



Topsfield Finance Committee
Minutes to the Meetings
Town Hall: COA Activities Room
(2nd Floor)
February 3, 2020

I. Call to Order: Chair Jon Guido called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM with Karen Dow, Karen Duval, Che Elwell, and Mike Hartmann. Eric Menzer, and Lou Ross were not present. Also present: Catherine Gabriel, Town Accountant; Boyd Jackson, Selectman; Dick Gandt, Selectman; Jackie Cuomo, Town Treasurer; Paula Burke, COA Director; Glenn Clohecy, Building Inspector, and Kevin Harutunian, Town Administrator. Members of the public present: David Larson.

II. Minutes: Karen Dow made a motion to accept the minutes as amended from January 27, 2020. 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 Presentations, including:

- a. **Treasurer/Accountant (7:00PM)** Jackie Cuomo, Treasurer, introduced herself to the Fincom. She went on to explain that she has a level funded budget but wanted to meet with the Fincom to see if any members had questions for her. She mentioned that the payment for the school envelope project is in process, and there is \$125,000 left to be reviewed for reimbursement.

Catherine Gabriel, Town Accountant, went on to discuss the Accounting Department budget. She would like to increase the Assistant Town Accountant hours from 34 hours to 40 hours. This would be an increase of \$9,378. She went on to explain that the responsibilities of this position have increased over the past three years. The Accounting office produces weekly warrants for Town bills. These warrants average over 200 invoices each week. Payroll is also a time-consuming process. Catherine would also like to add responsibilities such as; maintaining contracts and setup/maintain/reconcile ambulance receivables. There is also a need to work with the other departments to better utilize the MUNIS financial software system. Catherine went on to discuss two other requests; \$500 increase for toner cartridges, and \$1,300 increase for audit services. A short discussion followed.

- b. **Council on Aging (7:30PM)** Karen Duval, liaison, introduced Paula Burke. Paula discussed an over-guideline request for \$31 for the increased cost of

association dues for Massachusetts Councils on Aging. Paula went on to discuss some of the programs and activities that the Council on Aging offers. There are about 1,939 residents in town over the age of 60. To date, there have been 539 participants that have attended various events. They have a Title III Grant for Transportation (\$2900, an increase from last year's \$2,300). The transportation need has increased since FY17, but the van driver is only compensated when needed. A short discussion followed.

- c. **Building/Inspections (8:00PM)** Glenn discussed that there has been a change in personnel structure. He has retired and decreased his hours from 30 hours to 18 hours. This change was approved on a 6-month trial basis pending feedback from the Town Administrator, Board of Selectmen, and Building Inspector. The Building Inspector line item has been funded at 30 hours for FY21. The restructuring also included the Administrative Assistant increasing hours from 24 hours to 32 hours. This change would cost approximately \$10,969. He explained that this would allow for someone to be in the office to handle payments, etc. He went on to discuss that the new software that was implemented last year has been working great. To date, in FY19, there have been 479 permits issued. A short discussion on increasing the permit fee followed, the decision is made by the Board of Selectmen.
- d. **Town Administrator/Town Hall (8:30PM)** Kevin discussed the Town Hall/Selectmen budget. A discussion followed on some of the increases. He went on to discuss a request to increase the Facility Management Service hours, a request for \$10,000. Kevin went on to explain that this facilities management program was created for Town Hall. This program included implementing a software-based work order system and the addition of an independently contracted Facilities Manager who helps customize the work order system, review capital needs and provide day-to-day repairs, maintenance, and oversight of Town Hall. Kevin explained that the Facilities Manager's scope of work will be expanded to cover all Town buildings, creating more efficient and consistent service throughout the organization. The Fincom suggested it would be helpful to have the data showing what work the Facilities Manager has completed this past year. A short discussion on regionalizing a Facilities Manager followed.

IV. Liaison-led Updates and Discussions: Operating Budgets, Revenues, Other Expenditures- Che explained that the Masco School Committee has meetings every Wednesday. They are going through the budget process. Che plans to attend the meetings.

V. FinCom Model Status- Mike discussed the updated Model. Noting \$598,845 over the levy limit. A short discussion followed. Mike will continue to make updates.

VI. Correspondence None.

VI. Topics not reasonably anticipated by the Chair 48 hours in advance of

the meeting: None

VII. Upcoming Meeting Schedule: The next meetings of the Committee will occur on February 10th, and February 24th, 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 9:39 PM, seconded by Che Elwell and voted in favor 5-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Davis

Attachments:

1. Agenda
2. Minutes of 1/27/20
3. Town Accountant: Increase in Assistant TA hours document
4. FinCom YTD budget