



Topsfield Finance Committee
Minutes to the Meetings
Town Hall: COA Activities Room
(2nd Floor)
April 8, 2019

I. Call to Order: Chair Karen Dow called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM with Che Elwell, Mike Hartmann, Eric Menzer, Lou Ross, and Dana Warren present. Jon Guido was not present. Also present: Catherine Gabriel, Town Accountant; Steve Whelan, Town Moderator; Martha Morrison, Planning Board; and Jeanine Cunniff, Planning Board. Members of the public present signed the sign in sheet (attached). Karen Dow announced at 7:02 PM that Jeanine Cunniff was going to make a video recording.

II. Minutes: Dana Warren made a motion to accept the minutes as amended from March 18, 2019. Mike Hartmann seconded the motion, voted in favor 5-0-1. Che Elwell abstained as he was not present for the meeting.

Che Elwell made a motion to accept the minutes as amended from March 19, 2019. Lou Ross seconded the motion, voted in favor 6-0.

Dana Warren made a motion to accept the minutes as amended from March 25, 2019. Mike Hartmann seconded the motion, voted in favor 6-0.

III. FinCom Model: Pre-Town Meeting version: Mike Hartmann handed out V2.8. He noted any updates made; the amount under the levy limit is \$101,178 although he is checking the levy limit calculation. A short discussion followed.

IV. Annual Finance Committee Letter: final submitted version: Karen reported that she made any changes/edits and sent a final version to Kellie Hebert for printing to be mailed as part of the Annual Town Meeting warrant.

V. Citizen's Petitions:

- a. Free Cash for Debt Service: Kim Sherwood 7:15PM- Kim Sherwood discussed the citizen's petition to take \$400,000 of free cash and apply it to the current debt service. She explained that this would be a good use of free cash. FinCom members discussed the free cash balance currently is

\$897,000 after anticipated Annual Town Meeting expenditures, including the application of \$500,000 of free cash to reduce the tax levy. There would not be enough free cash to approve this article and stay at or above the policy guideline level (\$750K).

- b. Community Care Facilities: Planning Board 7:30PM- Lou Ross explained that the Planning Board met on April 2nd, to discuss and vote on this article. The Congregational Church has filed an ANR (approval not required with the Town), which would grandfather the future use under the existing zoning bylaws for three years. Lou suggests waiting for the report from the Planning Board before the FinCom votes on article 34th.
- c. Exotic Animals: Topsfield Fair 8:00PM- Eric explained that Article 33rd could potentially affect the Topsfield Fair. Jim O'Brien, Topsfield Fair Manager, reported that the elephant at the Fair is part of their educational program. He went on to mention that any animals that are part of the Fair are checked by veterinarians and the Fair works closely with the MSPCA. Martha Sanders said the petition was created in the hopes of banning exotic animals coming into town because the treatment of traveling act animals is often cruel and inhumane, not necessarily to suggest the Fair is doing something wrong.

VI. Town Meeting Warrant Articles: Assignments and Recommendations:

FinCom members had a brief discussion regarding town meeting and the preparation needed for each liaison to make the motion and discuss their assigned articles at Town Meeting.

The assignment for STM articles 2nd and 3rd is Mike Hartmann.

VII. Preparation for 4/30 Town Moderator's Forum: Steve Whelan mentioned that the Finance Committee, along with any other boards and committees, will have an opportunity to discuss the warrant articles or answer any questions at the forum. Karen asked Steve to forward along any question that may pertain to the Finance Committee ahead of time.

VIII. Correspondence: None.

IX. Topics not reasonably anticipated by the Chair 48 hours in advance of the meeting: none

VIII. Upcoming Meeting Schedule: The next meeting of the Committee will occur April 22, 2019 at 7:00 PM in the Town Hall Council on Aging Activities room.

X. Adjourn: A motion was made by Dana Warren to adjourn at 8:46 PM,

seconded by Eric Menzer and voted in favor 6-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Davis

Attachments:

1. Agenda
2. Minutes 3/18, 3/19, 3/25
3. Model V2.8
4. Sign In sheet