Finance Committee

TOWN OF HALIFAX

499 Plymouth Street

Halifax, MA 02338

**Meeting Minutes**

**Monday , November 8, 2021**

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

Also, in attendance in the audience were: Sandy Nolan, Charlie Seelig, Chief Chaves and Toni Ross

**Tom called the meeting to order at 6:04pm**

**Tom entertained a motion to accept the minutes of 10/25**

Motion: Michael Bennet

Second: Michael O’Brien

**AIF**

There were no Line Item or Reserve Fund Transfers

Tom said he looked at the 5 towns that had submitted data so far for the Wage and Personnel request. He said Halifax is the low payer in the group it would seem. He would like to hear suggestions about how to go forward with the wage review. Jon said he believed they would like to see a quote. He thinks we want to make sure the Town isn’t breaking the bank. Todd agrees but he doesn’t want to spend a lot of money on he study itself. Tom said from the 5 towns we got they were slightly larger towns. Tom said wage inflation is being announced in private business now too. It is in the market already in places like Walmart. Tom asked Linda if she could continue to try and get towns to answer. Tom said he can produce national algorithms with figures adjusted to Massachusetts. He said it wouldn’t cost anything for his company to do it. He would like to come back with something good for the town but also employees as well given wage pressures in the market. Charlie said as long as the algorithm takes into account the Cost of Living in Massachusetts. Tom asked if the Committee could go into Executive Session to discuss wage issues. Charlie said there is no means for them to be allowed to go into Exec Session for that. It all has to be done in a public forum and it would need to be posted. Tom said they could air the data during a regular finance committee meeting. He asked how others felt about that plan. Jon clarified this was just about going forward with the plan. Mike O’Brien asked about the ARPA money being used. Sandy said maybe just for the study. Sandy wanted to make sure that the Fin Com is only using the 10 comparable towns. Tom said it would be based on comparing the Massachusetts data to the 10-town data to get a better idea of the information on wages. Linda clarified with Tom that he said his portion could be done for free and Tom concurred. Tom said he would begin to move forward with the data analysis. Charlie said that the Fin Com could use some of the Revenue replacement money for that if they wanted to and the Selectmen agreed. He said the selectmen are looking at larger projects to go under other revenue sources of COVID money Charlie said you have to know a good sense of what you want the company to research for data before you go out to a company and ask them to bid it. Charlie said the Fin Com and Selectmen need to get an early start on Wage and Personnel issues.

 There was no public participation

Tom asked what the timeline should be for liaisons to reach out their department heads. Sandy said a budget meeting with the Selectmen is usually near the end of November. Charlie said the Fin Com should reach out to the Selectmen and ask if they could attend a meeting on 11/29 or 11/30. Tom asked where the financial insight will come from in meetings once Charlie is gone. Sandy said if Charlie can give a back of the envelope figure she can move forward from that. Sandy said she will put budgets in the Shared OneDrive file like last year. Sandy said that with the suggested changes from town counsel, all articles will have to be set with motions by April.

Charlie said that receipts seem to be coming into the State hand over fist for some reason. He said the Unrestricted Local Aid will likely go up and will help but won’t make a massive difference for Halifax. He expects we will likely get closer to 5% than 2% like most years.

Tom reminded everyone about the Conflict of Interest training that must be completed.

**Tom entertained a motion to adjourn at 6:30pm.**

Motion: Mike Bennett

Second: Mike O’Brien

**AIF**

Respectfully submitted,

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

Tom Connolly, Chair