



Topsfield Finance Committee

Minutes to the Meetings June 28, 2017

I. Call to Order: Chair Karen Dow called the meeting to order at 7:12 PM with Che Elwell, Mike Hartmann, Lou Ross, and Dana Warren present. Jon Guido and Eric Menzer were not present. Also present: Dick Gandt, Selectman; Catherine Gabriel, Town Accountant; and Kellie Hebert, Town Administrator. Members of the public present: Kim Sherwood, David Larson and Toni Pizzinato.

II. Minutes of May 22, 2017 and June 20, 2017: Dana Warren made a motion to accept the minutes as amended from May 22, 2017. Lou Ross seconded the motion, voted in favor 5-0-0.

Lou Ross made a motion to accept the minutes as amended from June 20, 2017. Che Elwell seconded the motion, voted in favor 4-0-1. Dana Warren abstained as he was not present for the full duration of the meeting.

III. Final Reserve Fund Transfer Requests: Kellie Hebert, Town Administrator, submitted a Reserve Fund Transfer request totaling \$19,500 to Selectmen's Special-Legal Services from the Reserve Fund to be used for unprecedented and extraordinary legal expenses this year. This would cover legal services through June 30th. Lou Ross made a motion to approve the request to transfer \$19,500 from Reserve Fund to Selectmen's Special Legal Services, seconded by Mike Hartmann, voted in favor 5-0; request signed. Discussion: Kellie mentioned that the increase was related to various one-time issues, including capital projects, recent changes to finance laws, a large number of appeals, and Special Town Meeting.

IV. Summer Authorization of Chair: A motion was made by Dana Warren to grant Karen Dow the authority to act as Summer Chair of the Finance Committee until the Committee reorganizes at its September meeting, seconded by Mike Hartmann, voted in favor 5-0.

V. Membership Terms Review: Eric Menzer will renew his term and serve on the Committee for another three years. Lou Ross will renew his term and serve on the Committee for another three years.

VI. Municipal Modernization Administrative Process: Che Elwell made a motion to designate the Finance Committee Chair or Vice Chair to sign payroll warrants and vendor warrants, seconded by Lou Ross, voted in favor 5-0; payroll and vendor warrant authorization forms signed.

VII. New Business: Kellie Hebert discussed merging two part-time positions into one 34 hours/week full-time position. Currently there is a part-time Conservation Committee administration assistant position and a part-time Board of Health administration assistant position, which sum to 37 hours/week. This change would be funded within the budget, but could have an impact on the health insurance budget. She is currently working on the job description for the new position.

An update on Donibristle Farm was discussed; the land grant paperwork is being processed and the purchase & sale agreement is being prepared.

Dana Warren discussed the topic of communications and how the Finance Committee can improve communication and relaying information to residents. One suggestion was to improve and clarify the Finance Committee letter. Also discussed was a better understanding of the Capital needs of the Town. Kellie noted that the new Town website, currently under construction, will have a notification feature as well as be more user friendly. She also noted that the Collins Center consultants have prepared a draft Capital Plan as well as a list of Financial Policies & Guidelines that the Finance Committee can review.

VIII.Upcoming Meeting Schedule: A Finance Committee meeting will be held in September, date to be determined.

IX. Adjourn: A motion was made by Dana Warren to adjourn at 8:41 PM, seconded by Lou Ross and voted in favor 5-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Davis

Attachments: none