



Topsfield Finance Committee
Minutes to the Meetings
November 20, 2017

I. Call to Order: Karen Dow, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM, with Che Elwell, Jon Guido, Mike Hartmann (arrived at 7:16), Eric Menzer, Lou Ross, and Dana Warren present. Also present: Catherine Gabriel-Heusser, Town Accountant; and Steve Whelan, Town Moderator.

Members of the public present: David Larson; Kim Sherwood; Eldon Goodhue; Gerry Buckley; Luigi Costanza; Scott Morrison, Superintendent Tri-Town Schools; Steven Greenberg, Assistant Superintendent Tri-Town Schools; Ted Chapman; Boyd Jackson, Selectman; Mark Lyons, Selectman; John Spencer, Selectman; approximately 7 other members of the public. Jeanine Cunniff arrived at 7:03 and announced she was going to make a video/audio recording; late arrivals were notified of this recording.

II. Minutes of November 6, 2017: Dana Warren made a motion to accept the November 6, 2017 minutes as drafted, seconded by Eric Menzer. Mike Hartmann abstained as he arrived late for the meeting. Voted in favor 6-0-1.

III. FY2019 Finance Committee Budget Guidelines: Chairman Karen Dow gave an overview of the budget process, starting with how guidelines are produced. She also discussed the process that follows after the guidelines are established and distributed to departments and boards. She noted that budgets are due to the Finance Committee, at the next meeting in January. The Finance Committee discussed the FY2018 Town of Topsfield Finance Committee Budget Guidelines as a starting point for FY2019 guidelines. There was a committee discussion of proposed guidelines for FY2019, including consideration of negotiated contracts, school enrollments, and the importance of staying on top of building maintenance. Discussion focused on “essential services” not necessarily being the same services as last year, as a particular service may no longer be necessary. Given the capital projects underway, a discussion on no new programs followed. Lou Ross made a motion to adopt the Proposed FY2019 Finance Committee Budget Guidelines with revisions discussed and authorized the chairman to finalize the FY2019 letter to department heads, seconded by Che Elwell and voted in favor 7-0.

IV. Correspondence: Karen noted an email request for Finance Committee personal email addresses. Steve Whelan, Town Moderator, urged members to not use their usual personal email addresses due to the difficulty of disentangling personal, work and town-related emails in response to public records requests. The Finance Committee general email address of finance@topsfield-ma.gov can be used to reach all members.

V. Topics not reasonably anticipated by the Chair 48 hours in advance of the meeting: none.

VI. Upcoming Meeting Schedule: The next two meetings of the Committee will occur on January 8th, 2018 and January 22nd, 2018 respectively, at 7:00 PM in the Proctor School Teachers' Lounge.

VII. Adjourn: Dana Warren made a motion to adjourn at 8:30 PM, seconded by Che Elwell and voted in favor 7-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Davis

Attachments: Senior Scoop, Draft guidelines