



Topsfield Finance Committee
Minutes to the Meetings
Town Hall: COA Activities Room
(2nd Floor)
January 6, 2020

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, Mike Hartmann, and Eric Menzer, present. Also present: Catherine Gabriel, Town Accountant; and Steve Whelan, Town Moderator. Members of the public present: David Larson.

II. Minutes: Eric Menzer made a motion to accept the minutes as amended from November 18, 2019. Che Elwell seconded the motion, voted in favor 6-0-1. Mike Hartmann abstained as he wasn't present for the meeting.

III. FY21 FinCom Budget: The Fincom Budget will be discussed and voted at the next meeting.

IV. Department Budgets: Liaison Reports & Schedule of Presentations:

Catherine Gabriel has assembled the submitted department budgets into a master document, including sections noting requests over guidelines. Jon discussed that liaisons should coordinate with the departments that want to meet with the FinCom to discuss their budgets. A discussion followed on some of the budgets noting and discussing any deviations from guidelines.

1. Eric discussed that the Elementary School met last Thursday for a preliminary discussion of the budget. Their full budget meeting will be held on January 25th. Eric will plan to attend.
2. Lou discussed that the Park & Cemetery budget has increased, but the increase is due to the new full-time labor position and that is a contractual cost.
3. Che briefly discussed Masco Capital; there is no substantial capital requests for FY21. He went on to say that there is no change in their budget process this year.
4. Mike briefly discussed that the Treasurer had some slight increases due to state mandates. Mike also discussed that the Town Clerk has an increase due to three elections this year. He also went on to briefly discuss that the Town Accountant is requesting additional hours for the Assistant Town Accountant.
5. Karen Dow discussed that she will be meeting with the Fire Chief in the upcoming week.
6. Karen Duval briefly discussed the Council on Aging budget, explaining that

they don't have any requests over guidelines but will be re-evaluating the two staff members and the split of hours between both positions.

7. Karen Duval discussed that she met with the library department. They had a discussion of some of the repairs that have already been done and a need for some maintenance in the future. The elevator has been repaired but is old and not as reliable as it once was. It is unclear as to what repair costs the Gould Trust will fund. The Gould Trust will not be covering the expense for security cameras that are needed. Karen suggested having the Gould Fund Trustees attend a Fincom meeting in the future to get their perspective on what the Trust will cover.
8. Karen Duval discussed that she met with the Police Department. She went on to discuss some of the over guideline requests. One being an increase in salaries due to two new officers coming off probation, they will be receiving 100% of pay instead of 90%. There is a request for additional hours for the executive assistant and administrative assistant. An added towing fee that is being charged, among other administrative fees can help offset those additional hours. The Chief will be retiring in April, a search will be conducted using the \$10,000 voted at town meeting.

V. FinCom Model Status: Mike discussed that he integrated the omnibus budget into the model. He added new growth of \$75,000 but he did not add any over guideline requests. Catherine Gabriel discussed that free cash has not been certified but she hopes to know more in the upcoming week and will update the FinCom once she does. Jon went on to discuss that the model is only a preliminary model at this point. Mike will continue to update the model and present at the next meeting.

VI. Correspondence: Senior Scoop, and The Beacon

VII. Topics not reasonably anticipated by the Chair 48 hours in advance of the meeting: Steve Whelan discussed that he met with Kevin, Town Administrator, they had a discussion regarding the Moderator's Forum. Kevin would like to see the forum split up into two nights. One night would focus on Capital issues and the other night would focus on the overall budget. Steve will update the FinCom once he knows more.

VIII. Upcoming Meeting Schedule: The next meetings of the Committee will occur on January 13th, 27th, and February 3rd, 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 8:13 PM, seconded by Eric Menzer and voted in favor 7-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Attachments:

1. Agenda
2. Minutes of 11/18/19
3. Senior Scoop
4. The Beacon
5. YTD FY20 FinCom Budget
6. Capital Improvements- 5-year plan
7. FY21 Omnibus budgets