



Topsfield Finance Committee
Minutes to the Meetings
March 19, 2018

- I. Call to Order:** Chair Karen Dow called the meeting to order at 7:04 PM with Jon Guido, Mike Hartmann, and Lou Ross present. Che Elwell, Eric Menzer, and Dana Warren were not present. Also present: Catherine Gabriel, Town Accountant; Steve Whelan, Town Moderator; Kellie Hebert, Town Administrator; Fire Chief Jen Brown; Scott Morrison, Tri-Town Superintendent; Linda Ross, School Committee Chair; Steve Clifford, Director of Facilities; and Katrina Frere, School Committee. Members of the public present: David Larson, Eldon Goodhue, Jeanine Cunniff, Heidi Fox, Gerry Buckley, Toni Pizzinato-Hatfield, Don Cragg and approximately 3 others. Karen Dow announced at 7:50 that Jeanine Cunniff was going to make a video recording; late arrivals were notified of this recording.
- II. Minutes:** Jon Guido made a motion to accept the minutes from February 26, 2018, as amended. Lou Ross seconded the motion, voted in favor 4-0. Minutes of March 12, 2018 will be approved at the next meeting.
- III. Department Head Budget, Presentations, including:**
- a. **Masconomet (7:00PM)-** Masco was unable to attend due to schedule conflicts. Karen noted that Masco did delay the implementation of a later start time and it will not be in the FY19 budget.
 - b. **Elementary Schools (8:00PM)-** Linda Ross discussed the budget increase of 3.59%. She mentioned that technology was not included in the budget and the fourth grade will have a larger class size than ideal. An update on the school envelope project followed. Steve Clifford reported the project has gone out to bid. They received two bids; both came back higher than the amount approved at town meeting last year. However, they will fund this overage (including 2 important priority alternates) with FY18 turn-backs. The turn backs are due primarily to FY18 SPED costs being lower than anticipated.
- IV. Department Budget Review and Approval:** The Committee reserves the right to supersede or modify the following Department budget approvals by future vote.
- Jon Guido recommended approval of the Elementary School budget in the amount of \$8,108,071, seconded by Lou Ross, voted in favor 4-0.
- Fire Chief Jen Brown briefly discussed the full-time fire contract that has been signed, and the call union contract will be signed soon. Eric Menzer will review the updated budget further, and the Chief will attend Thursday night's meeting.
- Catherine Gabriel mentioned that the Police budget has been updated. The

Police Chief will attend the next FinCom meeting.

Mike Hartmann handed out model V2.4. A short discussion followed.

Lou Ross handed out a revised Water budget. A short discussion followed. Greg Krom will be at the next FinCom meeting to discuss further.

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

Mike Hartmann recommended positive action on Town Accountant-Audit Services, for the amount of \$4,100, seconded by Jon Guido, voted in favor 4-0. Discussion: This would allow the Town Accountant to have the guidance of a consultant on an as needed basis.

Lou Ross recommended positive action on PEG/Cable Advisory Professional Services, for the amount of \$2,000, seconded by Jon Guido, voted in favor 4-0.

Lou Ross recommended no action on Parks & Cemeteries Vehicle & Equipment Maintenance, for the amount of \$1,000, seconded by Mike Hartmann, voted in favor 4-0.

Lou Ross recommended positive action on Parks & Cemeteries Grounds keeping, for the amount of \$1,000, seconded by Jon Guido, voted in favor 4-0.

Lou Ross recommended positive action on Landfill Department #494, for the amount of \$40,000, seconded by Mike Hartmann, voted in favor 4-0. Discussion: partially funded by remaining funds in Solid Waste Enterprise Fund.

Jon Guido recommended positive action on Council on Aging Tracking Software, for the amount of \$400, seconded by Lou Ross, voted in favor 4-0. Discussion: This represents the ongoing maintenance fee.

Lou Ross recommended no action on Holiday on the Green Department #693, for the amount of \$1,000, seconded by Jon Guido, voted in favor 4-0.

V. Town Meeting Warrant Article 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, 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 Lou Ross, seconded by Mike Hartmann, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Cemetery Building- Exterior Renovation and Building Repairs, Article Nineteenth, voted in favor 4-0.

VI. Finance Committee Letter: Karen has not yet drafted the letter. She will draft the letter for the next meeting.

VII. Reserve Fund Transfer Request: Tree Department- Lou Ross made a motion to approve a Reserve Fund Transfer request of \$10,000 to the Tree Department, seconded by Jon Guido, voted in favor 4-0. Discussion: Due to the recent storms, there has been an increased amount of costs incurred for tree cleanup. There is only \$25 remaining after paying expenses for fall storms. This request would pay for these unforeseen costs.

VIII. Correspondence: Two emails received regarding the secret ballot petition, as well as an email on the Masco budget and another with thoughts on Masco capital request.

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

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

XI. Adjourn: A motion was made by Lou Ross to adjourn at 10:07 PM, seconded by Jon Guido and voted in favor 4-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Davis

Attachments:

1. Agenda
2. Minutes of February 26, 2018
3. Article 3 vote tracker, dated March 19, 2018
4. Elementary Schools Budget, dated March 2, 2018
5. Model V2.4
6. Hearst house photos