Finance Committee

TOWN OF HALIFAX

499 Plymouth Street

Halifax, MA 02338

**Meeting Minutes**

**Monday June 21, 2021**

**Committee Members Present**: Tom Connolly, Cheryll Zarella Burke, Drew McGlincy, Joe Vetrano, Michael Bennett and Jon Schmaling.

Also, in attendance in the audience were: Charlie Seelig, Chief Chaves, Sandra Nolan, Gordon Andrews, Bob Ross, Bert Gaynor, Mark Bobrowski, Julie Barrett, Todd Dargie

The meeting was recorded by Zoom

**Tom called the meeting to order at 6:01pm**

**Tom entertained a motion to Accept the minutes from 6/14/21**

Motion: Cheryll

Second: Joe

**AIF**

Tom welcomed the new members to the committee. He asked if anyone wanted to debrief after the last Town Meeting. He said it was tense during the Town meeting and he is hoping better discernment of information and how decisions are made, will help make future meetings less tense. Charlie said Fin Com should expect another Special Town Meeting in September. He said Halifax will need to fund the Silver Lake Assessment because it had been voted by the other two towns and so now Halifax was obligated to pay the higher assessment even though it was voted down at town meeting. He also expects a Zoning article regarding the buffer zone on marijuana establishments. Charlie said the ARCA money will start to come through soon according to the state. The Board of Selectmen have not made any decisions on how to spend this money yet but they are open to suggestions. They will make sure to stay within the federal law limits of how it can be spent.

Tom asked Sandy if there was anything new to add about the budgets. Sandy said Fin Com just needs to make sure all Line Item transfers and Reserve Fund transfers are done by 7/15.

**Tom entertained a motion to approve a Line Item Transfer in the amount of $3000 from Snow and Ice to the Electricity account.**

Motion: Joe

Second: Michael Bennett

**AIF (Cheryll abstained as she lost connection)**

**Tom entertained a motion to approve a Line Item transfer in the amount of $5,000 from the Police Wages to the Police training account**

Motion: Joe

Second: Michael B

**AIF (Cheryll abstained as she still had no connection)**

**Tom entertained a motion to approve a Line Item transfer in the amount of $402.58 from the Police Wages to the Police Chief salary account**

Motion: Joe

Second: Cheryll

**AIF**

**Tom entertained a motion to approve a Line Item transfer in the amount of $130.00 from Recruitment to Selectmen Clerical account**

Motion: Cheryll

Second: Joe

**AIF**

**Tom entertained a motion to approve a Line Item transfer in the amount of $250 from Recruitment to Town Admin salary**

Motion: Cheryll

Second: Joe

**AIF**

Tom asked Todd Dargie who had filled out at a Talent Bank Form to join Fin Com or some other committees to tell the Fin Com a little bit about himself. Todd said he has been in town for about 6 years. He was in the army formerly and has his degree in Accounting. He works with budgets across the US in his current job. He also worked with youth sports organizations in Florida and handling their budgets. He would like the opportunity to work with the Town. Michael B asked about if Todd felt comfortable with the time commitment necessary to be on the Fin Com, especially during budget season. Todd said he believes he can be available. Sandy asked Todd if he was not place on Fin com would he be interested in joining the Capital Planning Committee. Todd said, yes he would be interested in helping wherever he is needed.

Tom brought up the idea of starting Wage and Personnel discussions in the summer, such as what Fred the former Chair had planned to do. He said we could set meetings for 7/12, 7/26 and 8/30. Linda said she would reach out to the Selectmen secretary to ask her to coordinate the Selectmen for those meetings to discuss Wage and Personnel items.

Mark Bobrowski said Judi Barrett from Barrett Planning in Duxbury was also in attendance and would be working with him on the Zoning bylaw revisions. Jue has extensive experience in planning and public outreach. Mark thought Halifax’s bylaws were not too bad overall. He reiterated his intent to hold 4 themed meetings over the next four times he met with the group. He mentioned that the Site Plan Reviews appeal process should be in the bylaws. He said in his first themed meetings he will go over things like job descriptions related to Zoning and planning. Who does what as far as Zoning members, Planning members, Building commissioner, etc. He said the second theme would be about Use tables and definitions. He said Halifax does not clearly define many of the principle uses. The third meeting would be a public meeting, and this is where you might see Halifax make significant changes if they want to. He said the fourth meeting would be about non-residential sections, such as sign regulations (he felt Halifax’s were very extensive), Parking regulations (which he think needs help), Lights, noise and landscaping. Mark said after that he will then work for about a month on those issues and then produce a first draft of the Zoning bylaw that includes the new changes. After that he will go to a second draft based on feedback and that would include the new changes as well as the original content that remained. Generally, he likes to think the third draft is the final product, but often it takes more than 3 drafts.

Mark shared his screen. He said he always likes to do a Table of Contents. He mentioned that he doesn’t believe that Halifax has to add any new chapters. He recommended that all definitions go in the back of the Zoning book. He said it is more uniform that way to find what a specific definition means, and it is consistent throughout different parts of the bylaw. He wants to add the Home Rule bylaw to Halifax and was surprised they didn’t already have it as it allows for a lot of flexibility by the Town. He mentioned the last time the Zoning bylaws for Halifax was completely updated was in 1976. He said everything in the Use Table needs definitions added to it. He said the enumeration of districts is too much trouble, you should just let the Use and Dimensional tables set the districts for you. He said Wireless, solar, and Earth Removal bylaws should all be moved into a general chapter of regulations. Use Regulations overall seem good to him.

He mentioned that the State said that Mixed Use or Multifamily with at least 10% affordable housing only takes a simple majority of town meeting versus a 2/3 vote. Halifax should update that. He said there are special rules for MBTA towns. Judi mentioned that Halifax is an MBTA town. Mark mentioned that the Town needs to give itself more exemptions in the bylaws for things like cemeteries, etc. He said the Retail stores section needs more definition on size, etc. He said Affordable Housing changes are coming also, so Halifax should be prepared.

Mark said the overall layout will be different. He said 75% of residents will read only the non-conforming section because that is when Zoning matters to them. He said Halifax should “clean this up” a lot. He said the dimensional regulations look good. He was curious if the extensive sign regulations for Halifax work well because he has not really seen any that extensive. Charlie said there are still sometimes issues. Mark mentioned that some of the political sign regulations are now unlawful according to updated laws and he will address that. He said the Flood Plain bylaws are right on point. He didn’t see anything for alternative nature for residential development (re: flexible space, open space) and he thinks it should be added to the bylaws because it creates some really nice areas.

Mark believes the Planning Boards powers and composition should also be in the bylaws. He said the Site Plan approvals are ok. He said there seems to be a lot of requirements for submittal of a site plan but maybe instead of so many subjective standards Halifax should put in objective standards. He said they should also add performance standards for non-residential. He said a “Lapse Provision” is missing from the section.

He suggests that the Dover Use site plan review should be added to Halifax bylaws. Also, requirements for reasonable accommodations for ADA.

Judi said it is good to hear from residents early on. Judi mentioned it is key for the ZBA, Planning Board and Conservation Commission to be involved and she was surprised there was more representation there. Mark said it is really important for the ZBA to be at the next meeting on 7/12 where they may be discussing non-conforming bylaws. Judi said some consultation from the ZBA through her would be a good idea. Mark asked if Fin Com could meet on 7/12 to discuss the non-conforming and Fin Com said they would put it on their agenda.

Tom asked if there was any public participation. There was none

**Tom entertained a motion to adjourn at 7:20pm**

Motion; Cheryll

Second: Michael Bennett

**AIF**

Respectfully submitted,

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

Joe Vetrano, Clerk