Finance Committee

TOWN OF HALIFAX

499 Plymouth Street

Halifax, MA 02338

**Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday March 22, 2021**

**Committee Members Present**: Cheryll Zarella Burke, Fred McGovern, Drew McGlincy, Tom Connolly, Joe Vetrano

Also, in attendance in the audience were: Charlie Seelig, Jean Gallant, Chief Chaves, Barbara Gaynor, Cesar Calouro, Ashely Disesa, Matt Durkee, Gordon Andrews, Paula Hatch, and a resident

The meeting was recorded by Zoom

**Fred called the Finance Committee meeting to order at 6:03 pm**

**Fred entertained a motion to accept the meeting minutes from 03/17/2021**

Motion: Cheryll

Second: Tom

**AIF (**Drew said he wasn’t sure about if the some of the votes were recorded correctly in the table in the notes. Fred asked if there were particular ones he was questioning. Drew said he though the vote on the backhoe may not have been correct. Tom Connolly said he had separately kept notes from the meeting and he had reviewed his notes against the minutes for votes, and he was in agreement with the minutes on all the votes. Drew said he would vote in favor then).

Fred asked Cesar (IT department) about the Data Processing line in the budget. Cesar said the increase in the budget line was for additional licenses for Office through Baracuda. Cesar said it went from about $13,000 last year to about $23,000 this FY22 to go from 100 licenses to 200 licenses. He said the Near Map software used by the Assessors’ office for virtual software to help with virtual inspections during COVID was an additional $7,000 also. Fred asked if the software was purchased because of COVID, as Cesar had said, would there be any chance that the CARES act money would cover the expense. Charlie said he didn’t think so because to his knowledge the Assessors would continue to use this software even if things returned to normal because many Assessors offices used it even before COVID. He asked Cesar if he agreed. Cesar said that was true, and the Board of Health and Highway department had also expressed interest in using this software for their purposes. Fred asked Cesar about the Work order Asset Management software article. Fred stated that the Fin Com had concerns about the amount of storage allotted for in the contract. Cesar stressed that the $24,000 was just for Highway and Building Maintenance so it could help prioritize jobs that needed to be done. Highway would use it to track fleet maintenance jobs and it would allow them to have good financial reports to give to Capital Planning as far as depreciation. Cesar said the $24,000 covered three modules, Facilities (for building maintenance), Fleet (for Highway fleet) and Stormwater. Cesar said this would replace the current ticketing system that the Town added a few years ago. He said this would allow the company to visit all the Town building sites and upload all the asset information so that Scott won’t have to do it himself. That portion of it is $15,000 of the $24,000 request. Fred asked if that $8,600 that remained would then become part of the regular Data Processing budget in future years. Cesar said it would. Tom asked about the stability of the firm that Cesar was looking to use as it was recently purchased by another firm. Tom mentioned that he had done some research based on the Fin Com questions about that and he saw that Dude Solutions was rated in the Top 20 in the space and also as one of the cheapest for what they do. Cesar said he had also reached out to other towns and that he had good feedback about Dude Solutions.

Cesar told Fred he would like to discuss the digital workflow system and the fact that Fin Com had questioned whether or not there was enough storage. Cesar said he had reached out to SHI (software company) to ask for pricing on a Docuwear system. Cesar said the licensing and pricing may be different from company to company. Cesar said there was not a lot of room for negotiation on pricing with some of the companies because they are part of a state bid list. He said he reached out to 3 different vendors to price 2 different softwares. Cesare said this phase of the Digital workflow would only be for certain departments and then we may add more departments later. Cesar said one possibility was to bring the back up onsite versus cloud based. Fred said that is not advisable. Tom agreed you wouldn’t want to bring it on site. Cesar said he thought cloud based was better. Tom said $37.50 per user per month and 50 gigs seems very high. You should either be getting terabytes for that amount of money per user or the cost per user should be closer to the teens. Cesar said if more users are added it will bring the price down eventually. Cesar said if we added up to 40-50 users though, the cost would eat up at least half of the data processing yearly budget. Fred mentioned about the issues the Highway has had with slowness in their systems but said he hadn’t been there since before the pandemic. Cesar said some of the new upgrades like switching them to laptops had helped with some of the issues. However, he said that that cabling there was a huge issue. Cesar said the job was never completed and now he is trying to cancel the contract and find a new vendor to due the job. Cesar said he is trying to go from CAT4 cable to CAT5 cable. Cesar said he also upgraded the bandwidth for the Town facilities and that should be helping slowness as well.

Fred asked Gordon if he would like to speak to the school articles. Gordon said to start he would defer to Paula Hatch to discuss the article for the tennis courts. Paula spoke about the capital plan that Silver Lake has worked on over the years and how they are constantly planning 5-6 years out. She said that SL has been able over the last few years to pay for some capital items out of the E&D account to help out the towns at times of financial stress. She said they can no longer afford to do that for large projects. She said the tennis courts are in serious disrepair. Paula said the most fiscally sound decision is to do a total refurbish of the courts because that would last longer than a patch or repair job. Matt Durkee (head of facilities) said that they had an athletic assessment done at the school. He said one of the things that came up was the substantial crack in the courts. He said you could redo just the top surface of the court at a cost of about $126,000 and it would be good for about 2-5 years. He said the full refurbish would cost about $340,000 but would last likely over 15 years. The current court is about 17 years old. Matt said the courts get a lot of public use. Matt said no matter what happens the courts need some kind of attention this year for sure. Cheryll asked if any resident from any town could use the court and the answer was yes. Drew asked if the cost was allocated amongst all three towns and Matt and Fred confirmed that yes, the article was for only Halifax’s portion of the $340,000, about $105,000. Fred asked the life expectancy of the refurbish. Matt looked up the information and Joe said he believed it was close to 20+ years and Matt agreed. Cheryll asked what the cost to just fill the cracks would be. Matt said that could come out of the regular operating budget for wages and then just whatever materials would cost but it would have to be done annually. Fred asked if just patching opens the Towns and school up to liability. Matt said it would be a possible trip hazard if you don’t fix the court fully. Paula Hatch asked if pictures would be helpful. Fred said they would, and Matt said he would supply them prior to Wednesday night’s meeting.

Joe asked Matt about the resealing article for the HES parking lot. He was wondering what the square footage of the area was and what materials were being used. Matt said it was the quote was to fill cracks, reseal and line the parking lot. Joe asked the total square footage. Matt said he would send it before the Wednesday meeting, and he said the lowest quote so far was for $24,700.

Matt said HES is trying to add exterior lights because the parking lot is still dim even when all lights are in use. He said they might have to add one or two poles at the most and look for ways to put some lights on the building to bring costs down but they would be very careful of the new roof. Matt said it should not be that expensive of a project.

Fred asked Matt about the kitchen flooring article. Matt said this has been on the radar for years. He said the bonded seams on the vinyl are starting to breakdown. They are becoming trip hazards. He said the biggest obstacle is the amount of heavy equipment that would need to be moved to do new flooring. He said the recommendation from flooring companies has been to do sheet linoleum with bonded or welded seams again. She said the price would be around $30,000. Matt said this has to be a priority within the next few years if not now. He said sooner rather than later would be helpful. Joe questioned why the article was for only $23,000 if the estimate was for $30,000. Matt said he would have to discuss that with Bob Clancy to see if he had gotten a lower price but as far as Matt knew it was about $30,000. Joe asked how much square footage was included. Matt said a rough guess would be about 1800 square feet.

Matt said the kindergarten wing is currently VCT and a high traffic drop off site for students and staff. He said the tiles there now are from the original building in 1993. They are lifting. They have put carpet tiles down to help for now. They would like to redo the total hallway. Joe asked about the square footage and Matt said he could send it before Wednesday’s meeting. Joe asked if about 2400 square feet seemed right for the area and Matt said probably around that based on his rough guess. Joe said that is a decent price if that is the square footage.

Matt addressed the article for the pathway around the HES exterior exits to the kindergarten wing. Matt said a paved surface would help with snow removal and help down the amount of debris brought in from outside after recess. Plus it helps with clearing large snow fall amounts and stopping ice damns. He said the fire department has often had to help shovel because they can’t snow blow an unpaved surface. Joe asked about he square footage. Matt said the quote was for 9 feet wide pathway, but he would have to look how long. He said the quote was for $23,000. Fred said the article said $30,000. Joe and Fred said they think maybe this article and the kitchen floor article have the costs flip flopped.

Matt said they are looking for AC in the server and art rooms for a combination of reasons. Matt said obviously the computers get hot in the server room and that is not good for computers. Gordon said if they put AC in the art room also which is a large room it would help bring summer school back to Halifax and not just in Plympton. Matt said because they are close together they should be able to do a split system to cover both locations. Joe asked if it included all the venting and runs. Matt said yes and there may even be some existing lines they can double up on in order to save costs.

Gordon mentioned that there should be an article for the SRO as Fred had asked about and that Gordon would look into that and the Fin Com should expect and article for that as well.

Fred asked Charlie about Wage and Personnel discussion. Charlie said he had nothing yet because he had been too busy.

There were no Reserve Fund Transfers

Fred clarified to keep Mondays and Wednesdays open for March and then after April 5th we could reassess. Fred asked Linda to add discussion on the Zoning RFPs to Monday night’s meeting. Charlie said the budget should be firmed up votes by 4/5 and articles could maybe go to 4/7. He said there are not many STM articles, maybe just two and the contracts for FY21. He said Fin Com can always give recommendations at Town meeting.

There was no public participation.

**Fred entertained a motion to adjourn at 7:15pm.**

Motion: Cheryll

Second: Drew

**AIF**

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Cole, Secretary \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Tom Connolly, Clerk