



Topsfield Finance Committee
Minutes to the Meetings March 28, 2016

I. Call to Order: Chair Karen Dow called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM with Che Elwell, Jon Guido, Mike Hartmann, Eric Menzer, Lou Ross and Dana Warren present. Members of the Board of Selectmen present: Laura Powers, Chairman, Eldon Goodhue, Boyd Jackson, Stephen Lais, and Martha Morrison (All Selectmen left, with the exception of Laura Powers, at 8:37 PM). Members of the Topsfield School Committee present: Gregg Lindsay, Linda Ross, and Gordon Spater (All left at 8:37 PM). Steven Greenberg, Assistant Superintendent of Operations (Tri-Town School Union) (left at 8:37 PM). Also present: Susan Sordello, Executive Assistant, Selectmen's office (left at 8:37 PM); Kellie Hebert, Town Administrator; Catherine Gabriel- Heusser, Town Accountant; Dick Gandt; Jeanine Cunniff; Fire Chief Giovannacci (left at 8:37 PM); and Captain Jen Collins-Brown (left at 8:37 PM).

II. Minutes: Dana Warren made a motion to accept the minutes as amended from March 22, 2016. Che Elwell seconded the motion, voted in favor 7-0-0.

III. Department Budget Review & Approval: Karen has made the adjustments to the model according to the discussion at the last meeting. Also, Catherine compared numbers against Munis and noticed a few amounts that needed to be adjusted, thus decreasing the overage by \$50,000. Karen will update further.

The committee reserves the right to supersede or modify the following Department budget approvals by future vote.

The finance committee reviewed Article III Vote Tracker, dated March 22, 2016, including department budgets that were submitted over the finance committee guidelines or that requested items on their attachment.

Jon Guido recommended positive action on the base budget for Treasurer/Collector Wages, for the amount of \$86,759, seconded by Lou Ross. Voted in favor 7-0. This supersedes the previous vote.

Che Elwell recommended positive action on base budget for Police Salary, for the amount of \$115,315, seconded by Eric Menzer. Voted in favor 7-0. This supersedes the previous vote.

Che Elwell recommended positive action on base budget for Police Wages, for the amount of \$1,269,281, seconded by Lou Ross. Voted in favor 7-0. This supersedes the previous vote.

Lou Ross recommended positive action on base budget for Highway Salary, for the amount of \$96,900, seconded by Dana Warren. Voted in favor 7-0. This supersedes the previous vote.

Che Elwell recommended positive action on base budget for Life, Medical, Medicare Insurance, for the amount of \$2,234,114, seconded by Lou Ross. Voted in favor 7-0. This supersedes the previous vote. Discussion: Che Elwell noted that it is an 11% increase rather than 12.73%. The cost is down \$33,000 from what was initially estimated.

Dana Warren recommended positive action on the Council on Aging Salary increase, for the amount of \$8,053, seconded by Eric Menzer. Voted in favor 7-0. This will increase the Director's hours to 35 hours per week.

Che Elwell recommended positive action on the Police Budget request for additional clerical hours, for the amount of \$7,506, seconded by Mike Hartmann. Voted in favor 7-0. This is a one-year increase.

Jon Guido recommended positive action on the Elementary Schools budget for the amount of \$7,602,224, seconded by Eric Menzer. Voted in favor 7-0. This amount is subject to a \$140,000 proposed override as discussed below.

IV. Joint Meeting with Board of Selectmen 7:30 PM- The Finance Committee Members along with the Board of Selectmen met to discuss the Topsfield Elementary School Budget. Gordon Spater, School Committee chair, discussed the presentation that was handed out. He said the budget is still over guidelines by \$172,939 and that the School Committee feels they can't make any more cuts to the budget without having an impact on the level of services currently provided. They cut \$268,000 out of the budget but noted that three major cost increases have impacted the budget: 1. Loss of Revenue- Special Education tuition (\$110,000); 2. Salaries, increase of 2%; 3. Extraordinary SPED costs (\$180,000). The School Committee is requesting an override of \$175,000. Without the override class size will increase. The Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee members had a discussion as to whether an override is the best option. The Finance Committee feels the budget can be \$33,000 above guidelines without adversely affecting typical levels of operating budgets, contributions to stabilization funds, minimum free cash level and reserve levy capacity. This decreases the potential override to \$140,000. The Board of Selectmen voted in favor of the override, totaling \$140,000.

VI. Town Meeting Warrant Article Assignments: No changes were made to the Town Meeting Warrant Article Assignments listed below.

Annual Town Meeting Warrant	Finance Committee Member
Article	Initials
2	KD
3	MH
4	LR
5	DW
6	DW
7	MH
8	CE
9	KD
10	LR
11	KD
12	MH
13	DW
14	KD
15	CE
16	KD
17	MH
18	MH
19	EM
20	JG
21	JG
22	JG
23	JG
24	CE
25	CE
26	MH
27	LR
28	LR
29	KD
30	KD
31	LR
32	MH
33	MH
34	KD
35	EM
36	KD
37	LR
38	LR
39	KD
40	LR
41	LR
42	LR
43	KD

44	KD
45	KD
Special Town Meeting	Finance Committee Members
Article	Initials
2	KD
3	KD
4	LR
5	LR
6	CE
7	EM

VII. Town Meeting Warrant Article Recommendations: Kellie Hebert, handed out a revised Preliminary Warrant, dated March 28, 2016. She also handed out the Warrant for 2016 Special Town Meeting.

The committee reserved the right to supersede or modify the following actions by future vote.

Annual Town Meeting Warrant Articles pending recommendations from the Committee are third, thirty-second, thirty-third, thirty-fifth, thirty-sixth, thirty-seventh, and fortieth.

In a series of motions, the Finance Committee voted actions on the following Annual Town Meeting Warrant Articles, dated March 28, 2016, as numbered in the attached draft warrant;

By motion of Dana Warren, seconded by Lou Ross, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Reserve Fund, Article Second, voted in favor 7-0. Discussion noted that the sum transferred will be \$100,000.

By motion of Lou Ross, seconded by Dana Warren, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Water Department Operating Budget, Article Fourth, voted in favor 7-0.

By motion of Eric Menzer, seconded by Mike Hartmann, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Memory Tree & Brownie Tree Lighting, Article Seventh, voted 2-4-1, By motion of Dana Warren, seconded by Che Elwell, the Finance Committee recommends no action on Memory Tree & Brownie Tree Lighting, Article Seventh, voted 4-2-1. Discussion noted the pros/cons of having lights in Town during the holidays and using taxpayer funds for those lights.

By motion of Jon Guido, seconded by Dana Warren, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Fund Town Employee Separation Reserve Fund, Article Fourteenth, voted in favor 7-0.

By motion of Dana Warren, seconded by Che Elwell, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Fund Other Post Employment Benefits, Article Fifteenth, voted in favor 7-0.

By motion of Dana Warren, seconded by Lou Ross, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Reserve For Salary/Wages, Article Sixteenth, voted in favor 7-0.

By motion of Jon Guido, seconded by Eric Menzer, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Accounting/HR Software for Tri-Town School Union, Article Twentieth, voted in favor 7-0.

By motion of Dana Warren, seconded by Lou Ross, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Landfill-Field and Infrastructure Maintenance, Article Twenty-first, voted in favor 7-0.

By motion of Lou Ross, seconded by Dana Warren, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Purchase of a 4 Wheel Drive Pick-Up Truck with Plow, Article Twenty-second, voted in favor 7-0.

By motion of Lou Ross, seconded by Mike Hartmann, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Purchase of Highway Brush Tractor, Article Twenty-third, voted in favor 7-0.

By motion of Mike Hartmann, seconded by Dana Warren, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Town Clerk Saturday Office Hours- General Law 41, Section 110A, Article Twenty-seventh, voted in favor 7-0.

By motion of Dana Warren, seconded by Lou Ross, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Aggregation of Electricity- Accept Massachusetts General Law, Article Twenty-ninth, voted in favor 7-0.

By motion of Che Elwell, seconded by Eric Menzer, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Amend Personnel Bylaw, Article Thirty-first, voted in favor 7-0.

By motion of Jon Guido, seconded by Erick Menzer, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Capital Stabilization Fund, Article Thirty-eighth, voted in favor 7-0.

By motion of Eric Menzer, seconded by Dana Warren, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Stabilization Fund, Article Thirty-ninth, voted in favor 7-0. \$25,000 will be transferred from free cash.

In a series of motions, the Finance Committee voted actions on the following Special Town Meeting Warrant Articles, dated March 28, 2016, as numbered in the attached draft warrant;

Special Town Meeting Warrant Articles pending recommendations from the Committee are Articles Second and Third.

By motion of Che Elwell, seconded by Eric Menzer, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Police Cruiser, Article Fourth, voted in favor 7-0.

By motion of Che Elwell, seconded by Dana Warren, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Public Safety Radio Communications Upgrades-Phase II, Article Fifth, voted in favor 7-0.

By motion of Jon Guido, seconded by Eric Menzer, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Automatic Floor Scrubber for Steward Elementary School, Article Sixth, voted in favor 7-0.

By motion of Jon Guido, seconded by Dana Warren, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Cafeteria Tables for Proctor Schools, Article Seventh, voted in favor 7-0.

By motion of Lou Ross, seconded by Dana Warren, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Authorize Insurance Proceeds for Highway Truck Sander, Article Eighth, voted in favor 7-0.

By motion of Lou Ross, seconded by Eric Menzer, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Highway Sander/Plow Truck Replacement, Article Ninth, voted in favor 7-0.

By motion of Eric Menzer, seconded by Dana Warren, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Fire/Rescue/EMS Assessment, Article Tenth, voted in favor 7-0. Discussion: The assessment will address concerns and issues that have been raised and help to decide what the best model is.

By motion of Eric Menzer, seconded by Lou Ross, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Fire Chief Assessment Center, Article Eleventh, voted in favor 7-0.

VIII. Finance Committee Letter: Discussion amongst finance committee members on edits/changes to the letter. Karen Dow will update the letter and forward to members before the next meeting.

IX. Upcoming Meeting Schedule: The next meetings of the Committee will

be held on March 29th, respectively, at 7:00 PM in the Proctor School Teacher's Lounge.

X. Adjourn: A motion was made by Dana Warren to adjourn at 10:01 PM, seconded by Eric Menzer and voted in favor 7-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Davis

Attachments: FY17 Topsfield Elementary Schools override request packet, Article III Vote Tracker, Version 2.4 Recap Sheet, Preliminary List of Warrant Articles, Preliminary Warrant for the 2016 Annual Town Meeting(as of 3/28/16), and Warrant for 2016 Special Town Meeting.