



Topsfield Finance Committee  
Minutes to the Meetings  
Town Hall: COA Activities Room  
(2<sup>nd</sup> Floor)  
November 5, 2018

**I. Call to Order:** Chair Karen Dow called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM with Jon Guido, Mike Hartmann, Lou Ross, Eric Menzer, and Dana Warren present. Che Elwell was not present. Also present: Dick Gandt, Selectman; Catherine Gabriel, Town Accountant; Steve Whelan, Town Moderator; Katrina Frere, Elementary School Committee; Jessica Steffens, Elementary School Committee; and Scott Morrison, Superintendent of Elementary Schools. Members of the public present: David Larson, Jeanine Cunniff, Kim Sherwood and approximately 2 others. Karen Dow announced at 7:03 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 as amended from October 29, 2018. Eric Menzer seconded the motion, voted in favor 6-0-0.

**III. Update on Draft Financial Policy Guidelines:** The finance committee discussed edits and changes to the Financial Policy Guidelines 'Reserve Funds/Fund Balances'. Karen noted any changes and will present a copy at the next meeting.

**IV. IV. Elementary School Committee Update 7:30PM** Katrina reported that the budget process can be challenging. Cutting costs to stay within guidelines each year makes it difficult to keep up with investing in the schools. One area that has been challenging to address is technology. Scott Morrison presented a slide show on 21<sup>st</sup> century methods of education and mentioned that technology is key in preparing children for the future; the schools' focus is on equitable access to technology, not constant access. He went on to discuss some of the new technologies. The school committee is in the very early stages of the budget process and they are also in the process of developing a 3-year model of how best to educate our children and what it will cost. Scott mentioned that 80-85% of the budget will be in place by January 12<sup>th</sup> or 26<sup>th</sup>. Katrina reported that the school committee is trying to communicate with the citizens more by partnering with more town boards and seniors to discuss concerns and visions.

**V. FY20 Budget Process:**

- a. **FinCom Model-** Mike Hartmann handed out and discussed V1.3. He noted any changes he made. He will continue to make updates as needed and present an updated version at the next

meeting.

- b. **Guidelines-** There was a general discussion amongst committee members on budget guidelines. Karen will draft a guideline letter, to present at the next meeting, November 19<sup>th</sup>.

**VI. Correspondence:** Karen briefly reported that the finance committee budget is on track. A copy of the “Beacon” was also presented.

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

**VIII. Upcoming Meeting Schedule:** The next meeting of the Committee will occur on November 19, 2018 at 7:00 PM in the Town Hall Council on Aging Activities room.

**X. Adjourn:** A motion was made by Dana Warren to adjourn at 9:44 PM, seconded by Eric Menzer and voted in favor 6-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Davis

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Attachments:

1. Agenda
2. Minutes of 10/29/18
3. Financial Policy Guidelines: Capital Improvement Financing & Debt Management
4. Financial Policy Guidelines: Reserve Funds/Fund Balances
5. Model V1.3
6. Topsfield Elementary School Committee 2018 Statements of Goals and Intentions