



Topsfield Finance Committee
Minutes to the Meetings
Meeting was held
via Teleconference
March 16, 2020

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Topsfield Board of Selectman was conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible. Specific information and the general guidelines for remote participation by members of the public and/or parties with a right and/or requirement to attend this meeting can be found on the Topsfield website, at www.topsfieldma.gov.

I. Call to Order: Chair Jon Guido called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM with Karen Dow, Karen Duval, Che Elwell, Mike Hartmann, Eric Menzer and Lou Ross. Also present Catherine Gabriel, Town Accountant; Steve Whelan, Town Moderator; Dick Gandt, Selectman; Boyd Jackson, Selectman; and Kevin Harutunian, Town Administrator. Members of the School Committee present; Charise Nulsen, Andrew Prazar, Meredith Sokolowski, and Gus Serino. Also present Matt LaCava, Assistant Superintendent of Student Support Services; and Scott Morrison, Superintendent of Tri Town School Union. Members of the public: a list of the call-in numbers are attached.

II. Minutes: Minutes of March 2nd and 9th will be voted at the next meeting.

III. FinCom Model Status- Mike Hartmann discussed an updated model, a discussion followed. He discussed that with a few updates/modifications the amount over the levy limit is \$468,753, this assumes the school budgets are at guidelines.

IV. Department Budget Presentations, including:

- a. **Elementary (7:10PM)** Eric Menzer discussed that there was a budget meeting last week. The budget was 8% over guidelines. There were additional administrative cuts which decreased the amount over guidelines to 6.8%. Charise went on to discuss some of the cuts to the budget. She explained that there is a worksheet located on the Tri-Town School Committee website that explains the budget adjustments. Charise went on to

explain that the school committee is in the process of discussing more cuts to the budget, however they didn't have much time before the fincom meeting to discuss further. They will be meeting on March 19th to discuss further. She will report back at the next fincom meeting.

- b. **Masco (7:30PM)** Dr. Harvey, discussed the Masco budget. He went on to say that the approved Masco budget is 7% over guidelines. This is a net increase of \$258,000 for Topsfield. He went on to discuss some of the budget critical priorities-\$218,696 (document attached). Enrollment for the current year is level at 1,714, projection for next year is 1,716.
- c. **Police (7:45PM)** Captain Gary Hayward discussed the administrative over-time for the fair (over guideline request). He discussed that this would provide window coverage at the police station when the fair is open. It also allows time for the fair payroll to be completed as it is a time-consuming process with several communities involved. He went on to say that this is a cost-effective way as to opposed to paying an officer. There is also an administrative fee that the town charges the fair (FY20 \$25,000), that could help compensate the additional funds that are being requested (\$3,300). Kevin Harutunian discussed speaking with the Fair to see if they would fund the additional hours and update the fincom once that discussion has taken place. Gary went on to discuss the request for additional funds for training. Given the hire of two new officers and two reserve officers retiring, that are instructors (paid at reserve rate) additional funds are needed.

V. Department Budget Review and Approval

1. Fincom members discussed the variation of scenarios to reduce the levy limit. The BOS have not discussed an override and are reluctant to move forward with an override for operating expenses.
2. Steve Whelan discussed postponing the Town meeting 30 days. A discussion followed on the uncertainty of what is happening and how it will affect the economy.
3. Kevin discussed that there are five contracts up for negotiations, at this time. He is currently working on two of the five.
4. The fincom discussed purchasing a backhoe (\$125,000). 1/3 would be funded by Chapter 90 funds, 1/3- \$30,000 from snow & ice, and 1/3 from water department.
5. Kevin discussed that cutting services is a reality, given the excess amount over the levy limit.

VI. Town Meeting Warrant Articles-

a. Assignments

ATM Warrant Article	Fincom Member
	Initials
1	JG
2	JG

3	MH
4	LR
5	CE
6	CE
7	JG
8	LR
9	KDUVAL
10	KDUVAL
11	JG
12	KDUVAL
13	JG
14	MH
15	KDOW
16	KDOW
17	KDOW
18	KDOW
19	EM
20	EM
21	LR
22	KDUVAL
23	LR
24	LR
25	EM
26	EM
27	JG
28	JG
29	JG
30	EM
31	LR
32	KDOW
33	LR
34	JG
35	KDOW
36	CE
37	CE
38	CE
39	KDOW
40	LR
41	JG

- b. **Recommendations-** The Board of Selectmen will meet tomorrow (March 17th) to discuss the warrant articles.

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 23rd March 25th, March 26th and March 30th, 2020 at 7:00 PM via zoom teleconference.

X. Adjourn: A motion was made by Karen Dow to adjourn at 10:13 PM, seconded by Eric Menzer and voted in favor 6-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Davis

Attachments:

1. Agenda
2. Model dated 3/16/20
3. Draft List of Warrant Articles dated 3/11/20
4. TSC Budget Overview
5. Masco FY21 Budget Critical Priority Details
6. Masco FY21 Budget Assessments by Town
7. MRSD FY21 Operating Budget Calendar
8. Conference call-in numbers (who attended)