

**MINUTES OF THE SELECTMEN'S MEETING
MARCH 25, 2020
REMOTE MEETING HOSTED BY PACTV ON ZOOM PLATFORM**

PRESENT: In Studio: Willard J. Boulter, Jr. (Chairman), Michael Buckley (Town Manager)
Video: John G. Brown, Jr. (Clerk), Jessica M. Rushing (Selectman), Daniel W. Trabucco (Selectman), Steve Dodge (Moderator), Sabrina Chilcott (Assistant Town Manager)
Audio: Arthur P. Boyle, Jr. (Vice-Chairman), Edwin J. Thorne (Town Manager)

At 2:00 pm Mr. Boulter opened the meeting and advised that, pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §20, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, this public hearing of the Pembroke Board of Selectmen is being conducted via remote participation. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but the public can view this meeting while in progress. PACTV is providing this service live on Comcast Government Access channel 15, and for those without cable, on their PRIME streaming channel by visiting www.pactv.org/live. Members of the public attending this meeting virtually will be allowed to make comments if they wish to do so, during the portion of the hearing designated for public comment, by emailing selectmen@townofpembroke.com or calling 781-709-1402. All votes taken during this meeting will be roll call votes.

3:00 TOWN ACCOUNTANT MICHAEL BUCKLEY: FY21 BUDGET UPDATE

Mr. Buckley advised that town meeting is likely to be pushed back; he displayed a flow of information through the organizational chart. Anticipating the transition, the Finance Team put together a timeline of tasks they wanted to accomplish, culminating in the Town Manager's budget presentation given February 4th. A few changes such as the Police contract have affected the data and revenue estimates have been locked in. In the budgeting process, the primary goal is to maintain essential services. The town must meet the debt obligations, secure employee agreements and adequately fund the snow and ice budget. This year we spent twice as much as was budgeted. The town's current AA Stable bond rating must be maintained in accordance with Standard and Poor's requirements by maintaining sufficient reserves, a strong debt and liquidity profile, fund long term pension and health care obligations and develop budgetary flexibility. Mr. Buckley provided detail on the town's performance versus measurements used to evaluate fiscal reserve policies, displaying areas where the town meets or is planning to meet targets as well as areas where the town is short of target. The town needs to plan for and fund capital projects and improvements, both short term and long term. Mr. Buckley broke down the budgeting process down in steps, beginning with the components that form the revenue summary. Revenue components include revenue derived from the tax levy (66%), state aid (24%), local receipts (8%) and available funds (3%). State aid has been declining at a rate at an increasing rate; in FY15 it represented 27.32% and FY21 is anticipated at 21.43%, not keeping pace with other funding sources and is a shrinking revenue source. Details were provided. Mr. Buckley showed the decline in Free Cash from FY15 to FY19 from \$2,274,830 to \$1,087,749, mirroring the decline in state aid. Once the revenue projections are nailed down, the Town Manager requests budget proposals from Department Heads, providing them with budget development and submission instructions, including no increases while maintaining the same level of services. Details were provided on the expenditures submitted by general government, public safety, public schools, health and human services, culture and recreation, and more. Out of district special education placement costs represent a very large increase; schools represent 51.79% of gross budget share, benefits and insurance represent a 20.64% gross budget share and public safety

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represents 11.79% with remaining expenditure centers representing less than 4% each. Mr. Buckley provided break out explanations of each expenditure center. Mr. Buckley presented net budget share data with shared costs factored in. With one town meeting per year, the town should earmark free cash to fund snow and ice expenses annually. Mr. Buckley explained that most departments are standing in place, treading water with no or limited growth funding, with the School Department actually taking a step back. Mr. Buckley advised that the increases in benefits and insurance are related to increased public safety personnel brought on two years ago, now captured in the increased assessment. Other mandatory expenditures include mandated allowances for abatements and exemptions, Plymouth County Tax, State Assessments and collective bargaining contingencies. Mr. Buckley addressed the detailed components of the Water and Solid Waste Enterprise Funds and discussed the town's long-term obligations and Capital Budget. Mr. Buckley advised that the town is facing certain risks including the decline of delivered services, lack of departmental cooperation, state aid reductions, decline in local and revenue and increased pandemic costs. Mr. Buckley advised that enough data isn't available yet on these factors to make a more developed projection. He concluded by stressing the importance of the departmental transfers and other items in the special warrant for town meeting. Mr. Boulter inquired about CPC funding contributions. Mr. Buckley explained that CPC was a type of override charged to residents beyond the two- and one-half percent, and any ballot-voted reduction to that tax would decrease tax bills, not go into the general fund. Ms. Rushing inquired about the abatement and exemption allowance included in mandatory expenditures. Mr. Buckley stated that money apportioned for this line that isn't distributed becomes a surplus in the overlay in the Assessor's office available to the town on request the next year; for FY21 it was approximately \$60,000. Ms. Rushing requested clarification on the FY20 deficit in the School Department and the portion that would be funded using Stabilization funds.

Mr. Boulter advised that items listed for board action pertaining to the warrant articles will be postponed. Mr. Boulter asked Mr. Dodge his thoughts regarding the scheduling of town meeting. Mr. Dodge stated that the uncertainty resulting from current circumstances make it difficult to reschedule or knowing what flexibility the Board has until the pending legislation passes. Mr. Dodge stated that it would be better to postpone as few times as possible while giving residents plenty of time and notice. Mr. Brown asked if the local election would also be rescheduled, Mr. Boulter stated that is a topic for a future meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Brown updated the Board on welcome signage at exit twelve; there are factors affecting the funding but the actual signs on route three won't change until 2025. Mr. Boulter advised that departmental phone numbers and email addresses are posted on the town website for anyone who needs to contact the town. PEMA is run by the Police Chief, Fire Chief and the Health Agent and they are open and accessible. PACTV is hosting PEMA forums regarding COVID-19 on Tuesdays and Tuesdays at 9:00 am on channel 15 and on their livestream and there is a landing page on the town website for COVID-19 with related information. Mr. Trabucco stated that the subcommittee negotiating the new town manager's contract will conference on Friday and requested an executive session be posted for the Board next Tuesday.

At 3:15 pm, Mr. Boyle moved to adjourn; Mr. Trabucco seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor by roll call vote.

MATERIALS & EXHIBITS

PowerPoint FY21 Budget Presentation (Accountant/BOS/TM Office)