



Topsfield Finance Committee
Minutes to the Meetings
March 12, 2018

I. Call to Order: Vice Chair Jon Guido called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM with Che Elwell, Mike Hartmann, Eric Menzer, Lou Ross, and Dana Warren present. Karen Dow was not present. Also present: Dick Gandt, Town Selectman; Boyd Jackson, Town Selectman; and Steve Whelan, Town Moderator. Members of the public present: David Larson, Eldon Goodhue, Jeanine Cunniff, Catherine Carlson, Heidi Fox, Robert Cornetta, Judd Pratt, Gerry Buckley, Toni Pizzinato-Hatfield, Dorothy Watts, and approximately 8 others. Jon Guido announced at 7:01 that Jeanine Cunniff was going to make a video recording; late arrivals were notified of this recording.

II. Minutes: Minutes of February 26, 2018 will be approved at the next meeting. Dana Warren made a motion to accept the minutes from March 5, 2018, as amended. Che Elwell seconded the motion, voted in favor 6-0.

Article revote:

By motion of Che Elwell, seconded by Lou Ross, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Compensated Absences Fund, Article Thirteenth, voted in favor 6-0.

III. Department Head Budget, Presentations, including:

a. **Masconomet (7:00PM)**- Masco was unable to attend.

IV. Department Budget Review and Approval: The Committee reserves the right to supersede or modify the following Department budget approvals by future vote.

Dana Warren discussed that Masco could not attend the meeting due to the continuation of their deliberation budget process.

Che Elwell discussed that the town has received the OPEB audit but that it requires some explanations. He will be meeting with Kellie Hebert and the Town Treasurer to discuss further.

Jon Guido discussed that the elementary budget has not been certified but is expected to be within guidelines

Eric Menzer will attend the March 20th Planning board meeting, in order to gain information on the request for a medical marijuana overlay.

Mike Hartmann handed out model V2.2. A short discussion followed.

The Finance Committee reviewed the List of Requests over 0% Finance Committee Guidelines, dated March 8, 2018.

Dana Warren recommended positive action on Selectmen Special- Legal Services, Item #1, for the amount of \$5,000, seconded by Che Elwell, voted in favor 4-2. Discussion: fincom members discussed that a reserve fund transfer could be requested for costs incurred over the \$5,000.

Discussion on Item #2, Town Accountant- Annual Audit Professional Services, for the amount of \$4,100. The fincom members discussed whether the \$1,500 is a contracted item or not. Mike Hartmann will discuss with Catherine Gabriel.

Dana Warren recommended no action on Town Buildings- Utilities (Electric & Gas), Item #3 &4, for the amount of \$3,914, seconded by Eric Menzer, voted in favor 6-0.

Dana Warren recommended positive action on Town Clerk/Elections- Building Rental Fees & Election Expense, Item # 5 & 6, for the amount of \$3,050, seconded by Che Elwell, voted in favor 6-0.

Dana Warren recommended positive action on Solid Waste Collection- Contractual Increase in Fee, Item # 13, for the amount of \$20,112, seconded by Lou Ross, voted in favor 6-0.

Eric Menzer recommended positive action on Fire Department- Travel Expense & Meetings, Item# 10, for the amount of \$2,000, seconded by Lou Ross, voted in favor 6-0.

Dana Warren recommended positive action on Council on Aging- Rental Expense Programming Space, Item# 16, for the amount of \$3,600, seconded by Eric Menzer, voted in favor 6-0.

Dana Warren recommended no action on Council on Aging- Postage, Item #14, for the amount of \$400, seconded by Mike Hartmann, voted in favor 6-0. Discussion: Fincom members discussed electronic distribution.

Eric Menzer recommended no action on Animal Control- Animal Boarding Expenses, Item # 11, for the amount of \$929, seconded by Dana Warren, voted in favor 6-0.

Lou Ross recommended positive action on Street Lights- Electricity, Item #12, in the amount of \$2,175, seconded by Eric Menzer, so voted 3-2-1.

Eric Menzer recommended positive action on Fire Department- Medical Supplies, Item# 9, for the amount of \$2,500, seconded by Dana Warren, so voted 3-3.

Mike Hartmann recommended positive action on Town Clerk-Public Records Tracking Software and Public Records Software Maintenance, Item #7A&B, for the amount of \$4,500, seconded by Dana Warren, so voted 2-4.

V. Reserve Fund Transfer Request: Tree Department, Lou Ross discussed that they will not see a request from the tree department until the Town receives the invoices for tree work. There could also be additional invoices, due the upcoming snow storm.

VI. Town Meeting Warrant Articles:

a. Citizen's Petition Articles Discussion (8:00PM) Toni Pizzinato-Hatfield, discussed the citizen's petition for a secret ballot. She gathered 81 signatures favorable for this petition. She discussed that a secret ballot would help to avoid vote suppression, preserve vote confidentiality, provide audit/paper trail for back-up, and resolve discrepancy. She went on to note that several towns have implemented secret ballots and have had success in doing so. Fincom members discussed their concern as to whether a secret ballot would increase the length of the voting process. A few residents present, expressed that they are in favor of a secret ballot and that it would give residents who may not normally vote an opportunity to vote privately. Jon Guido thanked Toni for coming to speak to the fincom about this petition.

Plastic Bag Petition: Eric Menzer discussed that he needs the contact information for the person who created the petition.

Charter Review Committee: Lou Ross is gathering more information on this petition.

b. Recommendations The committee reserved the right to supersede or modify the following actions by future vote.

Annual Town Meeting Warrant Articles pending recommendations from the Committee are as follows: Articles first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, seventeenth, eighteenth, twenty-second, twenty-third, twenty-fourth, twenty-fifth, thirtieth, thirty-first, thirty second, thirty-third, thirty-fourth, thirty-fifth, thirty-sixth, thirty-seventh, thirty-eighth, thirty-ninth, fortieth, forty-first, and forty- second, as numbered in the attached draft warrant, dated March 2, 2018.

In a series of motions, the Finance Committee voted actions on the following Annual Town Meeting Warrant Articles as numbered in the attached draft warrant, dated March 2, 2018:

By motion of Eric Menzer, seconded by Dana Warren, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Fire Engine Two Vehicle Repairs, Article Twentieth, voted in favor 5-1.

By motion of Eric Menzer, seconded by Mike Hartmann, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Fire Personal Protective Equipment, Article Twenty-first, voted in favor 6-0.

By motion of Che Elwell, seconded by Mike Hartmann, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on MGL 59, s.5, Clause 41A: Tax Deferral Gross Receipts Limit, Article Twenty-sixth, voted in favor 6-0.

By motion of Lou Ross, seconded by Eric Menzer, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on MGL 60, s.3D: Tax Relief Fund for Seniors and Disabled, Article Twenty-seventh, voted in favor 6-0.

By motion of Lou Ross, seconded by Che Elwell, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on MGL 60 s. 3F: Voluntary Donation to Veteran's Assistance Fund, Article Twenty-eighth, voted in favor 6-0.

By motion of Lou Ross, seconded by Che Elwell, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Amend General By-Law: Chapter XXV-Delinquent Taxpayers License & Permits, Article Twenty-ninth, voted in favor 6-0.

VII. Correspondence:

- a. Jon Guido discussed an email from TWT and their request to meet with Finance Committee Members at an upcoming meeting.
- b. Beacon and Senior Scoop were circulated amongst Finance Committee Members.

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

IX. Upcoming Meeting Schedule: The next meetings of the Committee will be held on March 19th, March 22nd, and March 26th, respectively, at 7:00 PM in the Proctor School Teacher's Lounge.

X. Adjourn: A motion was made by Dana Warren to adjourn at 9:55 PM, seconded by Eric Menzer and voted in favor 6-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Davis

Attachments:

1. Agenda
2. Minutes of March 5, 2018
3. Article 3 vote tracker, dated March 11, 2018
4. List of Requests over 0% Finance Committee guidelines dated March 8, 2018
5. Model V2.2