



Topsfield Finance Committee
Minutes to the Meetings
Meeting was held remotely via a posted Zoom link
February 14, 2022

Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, this meeting will be conducted via remote means. This means that members of the public body as well as members of the public may access this meeting via virtual means. The meeting may also be accessed remotely via contact provided below. When required by law or allowed by the Chair, persons wishing to provide public comment or otherwise participate in the meeting, may do so by accessing the meeting remotely, as noted above. Additionally, the meeting may be broadcast at a later date via the town YouTube channel and Boxford Cable Television.

I. Call to Order: Chair Che Elwell called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM with Karen Dow, Jon Guido, Karen Duval, Tim O'Malley, Mike Hartmann and David Larson present. Also present: Catherine Gabriel, Town Accountant; Beth Willis, Town Clerk; Chief Jen Collins-Brown, Fire Dept; Bill Hodges, Zillie Bhuju and Melissa Ogden, Masconomet School Committee; Donna Rich, Purchasing Agent; Kevin Harutunian, Town Administrator; Lynne Bermudez, Boyd Jackson and Dick Gandt, Select Board. D. Gandt recorded the meeting. Members of the public present: one. All votes at the meeting were taken by roll call due to the remote nature of the meeting.

II. Review any meeting minutes: 2/7/22 minutes: motion to approve by J. Guido, seconded by D. Larson. Voted in favor by roll call 7-0.

III. Masco discussion:

- K. Duval and J. Guido attended the 2/9/22 Masco budget subcommittee meeting and shared some information shown there.
- State aid is up slightly (about \$30/student). Any benefits from the Student Opportunity Act will only appear 4-5 years from now.
- Administration proposes to keep the number of Middle School teams at 3, as the current lower enrollment in Grades 7-8 is only expected to last another 2 years.
- Excess E&D funds being returned to the three towns.
- Final state reimbursement for the building renovation/addition project is larger than the final payment on the debt. C. Gabriel researching how to treat this.

IV. Select Board/Town Administrator: FY23 budget built carefully, looking for savings and considering needs. Over-guidelines total request a bit smaller than FY21 and FY22. Over-guidelines items:

- 8 hours/week for a digital communications person, including website work. Hired person in FY22 using Professional Services budget. Partial support will come from PEG funds.
- Increased hours for Select Board minutes secretary.
- Planner, to work on master plan, support Planning Board and ZBA including minutes for those boards. Donna Rich currently supports those boards in addition to her role as Purchasing Agent; she's retiring in April.
- \$10k for economic development services: downtown beautification and activities like Holiday on the Green; taking over from the Topsfield Community Partnership.
- \$8.3k for cyber security for the financial areas of Town Hall, through the IT regional partnership.
- \$3.5k for the annual lease on the new plotter for Inspections and Planning; this replaced one that failed recently.

V. Model Update: Deferred to 2/28/22 meeting.

VI. Schedule Department Meetings:

- 2/28: Elementary.

VII. A motion was made by Karen Dow to adjourn at 8:37 PM, seconded by David Larson and voted in favor 7-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Dow

Attachments: none