



Topsfield Finance Committee
Minutes to the Meetings
Town Hall: COA Activities Room
(2nd Floor)
February 24, 2020

I. Call to Order: Vice Chair Che Elwell called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM with Karen Dow, Karen Duval (arrive 7:45PM), Mike Hartmann, and Lou Ross. Jon Guido and Eric Menzer were not present for the meeting. Also present: Catherine Gabriel, Town Accountant; Steve Shephard, Parks & Cemetery Superintendent; Gretchen Rehak, Parks & Cemetery Board Member; Marshall Hook, Parks & Cemetery Board Member; and Steve Mscisz, Parks & Cemetery Board Chair. Members of the public present: David Larson.

II. Minutes: Lou Ross made a motion to accept the minutes as amended from February 10, 2020. Karen Dow seconded the motion, voted in favor 4-0-0.

III. Department Budget Presentations, including:

- a. **Parks & Cemetery (7:30PM)** Lou Ross, liaison, introduced Steve Shepherd, Marshall Hook, Steve Mscisz, and Gretchen Rehak. Steve went on to discuss the Parks & Cemetery budget, noting no new program. Salary increases are contractual per the contract. He discussed that there is a \$7,000 increase in the budget for additional mandated PFAS testing. Steve went on to discuss a request for \$5,000 to fund the holiday on the green. These funds would be used to pay for the cost of using bucket trucks to hang lights, as well as advertising the event. In the past the event was funded through donations and a warrant article. Both have been depleted. Steve also discussed a potential request for \$5,000 to update the electrical boxes located on the common. It would be a one-time cost, currently, there is no line item in the budget for this. Fincom discussed whether the cost should come out of the building maintenance fund.

IV. Liaison-led Updates and Discussions: Operating Budgets, Revenues, Other Expenditures-

1. Karen Dow mentioned that the elementary school committee has not met due to school vacation. They will be meeting tomorrow (February 25th). Eric and Karen will attend the meeting. She noted that the Administration draft budget has an increase of over 12%. A short discussion followed. She

has not seen a banded sheet yet, and the budget is anticipated to be approved by the end of March.

2. Karen Duval briefly discussed the Masco budget. Currently the budget has an increase of 5.45%. The committee has not voted the budget, deliberations start this week. Che discussed OPEB. In comparison to town hall staffing, Masco staffing is similar, but OPEB liability is four times as much as Town Hall's OPEB. Karen Duval has brought this up to the committee and they will research it.
3. Lou Ross will speak with the Planning Board to see when it would be good for them to attend a Fincom meeting.
4. Che discussed that he would type up a formal request for school salary data.

V. FinCom Model Status- Mike discussed the updated Model. He has updated the model with the latest omnibus budget. The amount over the levy limit is \$589,000 (assuming 3% for Elementary, and 3% for Masco). Mike will continue to make updates.

VI. Draft Warrant Articles- Fincom members reviewed the draft 2020 ATM list of warrant articles, a short discussion followed.

VII. 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 March 2nd, and March 9th, 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 8:56 PM, seconded by Karen Duval and voted in favor 5-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Davis

Attachments:

1. Agenda
2. Minutes of 2/10/2020
3. Model dated 2/24/2020
4. List of Warrant Articles dated 2/24/2020