Finance Committee

TOWN OF HALIFAX

499 Plymouth Street

Halifax, MA 02338

**Meeting Minutes**

**Monday October 4, 2021**

**Committee Members Present**: Tom Connolly, Michael Bennett, Michael O’Brien, Cheryll Zarella Burke and Jon Schmaling and Todd Dargie

Also, in attendance in the audience were: Sandy Nolan, Charles Seelig, Ashley Disesa, Cesar Calouro and Darlene Regan

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

The minutes that had been presented were the minutes of 9/21 and not the minutes of 9/27/21 and so Tom said they would wait until the next meeting to accept the 9/27 minutes as the 9/21 minutes had already been approved.

Tom mentioned that Linda had sent all the job descriptions that were on file for Wage and Personnel employees. He wondered if there was a better more organized way to approach the matter. Charlie said we still need updated pay data and that he still had not worked on that. He said the Finance Committee then has to decide if it wants to get into using the point system and looking at job descriptions or if there first priority is to look at the Wage Scale as a whole and then make adjustments there. Tom said his view was that we need to first analyze the wage information and see if we are way off the market and then fix the pay scale as a whole and just start there. He said if we needed to we could move on after that.

Tom asked Darlene Regan to speak about her request to bring the new van driver in at a Step 6 for their grade. Darlene said she recently had 2 van drivers leave. She said she is trying to find someone qualified to do the work and it is hard. She found a Halifax resident who has her CDL. The woman currently drives for First Student but would like something with less hours. She saw the Halifax van driver job and thought it was a good fit. She would like to stay under 20 hours a week. Darlene wants to give her a step 6 because she seems like an ideal candidate. Tom asked how many hours a week she would do and Darlene said less than 20. She said hours per week could vary between 5 hours to 19 hours. Jon said that he noticed that the applicant was only seeking a pay rate of $18.81 and so he wondered why Darlene was asking for Step 6 at $19.11. She said the $19.11 was pretty close to the request and it was more in line with what others receive. Jon said we wouldn’t want to lose anyone but it could give her somewhere to go up to if we put her at a lower step. Tom asked what the difference between bringing the driver in at Step 1 and Step 6 was and Darlene and Sandy said it was about $3 an hour more.

**Tom entertained a motion to recommend the new van driver be brought in at Grade 2 Step 6**

Motion: Michael O’Brien

Second: Cheryll

**AIF**

Charlie said the Board of Selectmen would be addressing their side of the vote on their 10/12 meeting.

Cesar asked if comparable towns that are listed on the website are the same ones that they will be using this year. Charlie said he hadn’t had a chance to update the list but it usually stays about the same. Sometimes you have one town drop off or one town add on, but basically you have the same 8 standard ones because demographics don’t change that radically.

Tom talked about the liaisons. He asked if people could overlap between departments and work together. Charlie said of course they could because the liaison is not working as an advocate for their departments, they are instead just an information gatherer. Cheryll said she would like to keep the same departments she worked with last year. Tom asked Charlie if there needed to be a formal vote for liaisons. Charlie said there did not.

Tom asked if anyone wanted the Public Works groups. Michael Bennett said he would take them. Sandy suggested that Michael need not take Capital Planning as Tom and Todd are both already on it. They all agreed. Jon said he would take the regulatory grouping. Todd will take the Town Hall groupings. Michael O’Brien said he will do the other general grouping that included the Veteran’s agent. Tom said he would like to be the liaison for the schools. Linda said she would provide an updated list (will be added to the minutes).

Tom asked Sandy about the timeline for the budget work. Sandy said in the end of November she sends out budget sheets that are due the first week of January. Sandy will update the budget sheets, etc in the fin Com spreadsheet she gives out annually. Charlie said he may provide a “back of the envelope” number of what the Town will be working with for a budget, and he may even try and go out a couple extra years. Charlie will ask the Finance committee and the Board of Selectmen what they want to advise departments to do. Sandy said the last couple of years it has been to level service.

Tom mentioned that when he was new last year, he thought it was a heavy life to get used to the way municipalities work versus private companies. Sandy said she would send out the information as early as she could Cesar said he will talk to Sandy about making it easier for the member to access shared documents Tom advised new members that if there is something they see in the budgets that doesn’t seem to make sense, to please get an answer from the department because it always comes out in Town meeting. Sandy said last town meeting was a very difficult year because everything was so up in the air due to COVID.

Charlie said the finance Committee needed to elect a member to be the representative to the Zoning Bylaw revision committee. Tom said he thins there are major things in the Zoning that need to be reviewed and he found the meetings with Mark Bobrowski very interesting. Jon asked what the commitment is for the committee. Charlie said probably several meetings in the next few months. He hoped to have something by January that he could take to town meeting in May. Jon said he would be interested.

**Tom entertained a motion to appoint Jon Schmaling as the Finance Committee representative to the Zoning by law study committee**

Motion: Tom

Second: Cheryll

**AIF**

Cheryll asked Sandy if there was anything to be signed. Sandy said she believed there was a payroll. Cheryll said she would stop by.

There was no public participation

**Tom entertained a motion to adjourn at 6:47pm**

Motion: Cheryll

Second: Michael O’Brien

**AIF**

Respectfully submitted,

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

Michael Bennet, Clerk