program.
 - The program would be for infant/ Toddler and preschool and summer programs.
 - The committee visited Child Care centers in Sharon, Cornwall and Salisbury. These towns are all financially supported by their towns.
 - A survey was sent to Reg # 12 families. It shows a need.
 - The initial investigation into seeing if the Child care is feasible in that building was paid by \$2,000 from a Grant and \$1,500 from the Economic Development budget.
 - The next step is the need for funds for the schematic design and design development to see if it is feasible. Need to understand what the cost of the project would be in order to understand if the project feasible. The funds requested is \$8,400.00.
 - The \$8,400 is fixed price to get design to get the cost from the builders. This will be a design that can be sent out to bid.
 - Vokota, the Design Company, is using a Construction management company to come up with estimates.
 - Not sure at this time is children/ families will be from all of Reg#12 or just Washington.
 - At this time the second floor of the building is not being looked at, just the first for the child care.
 - This is strictly to see if it is feasible. To go any further there will have to be a town meeting.
 - A concern was stated by Erica Ryland about the survey with the wordage of “affordable Child care” she feels it does not give a valid survey. Per Michelle child care is not a money-making business that is why the state does give subsidies. Maybe “comparable” would have been a better word. The thought was to be comparable to other daycares not those that a more like schools.
 - A request was asked if more concrete number of children, but Michelle said that would be hard at this stage. The survey states that there would be a need. A meeting would be good to get that information out there.

- Infant/ Toddler is 4 children per adult and preschool is 10 per adult. Maximum number of children is set by square footage.
- Not sure if there are any private daycares in town.
- Rumsey is going to be opening a pre-school.
- Pre-school in the Primary School is only part-time.

A Motion was made to approve the funds of \$8,400 for the schematic design and design development by Ted Bent, seconded by Matt Cain, and unanimously approved

A Motion to approve the 2022 Meeting calendar by Ted Bent, seconded by Craig Schoon, and unanimously approved.

A motion to adjourn at 5:55 by Craig Schoon and unanimously approved.

Next Board Meeting: January 24, 2022 at 5:00.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Kennedy Gomez
Finance Director