



Topsfield Finance Committee

Minutes to the Meetings May 22, 2017

**I. Call to Order:** Chair Karen Dow called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM with Che Elwell, Jon Guido, Mike Hartmann, Eric Menzer, Lou Ross, and Dana Warren present. Also present: Mark Lyons, Selectman; Dick Gandt, Selectman; Catherine Gabriel, Town Accountant; Gregor Smith, Town Hall Building Committee; Gregory Krom, Superintendent, Water Department; Phil Knowles, Chairman of the Board of Water Commissioners. Members of the public present: Heidi Fox and David Larson.

**II. Minutes of April 10 and May 2, 2017:** Dana Warren made a motion to accept the minutes as amended from April 10, 2017. Lou Ross seconded the motion, voted in favor 7-0-0.

Dana Warren made a motion to accept the minutes as amended from May 2, 2017. Lou Ross seconded the motion, voted in favor 7-0-0.

**III. Town Hall building project update: 7:05PM** Karen Dow updated finance committee members on the progress of the Town Hall building project. The detailed design is done and roughly \$1 million has been spent to date. The Finance Committee also discussed some of the pros/cons of restricting the Town Hall Project to just a renovation.

**IV. Water Treatment Plant update: 7:20PM** Greg Krom and Phil Knowles briefly mentioned they are awaiting construction bids and will have them in time for the Special Town Meeting on June 20<sup>th</sup>. They are still hoping that the Treatment Plant will be constructed and operating by the summer of 2018. Based on an estimated project cost of \$9 million, the increase cost to the average water user would be about \$311/year. Greg Krom noted that they will be having an open forum on June 15<sup>th</sup> at the Town Library.

**V. Special Town Meeting Warrant Article Assignments:** Responsibility for review of specific Special Town Meeting Articles and presentation of them at Town Meeting were assigned as listed below.

Special Town Meeting	Finance Committee Members
Article	Initials
1	

2	KD
3	LR
4	LR

**VI. Special Town Meeting Warrant Article Recommendations:** The Committee reserves the right to supersede or modify the following actions by future vote.

By motion of Eric Menzer, seconded by Dana Warren, the Finance Committee recommends no action on Citizens' petition, Special Town Meeting Article Second, voted in favor 7-0. Discussion: The committee discussed the senior population and how they, and Town operations, would be impacted if the extra space was not added onto Town Hall. They also discussed whether or not there would be a cost savings in a "renovation-only" project, given the costs incurred to date, the delays and costs associated with changing to a "renovation-only" project, and the cost of rental space to handle functions that would have been in the addition.

By motion of Lou Ross, seconded by Jon Guido, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Water Treatment Facility, Special Town Meeting Article Third, voted in favor 7-0.

By motion of Lou Ross, seconded by Dana Warren, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Public Works Fire Suppression System Improvements, Special Town Meeting Article Fourth, voted in favor 7-0.

**VII. Reserve Fund Transfer Request: Street Lights** David Bond, Highway Superintendent, submitted a Reserve Fund Transfer request totaling \$4,000.00 to Street Lights- Other from the Reserve Fund to be used for an expected shortfall for street lights and site lighting at town facilities, due to an increase in National Grid rates. Lou Ross made a motion to approve the request to transfer \$4,000.00 from Reserve Fund to Street Lights- Other, seconded by Eric Menzer and voted in favor 7-0. Discussion: Finance Committee members suggested setting up a meeting with David Bond in the fall to discuss the continued increases from National Grid, and to discuss possible solutions. Catherine Gabriel also noted that she could do an analysis of the Street Light- Other account.

**VIII. New Business:** None

**IX. Upcoming Meeting Schedule:** A Finance Committee meeting will be held prior to the Special Town Meeting, June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017, at 6:00PM in the Proctor School Teacher's Lounge. The Special Town Meeting will take place on June 20<sup>th</sup> in the Woodbury Auditorium at the Proctor School, 7:00PM. A Finance Committee meeting will be held Wednesday June 28<sup>th</sup> at 7:00PM in the Proctor School Teacher's Lounge.

**X. Adjourn:** A motion was made by Dana Warren to adjourn at 8:01PM, seconded by Lou Ross and voted in favor 7-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Davis

---

Attachments: Draft Special Town Meeting Warrant Articles, dated 5/19/17