



Finance Committee
TOWN OF HALIFAX
499 Plymouth Street
Halifax, MA 02338

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 28, 2023

Committee Members Present (Remotely): Todd Dargie, Cheryll Zarella Burke, Frank Johnston, Jim Walters & Michael Bennett

Committee members absent: Jonathan Schmaling

Audience (Remotely): Summer Schmaling, Jill Proulx, Christine Healy, Darleen Regan, Sandy Nolan, Chief Joao Chaves, Jason Frazer & Katie Esposito

Todd Dargie called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm

Meeting is being record by area 58

Todd entertained a motion to accept the Finance Committee Meeting minutes from March 13, 2023

Motion: Michael Bennett Cheryll Zarella Burke

Second: Cheryll Zarella Burke

Roll Call: Frank Johnston, Michael Bennett, Jim Walters, Cheryll Zarella Burke & Todd Dargie

School Department: The department is joined by Jason Frazer, Summer Schmaling, Jill Proulx, Christine Healy to discuss the School Departments FY 24 Budget and capital requests.

Capital Request: Jason Frazer, who represented the Silverlake school speaks on capital request warrant article 28. The original verbal quote given had expired after the warrant was submitted. The new quote is \$650,000 (\$325,000/each) to replace the 2 HVAC air handlers. After speaking with the maintenance department at the school it was determined the unit in need of repair would be the handler controlling the kitchen and café. Jason believes the shared cost for Halifax would come in at \$101,000. Halifax is responsible for 35% of the total cost. Jason believes this written quote will be active for 6 months.

School Resource Officer: Article 29 for the school resource officer has increased by \$2,000 from last year. This is a 50% shared cost between Plympton and Halifax as Kingston pays the salary of the officer for Silverlake High School. The cost for this line item will be \$38,000.

Halifax School Department: Summer Schmaling, the school committee chair reviews the FY24 budget with the committee. Most items are to remain level funded. Summer explains there were two new positions added this year which are a Math Interventionist and Instrumental Instructor. This is a \$52,000 increase which was added to the line item for teacher expenses. Todd asks about the line item for Instructional Software that has increased by 21.79%. This is due to licensing software and subscriptions used by the school. Next line item discussed was

the special education teaching services which had an increase 17.01%. This is for the additional staff member that had been hired this current year FY23. By creating this full-time position, Halifax elementary limited the need for certain students to go out of the district for services. This will save on transportation and tuition paid to other towns.

Nurse Leader Position: This item had an 86.8% increase this year. This is due to the salary for a Float Nurse position. The float nurse will be used as a substitute nurse and support staff to assist with documentation. A contracted nurse subsite costs around \$400/ per day. The float nurse position was funded during Covid however that grant has now ended. The department has added this item to the budget this year due to all three towns joint subcommittees voting in favor of making it a permanent position. The town will be responsible for 30.8% of this shared cost of \$70,000. Jill will provide the Float Nurse analyze documents to the finance committee.

Special Education Transportation: Todd asks if the school committee has looked at any alternatives to lower costs. Summer explains there is a driver shortage currently which makes it difficult. Christine adds that local vendors are unavailable due to school schedules being in the same timeframe. She has spoken with the selectmen regarding utilizing the COA van. This would require making sure the van was 7D complaint and the driver was also 7D certified. Currently the town is using multiple agencies for transportation services. Most of the service transports students to Kingston school district. Todd asks Christine if she would provide the committee with the local routes for the vans. Sandy states the budget increase for elementary school is 5.9%.

COA Budget Update: Darleen the COA director reviews the budget with the committee.

Van Supplies and Maintenance (Line Item 72): She begins with Van Supplies and Maintenance which has increased by \$1,500. This increase will include inspections, cleaning/sanitizing, oil changes, medical equipment items, repair chair lift and annual maintenance. The van is being utilized more than in the past due to day trips and medical appointments out town.

Equipment (Line Item 81): This amount may include purchasing dining chairs and tables to expand seating availability for the residents. This will be used to bring activities and programs back to the COA as they currently spread through the town. Darleen does not have an exact purpose for the funds yet but will use them as she see necessary throughout the year.

Advertising (Line Item 74): This is a \$350 increase from last year. Currently the COA receives around \$1,000 in sponsors for their newsletter. This fund would be used as back-up in case they lost a sponsor to give the department a 2/3-month cushion to cover printing costs.

Electric Expense (Line Item 105): The COA is asking for a \$3,800 increase due to expected energy cost when the contract ends in the fall. Cody and Sandy are recommending this amount increase to \$4,000. Sandy states they will be switching over to LED lights to assist with energy costs.

Town Articles and Expenditures: Sandy reviews documents with the committee in Cody's absence.

Todd entertained a motion to defer the line item 22 highway chipper – Not recommend.

Motion: Cheryll Zarella Burke

Second: Frank Johnston

Roll Call: Frank Johnston, Michael Bennett, Jim Walters, Cheryll Zarella Burke & Todd Dargie

Steve requested to keep the article on the warrant without the financial committee's recommendation.

Wheeled Mecalac Excavator (line Item): Steve has provided the committee with the usage document requested. Steve has also informed the committee by email that he has received an additional quote for a Volvo machine. The committee is requesting Steve attend the next committee meeting to review trade in value for current machine and to review the Volvo & Mecalac quotes. The committee agrees to move the next meeting to Wednesday April 5th at 6PM to allow Steve time to come back from vacation and prepare for the meeting.

Todd entertained a motion to recommend the MSBS ADA Compliance Project for \$500,000

Motion: Michael Bennett

Second: Cheryll Zarella Burke

Roll Call: Frank Johnston, Michael Bennett, Jim Walters, Cheryll Zarella Burke & Todd Dargie

These funds will be managed by Scott and procured by Cody. Sandy must sign off on all documents for this as well.

Repair of roof top heating units line item 28 has been deferred unit next meeting. Sandy will request a definite number from the school department before the committee votes.

Todd entertained a motion to recommend the Middle School Resource Officer to \$38,000

Motion: Michael Bennett

Second: Cheryll Zarella Burke

Roll Call: Frank Johnston, Michael Bennett, Jim Walters, Cheryll Zarella Burke & Todd Dargie

Todd entertained a motion to recommend line item COA Expense for \$9,075

Motion: Michael Bennett

Second: Cheryll Zarella Burke

Roll Call: Frank Johnston, Michael Bennett, Jim Walters, Cheryll Zarella Burke & Todd Dargie

Todd entertained a motion to recommend line item 105 COA Electric for \$4,000

Motion: Cheryll Zarella Burke

Second: Michael Bennett

Roll Call: Frank Johnston, Michael Bennett, Jim Walters, Cheryll Zarella Burke & Todd Dargie

Todd entertained a motion to recommend the Halifax and Silverlake 2024 Fiscal Year Budget

Motion: Frank Johnston

Second: Cheryll Zarella Burke

Roll Call: Frank Johnston, Michael Bennett, Jim Walters, Cheryll Zarella Burke & Todd Dargie

New Town Revenue Suggestions: New suggestions have been made. Cody shared the current fee schedule for the town with the committee.

As May Arise: There is currently an open position on the committee for a 7th member. The selectmen were accepting Toms resignation letter tonight at their board meeting. After the meeting Cody will post the open position on the website.

Public Participation: Sandy asked the committee to add reserve fund transfer request to the next scheduled meeting.

Next Meeting Planning: Finance Committee Meeting scheduled for April 5, 2023 at 6:00 PM

Exhibit List:

- **Halifax School Budget**
- **Silverlake School Shared Cost Budget**
- **School Department Warrant Articles**
- **Final Fiscal Year 2023 Assessment**
- **COA Budget Sheets FY24 Final**
- **FY24 Fin Com Budget from TA**
- **Wheeled Mecalac Excavator Usage**
- **Special Education Cost**
- **Halifax Fee Schedule**

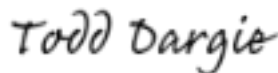
Todd entertained a motion to adjourn at 9:18 PM

Motion: Michael Bennett

Second: Cheryll Zarella Burke

Roll Call: Frank Johnston, Michael Bennett, Jim Walters, Cheryll Zarella Burke, Jonathan Schmaling & Todd Dargie

Respectfully submitted,



Todd Dargie, Chairperson