



Topsfield Finance Committee

Minutes to the Meetings February 22, 2016

I. Call to Order: Chairman Karen Dow called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM with Che Elwell, Jon Guido, Eric Menzer (left at 7:59 PM to attend selectman meeting, returned at 9:18 PM), Lou Ross, and Dana Warren present. Mike Hartmann was absent. Also present: Fire Chief Ronald Giovannacci (arrived 7:13 PM and left at 7:59 PM), Police Chief Evan Haglund, (arrived 7:44 PM and left at 8:26 PM), Kellie Hebert, Town Administrator (left at 7:27 PM), Catherine Gabriel-Heusser, Town Accountant, Bill Hodges, Masconomet School Committee (arrived 8:26 PM and left at 8:53 PM), Superintendent Greg Krom, Topsfield Water Department (left at 7:27 PM), Martha Morrison, Selectman (left at 7:27 PM), and Steve Whelan, Town Moderator (left at 8:17 PM).

II. Minutes: Dana Warren made a motion to accept the minutes from February 1, 2016. Lou Ross seconded the motion, voted in favor 5-0-1. Eric Menzer abstained as he was not present for the meeting.

III. Department Head Budget Presentations:

- A. Water: (7:03-7:27PM)-** Karen Dow introduced Superintendent Greg Krom to the committee. Greg discussed the new water treatment plant project. They hired a designer in the last year. They have just finished conducting pilot testing and the findings have been submitted to the MASSDEP, who has 60 days to review. Greg will know more once they get a response from MASSDEP. Construction funding for the project would be sought at the 2017 ATM with an estimated total cost of \$8 million dollars (including design). Greg also discussed resident water main meters. Meters were expected to last 10 years, however testing has shown that is not the case and they will need to be replaced sooner. The FY2017 budget factors in an increase to start replacing meters.
- B. Fire: (7:28-7:59)-** Karen Dow introduced Fire Chief Ronald Giovannacci to the committee. The FY2017 Budget is within guidelines. Chief Giovannacci is anticipating his retirement in the next 6-7 months. He also noted that one other firefighter will likely be retiring in the next year. A discussion was held about the 24/7 Fire Study Committee report. The report is now being discussed with the Board of Selectman.

- C. Police:** (8:00-8:26)- Karen Dow introduced Police Chief Evan Haglund to the committee. The Chief passed out the FY2017 budget and reviewed, noting the contractual wage increases. He also pointed out that the executive assistant is now hourly, and the position has been increased from 36 hours to 40 hours a week. He would like to increase the clerk's hours from 6 to 12 hours per week.
- D. Masco:** (8:27-8:53)- Bill Hodges, Masconomet School Committee, briefly reviewed the Masconomet budget process with the Finance Committee. Bill noted a 3.35% increase in the draft operating budget. That would result in a 1.5% increase for Topsfield. Bill also noted that student population is down overall. The Masco School Committee will continue with their budget process and will meet with the Finance Committee again.

IV. Updates on FinCom Liaison Department Budget Reviews: Continued discussion of Budgets, noting any deviations from guidelines. The Following departments will be scheduled for **February 29th, 2016** (times have not yet been determined):

- A. Elementary schools
- B. Library

V. Reserve Fund Transfer: Lou Ross noted a place holder for a possible future reserve fund transfer request from the Highway Department for a sanding truck that was totaled in an accident during a recent snow storm. He will know more at the next meeting.

VI. Upcoming Meeting Schedule: The next meetings of the Committee will be held on February 29th, March 7th and March 14th respectively, at 7:00 PM in the Proctor School Teacher's Lounge. Karen Dow will be absent from the March 7th meeting. Che Elwell will be absent from the March 14th meeting.

VII. Adjourn: A motion was made by Dana Warren to adjourn at 9:23 PM, seconded by Che Elwell and voted in favor 6-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Davis

Attachments: The Beacon, Topsfield Police Department Budget, and Masco FY2016-17 Proposed Budget.