



Topsfield Finance Committee
Minutes to the Meetings
Town Hall: COA Activities Room
(2nd Floor)
January 14, 2019

I. Call to Order: Chair Karen Dow called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM with Che Elwell, Mike Hartmann, Lou Ross, and Dana Warren present. Jon Guido and Eric Menzer were not present. Also present: Catherine Gabriel, Town Accountant; and Dick Gandt, Town Selectman. Members of the public present: David Larson, Curtis Niehaus, Libby Wilson, Jeanine Cuniff and one other. Karen Dow announced at 7:05 PM that Jeanine Cuniff was going to make a video recording.

II. Minutes: Dana Warren made a motion to accept the minutes as amended from December 20, 2018. Che Elwell seconded the motion, voted in favor 5-0-0.

Lou Ross made a motion to accept the minutes as amended from January 7, 2019. Che Elwell seconded the motion, voted in favor 4-0-1. Mike Hartmann abstained as he was not present for the meeting.

III. Department Budget: Liaison Reports: Catherine Gabriel has assembled the submitted department budgets into a master document, including sections noting requests over guidelines. Catherine will coordinate with departments that want to meet with the FinCom to discuss their budgets. Meetings will take place on 1/28, 2/4 & 2/11. A brief discussion was held on some of the budgets noting and discussing any deviations from guidelines.

1. Mike briefly mentioned that the assessors' department typically has a warrant article every so many years in the amount of \$100,000 for the assessment of properties. The assessor would like to instead add a budget line item for \$10,000 per year. The town assessor will be at the 1/28 FinCom meeting, to discuss further.
2. Lou gave a brief update on the water department budget. The water treatment plant construction should be complete in the next two months. They are hoping to go to bond soon. The operating budget is higher than guidelines due to costs associated with the new water treatment plant. Once the plant is running, additional labor is needed for a period of time to ensure that it is running properly, as required by the state.

3. Dana reported that Masco will be having a budget hearing on 2/25. He will check to see when they will be able to come to discuss the budget.

IV. FinCom Model Status: Mike presented model V1.5, in this version the only change was to increase the OPEB amount to \$300K, consistent with the recently adopted policy guidelines. He is currently working to input the omnibus budget and will have an updated version for the next Finance Committee meeting.

V. Correspondence: None.

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

VIII. Upcoming Meeting Schedule: The next meetings of the Committee will occur on January 28th, February 4th, and February 11th 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 7:47 PM, seconded by Lou Ross and voted in favor 5-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Davis

Attachments:

1. Agenda
2. Minutes of 12/20/18, and 1/7/19
3. Model V1.5