

## FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

**Thursday May 30, 2019 – 4:00 PM – Richmond Town Hall, 1529 State Road**

**PRESENT:** Mr. Mark Pruhenski, Town Administrator; Mr. Bob Gniadek, Chair of the Finance Committee; Ms. Patricia Callahan, Finance Committee; Mr. Bob Youdelman, Finance Cte.; Mr. John Mason, Finance Cte.; Mr. Stevan Patterson, Finance Cte.

**ABSENT:**

**GUESTS:** Mr. Paul Lisi, Town Treasurer/Collector

**Annual Re-Organization:** Mr. Gniadek called the meeting to order at 4:02 PM and called for nominations for the Chairmanship of the Finance Cte. Ms. Pat Callahan nominated Mr. Bob Gniadek, who accepted the nomination. A vote was taken that approved the nomination by unanimous approval.

**Minutes of March 20, 2019 and April 3, 2019:** The minutes were distributed to the Committee members for review. A motion to approve the minutes as read was seconded by Ms. Callahan and adopted by unanimous consent.

**Reserve Fund Transfers – End of Fiscal Year:** Mr. Pruhenski noted that there was one Reserve Fund Transfer Proposal before the Board in the amount of \$18,300 which represents the balance in the Reserve Account at this time. The request is that the full amount be transferred to Line Item 015151, which is Town Counsel. The Town Counsel line item is currently overdrawn by \$13,902. The amount being requested will be used for balancing the account and funding the remaining fiscal year bills. Following Mr. Pruhenski's reading of his formal statement of why the fund is overdrawn, Mr. Paul Lisi clarified that legal fees incurred during real estate takings are actually added to the taxes, interest and penalties due. He went on to explain how the new more aggressive collection of taxes will be creating more revenue.

A question was raised about the Town-owned properties that should be sold and Mr. Lisi outlined the process that will be used.

In response to a question as to whether there were any other accounts in danger of being overdrawn, Mr. Lisi explained that those will be addressed at a meeting of the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee legally required to occur prior to July 15<sup>th</sup>, when they will be adjusted through end-of-year transfers among accounts. Mr. Lisi did not anticipate that the total budget amount for the year would be exceeded.

A motion was made that the Reserve Fund Transfer of \$18,300 to line item 015151 be approved. The motion was seconded and adopted by unanimous consent.

Mr. Lisi advised the Finance Committee members that he will be requesting their presence at a joint meeting with the Board of Selectmen sometime in June so that the end-of-year transfers of unspent funds among accounts can be done with the approval of the Board of Selectmen, in

concurrence with the Finance Committee members as soon as the quarter-end results are available, which is what the Statute requires. Mr. Gniadek noted that he felt it is good practice to do that and he asked Mr. Lisi to arrange for complete quarterly financial reports to be sent to the Finance Committee members as soon as the quarter-end results are available.

**Unanticipated Items:** Mr. Gniadek reported that he had been contacted by a Richmond property taxpayer expressing some dissatisfaction with the new process of quarterly tax payments without a quarterly bill being sent out. The taxpayer missed paying on time for the first time in forty years because of the new system and felt that it was not an appropriate process. Mr. Lisi addressed the issue by explaining how the new system was implemented. He noted that 88% of taxpayers returned their payments on time, indicating that the explanation sent along with the new bills was clear. He also noted that several late payments arrived with an explanation that they did not read the letter. He noted that in the case of any interest of less than \$15.00, he waived that payment. Interest incurred in excess of \$15.00 cannot be waived.

A second notice was sent by email, which would have reached only those with access to email. Mr. Lisi outlined his plans for extensive notifications prior to the next tax bills being sent by blast email news and hard copy in all public notice posting locations. There was a discussion that followed exploring ways to be sure that the residents of Richmond would have reminders sent to them in various ways to avoid late payments.

Prior to a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded and passed by unanimous vote, Mr. Mark Pruhenski was recognized and thanked for his service to the Town.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 PM

Signed:

Mr. Robert Gniadek

Chair – Finance Committee