



## Topsfield Finance Committee

### Minutes to the Meetings February 29, 2016

**I. Call to Order:** Chairman Karen Dow called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM with Che Elwell, Mike Hartmann, Eric Menzer, Lou Ross, and Dana Warren present. Jon Guido was absent. Also present: Kellie Hebert, Town Administrator (arrived at 7:06 PM), Catherine Gabriel-Heusser, Town Accountant, Laura Zalewski, Library Director and Judith Lais, Library Trustee (both left at 7:11 PM), Katherine Carlson, Topsfield School Committee (left at 8:32 PM), Steve Greenberg, Assistant Superintendent of Operations (TriTown School Union) (left at 8:32 PM), Gregg Lindsay, Topsfield School Committee (left at 8:32 PM), and Gordon Spater, Topsfield School Committee (left at 8:32 PM).

**II. Minutes:** Lou Ross made a motion to accept the minutes from February 22, 2016. Che Elwell seconded the motion, voted in favor 5-0-1. Mike Hartmann abstained as he was not present for the meeting.

### **III. Department Head Budget Presentations:**

**A. Library: (7:03 PM-7:11 PM)-** Dana Warren introduced Laura Zalewski, Library Director and Judith Lais, Library Trustee to the committee. The budget is within guidelines. Laura and the committee briefly discussed the future of part-time positions at the library, noting it has become more and more difficult to keep qualified part-time library assistants. The constant turnover has made it difficult for senior staff to focus on improving library service as they have to devote significant time to interviewing and training new people. In the future Laura and Judith would like to see the return of a 32-hour/week position, which had been split into two 16-hour/week positions to accommodate an employee several years ago. This would have a budgetary impact in the Insurance section of the Town budget, rather than the Library budget.

**B. Elementary Schools: (7:19 PM-8:36 PM)-** Karen Dow introduced Katherine Carlson, Steve Greenberg, Gregg Lindsay, and Gordon Spater to the committee. Steve Greenberg presented the current status of the Topsfield Elementary Schools budget development process. Steve also gave an overview of the FY17 budget to the committee. The budget is currently 6.15% or \$441k over the FinCom guideline, which takes into account extraordinary special

education costs. The elementary school committee will continue deliberations on budget adjustments to attempt to get closer to the guideline.

**IV. Discussion of Capital Items:** A discussion on Capital Items was held among the committee and Kellie Hebert, Town Administrator.

**V. Preliminary List of Warrant Articles:** A discussion on the Preliminary List of warrant articles was held among the committee and Kellie Hebert, Town Administrator.

**VI. Department Budget Review & Approval:** Karen Dow requested each liaison review their budget amounts listed on the First Draft of the Article 3 vote tracking sheet and inform her of any discrepancies before the next meeting. That will allow the committee to proceed to vote department budget approvals.

**VII. Upcoming Meeting Schedule:** The next meetings of the Committee will be held on March 7<sup>th</sup>, March 14<sup>th</sup>, March 21<sup>st</sup> and March 28<sup>th</sup> respectively, at 7:00 PM in the Proctor School Teacher's Lounge. Karen Dow will be absent from the March 7<sup>th</sup> meeting. Che Elwell will be absent from the March 14<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**VIII. Adjourn:** A motion was made by Dana Warren to adjourn at 9:05 PM, seconded by Lou Ross and voted in favor 6-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Davis

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Attachments: Library Director memo, Proposed FY2017 Elementary School Budget and Capital overview, FY2017 Capital Plan Overview, Preliminary List of Warrant Articles, Article 3 Vote Tracking Sheet.