



Topsfield Finance Committee
Minutes to the Meetings
Town Hall: COA Activities Room
(2nd Floor)
January 13, 2020

I. Call to Order: Chair Jon Guido called the meeting to order at 8:01 PM with Karen Dow, Karen Duval (arrived at 8:15PM), Che Elwell, and Mike Hartmann present. Lou Ross and Eric Menzer were not present. Also present: Catherine Gabriel, Town Accountant; Dick Gandt, Selectman; and Kevin Harutunian, Town Accountant. Members of the public present: David Larson.

II. Minutes: Karen Dow made a motion to accept the minutes as amended from January 6, 2020. Che Elwell seconded the motion, voted in favor 4-0-0.

III. FY21 FinCom Budget: The Fincom budget was discussed, noting \$1,579 for the recording secretary, \$395 (level) for membership fees & advertising, and \$100,000 for the Fincom Reserve Fund. Mike Hartmann led a discussion on the Step/COLA increase of 4.92% for the recording secretary position. He went on to ask Kevin about wage increases. Kevin discussed that he is working on understanding the history of the grid system. He has spoken to the Board of Selectmen to understand the process. He went on to discuss that there will be no changes in the grid system for FY21 but the process of gathering information and understanding where Topsfield compares to surrounding communities has begun. He will continue to keep Fincom members updated in the process. Che Elwell made a motion to approve the Finance Committee budget and submit to Catherine Gabriel. Karen Dow seconded the motion, voted in favor 4-0-1. Karen Duval abstained as she was not present for the full discussion.

IV. Department Budgets: Liaison Reports: 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. Catherine Gabriel will coordinate with departments to schedule times to present to the fincom.
2. Catherine handed out and briefly discussed some of the updates/corrections to the omnibus budget and "other" over guidelines sheet.

3. Che discussed that Masco has shared their budget calendar. The budget sub-committee will be meeting this week, Che plans to attend. The school committee has a target date of 2/14 to present the proposed budget to town officials.

V. FinCom Model Status: Mike discussed model V1.1. Free cash has been updated (\$2,046,950). He also made a correction to Medicare tax (\$9,400). A general discussion followed. Mike will update the model further, with the revised omnibus budget updates/corrections and present at the next meeting.

VI. Correspondence: None.

VII. Topics not reasonably anticipated by the Chair 48 hours in advance of the meeting: Kevin discussed that he was thankful for the warm welcome that he has received in his new role as Town Administrator. He has been busy getting to know all the staff, as well as meet with department heads to discuss budgets. He went on to discuss that communication is key and that he has an open-door policy. He mentioned that he will be holding an open house on January 16th, between 4-6 PM, he invites the public to meet staff, as well as tour the building. A few other upcoming events he mentioned; 2/13-Budget discussion forum, 2/20-Capital requests forum, and 3/7-downtown revitalization meeting.

VIII. Upcoming Meeting Schedule: The next meetings of the Committee will occur on January 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 Karen Dow to adjourn at 8:57 PM, seconded by Che Elwell and voted in favor 5-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Davis

Attachments:

1. Agenda
2. Minutes of 1/6/20
3. YTD FY21 FinCom Budget
4. FY21 Masco Budget Calendar
5. Budget Updates/Corrections