



Topsfield Finance Committee
Minutes to the Meetings
March 6, 2017

I. Call to Order: Vice Chair Jon Guido called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM with Mike Hartmann, Eric Menzer, Lou Ross, and Dana Warren present. Karen Dow and Che Elwell were not present. Also present: Catherine Gabriel, Town Accountant; Martha Morrison, Planning Board; Steven Hall, Planning Board; Stephen Whelan, Town Moderator; Susan Givens, Masco CFO; Kevin Lyons, Masco Superintendent; Bill Hodges, Masco School Committee; Jeanine Cunniff, Planning Board. Residents also present: David Larson, Dick Gandt, Martha Sanders, Peter Dempsey, Betsy Dempsey, Dorothy Merrill, Jennie Merrill, David Merrill, Joanne Harder, Paul Harder, Francee Longmuir, Dan Shugrue, Margaret Cushing, and Tom Warren.

II. Minutes: Dana Warren made a motion to accept the minutes from February 27, 2017. Lou Ross seconded the motion, voted in favor 4-0-2. Mike Hartmann abstained as he was not present for the meeting.

III. Department Liaison Updates: Operating Budgets, Warrant Articles:

Continued discussion of budgets, noting any deviations from guidelines. The following departments will be scheduled for March 13th, 2017:

a. Elementary

IV. Department Head Budget Presentations:

Masco: 7:005M- 7:44PM, Kevin Lyons, Bill Hodges and Sue Givens discussed the proposed budget, noting an increase of 2.8%. Kevin Lyons noted that due to the declining enrollment in recent years they are taking action to reduce personnel without diminishing opportunities. A discussion followed on the proposed Warrant Article for the Safety and Security Items. Dana Warren thanked them for coming in and for the continued communication.

Planning Board: 7:45PM- 8:10PM, Martha Morrison discussed the items that the Planning Board will be adding to the Warrant Articles this year. Martha is working on the article descriptions and will give them to Catherine Gabriel.

V. Donibristle Farm discussion with Chris LaPointe, Essex County

Greenbelt 8:11PM-8:49PM: Chris discussed that he has met with the Board of Selectmen and that they are supportive of the plan. Jon Guido said that while the Finance Committee has not voted on the manner, the general temperature of the Committee is generally supportive of the idea of Donibristle Farm being preserved by the Greenbelt, there are significant

challenges with the current funding plan given the growing list bonafide capital improvement needs of the Town and the Finance Committee needs to balance how to address the needs of the Town in a prudent and responsible manner fiscally. Greenbelt has raised \$120,000 thus far. A discussion followed. The Finance Committee will reach out to Chris if they have any questions, they will be voting on the Article in the coming weeks and will keep Greenbelt updated.

VI. Draft List of Warrant Articles: Jon discussed that the Finance Committee will be voting the base budget on March 13th, 2017. Jon will request an updated version of the Warrant Articles.

VII. New Business: None

VIII. Upcoming Meeting Schedule: The next meetings of the Committee will be held on March 13th. The Finance Committee discussed having the elementary schools attend the March 13th meeting to give an update on the base budget and school envelope project. A joint meeting of the Committee and Board of Selectmen will be held March 20th, respectively, at 7:00 PM in the Proctor School Teacher's Lounge.

IX. Adjourn: A motion was made by Dana Warren to adjourn at 9:08PM, seconded by Lou Ross and voted in favor 5-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Davis

Attachments: None