



Topsfield Finance Committee
Minutes to the Meetings
February 26, 2018

- I. Call to Order:** Chairman Karen Dow called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM with Che Elwell, Jon Guido, Mike Hartmann, Eric Menzer, Lou Ross, and Dana Warren present. Also present: Catherine Gabriel, Town Accountant; Boyd Jackson and Dick Gandt, Town Selectmen; Steve Whelan, Town Moderator; Greg Krom, Water Department Superintendent; Richard Stone, Water Commissioner; Mark Gallagher, Water Commissioner; Scott Morrison, Tri-Town Superintendent; Linda Ross, School Committee Chair; and Katrina Frere, School Committee Member. Members of the public present: David Larson, Eldon Goodhue, Jeanine Cunniff, and Gerry Buckley. Karen Dow announced at 7:02 that Jeanine Cunniff was going to make a video recording; late arrivals were notified of this recording.
- II. Minutes:** Dana Warren made a motion to accept the minutes from February 12, 2018. Eric Menzer seconded the motion, voted in favor 5-0-2. Che Elwell and Mike Hartmann abstained as they were not present for the meeting.
- III. Department Head Budget Presentations:**
- Water: 7:00PM-** Lou Ross, department liaison, introduced Greg Krom, Water Department Superintendent, and Water Commissioners Richard Stone and Mark Gallagher. A discussion of the proposed budget followed. Greg provided an update on the water treatment project; the foundation has been poured and the walls will be going up in two weeks. A discussion on outstanding and projected debt followed, with Greg passing out existing and projected debt schedules to Finance Committee members. Greg also said the warrant article for the fire sprinkler system will be delayed until FY2020. There will be two warrant articles for FY2019: an article to move retained earnings to the River Rd. project (reducing the borrowing cost), and an article to inspect the concrete water storage tanks.
- Elementary Schools: 7:30PM-** Jon Guido, department liaison, introduced Scott Morrison, Tri-Town Superintendent; Linda Ross, School Committee Chair; and Katrina Frere, School Committee Member. Linda passed out several hand-outs and gave an overview, as well as an update, of the budget process. She noted they will have a meeting March 1st to continue deliberation. Jon Guido mentioned that he has attended many school committee meetings and understands that to stay within FinCom guidelines, services will need to be cut. Scott Morrison discussed some of the technology challenges in comparison to Boxford and Middleton elementary schools, and some of the possible ways to fund technology. Jon Guido will be in touch with the committee for updates on their budget process.

IV. Liaison-led Updates and Discussions: Operating Budgets, Revenues, Other

Expenditures: Continued discussion of budgets, noting any deviations from guidelines. Dana Warren briefly discussed the proposed Masco budget, noting an increase above FinCom guidelines in the community contributions to the general operating budget. Dana will contact the Masco committee to get clarification on whether the start time amounts are included in the budget they provided. He will also schedule a time in March for the Masco committee to discuss the budget further.

Catherine Gabriel noted the remaining balance in the Solid Waste Enterprise fund is not sufficient to cover the required annual landfill monitoring costs. The remaining expense, and the entire monitoring expense in future years, will be part of the Town's operating budget.

V. Correspondence:

a. Letter to Editor based on Jon Guido's remarks at 1/24 Forum: Jon Guido passed out the most recent draft letter. A discussion followed. A motion was made by Jon Guido to approve the letter with the changes discussed, and to post the letter to the Town website and to also submit to the Tri-Town newspaper. Eric Menzer seconded the motion, voted in favor 7-0-0.

VI. Topics not reasonably anticipated by the Chair 48 hours in advance of the meeting: None.

VII. Upcoming Meeting Schedule: The next meetings of the Committee will be held on March 5th, March 12th, and March 19th, respectively, at 7:00 PM in the Proctor School Teacher's Lounge.

VIII. Adjourn: A motion was made by Dana Warren to adjourn at 9:24 PM, seconded by Lou Ross and voted in favor 7-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Davis

Attachments:

1. Agenda
2. 2/12 Meeting Minutes
3. FY2019 Topsfield Water Enterprise Fund Budget
4. Water Department Existing Long-term Debt Schedule
5. Water Department Bond Financing Comparison
6. Elementary School Banding Sheet
7. Elementary School slides overview
8. Elementary School proposed Budget: Budget Narrative
9. Linda Ross, Opening Remarks
10. Draft Letter to Editor