



Topsfield Finance Committee  
Minutes to the Meetings  
Town Hall: COA Activities Room  
(2<sup>nd</sup> Floor)  
November 18, 2019

**I. Call to Order:** Chair Jon Guido called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM with Karen Dow, Karen Duval, Che Elwell, Lou Ross (arrived at 7:04), and Eric Menzer, present. Mike Hartmann was not present. Also present: Catherine Gabriel, Town Accountant; Mike Harvey, Masco Superintendent; Zillie Bhuj, Masco School Committee; Melissa Ogden, Masco School Committee; and Bill Hodges, Masco School Committee. Members of the public present: David Larson

**II. Minutes:** Eric Menzer made a motion to accept the minutes as amended from October 28, 2019. Che Elwell seconded the motion, voted in favor 5-0-0. Lou Ross was not present at the time of voting.

**III. Masco School Committee Update: 7:15PM,** Che Elwell thanked the school committee and Superintendent for coming to a Finance Committee meeting to give an update in the budget process. Superintendent Harvey discussed that they are still in the early stages. The budget will be presented to the school committee in early January. Zillie will update the FinCom once they have a budget. Jon discussed that early communication and transparency has improved, and that presenting the FinCom with a budget as early as they can, greatly helps the FinCom. Melissa went on to discuss that the Masco subcommittee will be meeting January 15<sup>th</sup>, at that time they will discuss the budget overview process. The school committee discussed that Topsfield's portion of enrollment has increased .73%. The school committee went on to discuss that they will be working on a fully developed Capital Plan, to be complete by the Spring of 2021. They discussed that there won't be many, if any Capital requests this year.

**IV. Financial Policy Guidelines Amendments:** The committee discussed that they would discuss the amendments at the next meeting in January. They all agreed that more information and input from the new Town Administrator was needed.

**V. FY2021 Budget Process**

- a. **FinCom Model-** Mike Hartmann was not present to discuss the model. Jon discussed that he will continue to make edits and present an updated model at the next meeting.
- b. **Guidelines-** Committee members discussed the guidelines letter.

Discussion focused on salaries and the COLA amount. Committee members are concerned about the increasing salary costs. They discussed adding a sentence to the letter pertaining to salaries. Catherine Gabriel went on to discuss that the grid will be sent to department heads next week. The COLA will be 2% with a step increase of 2.75%. A brief discussion on non-union/union salaries followed. Lou Ross made a motion to adopt the Proposed FY2021 Finance Committee Budget Guidelines with revisions discussed and authorized the chairman to finalize the FY2021 letter to department heads, seconded by Eric Menzer and voted in favor 6-0.

**VI. Correspondence:** The Beacon

**VII. Topics not reasonably anticipated by the Chair 48 hours in advance of the meeting:**

**VIII. Upcoming Meeting Schedule:** The next meetings of the Committee will occur on January 6th, 2020 at 7:00 PM in the Town Hall Council on Aging Activities room.

**X. Adjourn:** A motion was made by Lou Ross to adjourn at 8:40 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 10/28/19
3. Guidelines Letter
4. The Beacon
5. Masco Capital Improvement Task Force Letter
6. Masco FY21 Budget Process Overview