

Finance Committee
Town of Halifax
499 Plymouth Street
Halifax, MA 02338

Meeting Minutes

Monday, January 9, 2023

Committee Members Present: Cheryll Zarella Burke, Todd Dargie, Jon Schmaling, Michael Bennett, Jim Walters, Frank Johnston, and Tom Connolly

Audience: Sandy Nolan, Darlene Regan, Holly Merry, Chief Chaves and Susan Lawless

Tom called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

Tom explained he has limited time and now there is a backlog of historical minutes. There are 3 applicant resumes' that will be put on the next agenda, and with organization and new secretarial support, the minutes should be done. He also discussed resigning, which he was supposed to do in July, but because of Charlie Selig leaving, and a new town Administrator for 30 days, and losing 2 Board of Selectmen, and also down on own Committee, it has been a challenging year.

Budget assignments were discussed. Each member was given their department assignments to act as liaisons and Tom will email them with lists and contact information, so they can set up meetings to discuss their FY24 budgets. He explained that the objective is to be articulate as possible about their budgets, and have no judgment of what they are deciding. Liaisons should continue to remind departments of the budget guidance we have given them, and each liaison should be well versed behind their rationale of how they put their budgets together. Sandy added that your job is not to advocate for them, but to be able to explain what they have given you and the reasons why. Tom said it is a seek to understand.

Tom explained that the Finance Committee one drive folder will be populated by budgets. Sandy has already started adding to the folder, she will also update all names and contacts and send them out.

Tom discussed meetings going forward; meetings will be held every Monday except holidays.

January 23 - 30

February 6-13-27

First reviews of budgets should be starting.

Tom has not checked correspondence in box at Town hall, and Sandy added that they had received two resumes' from Indeed and also added that the new Town Administrator will be starting on January 17th and he will be attending meetings. Susan Lawless said that she had folder for wage and personnel requests in the Clerk's office, and she will put them in the Fin Com mailbox after the deadline of January 11th.

Tom discussed secretarial candidates should be reviewed at next meeting and the possibility of consolidation, if candidates wanted more hours.

Sandy explained that the positions open are ZBA secretary, Planning Board secretary, and Conservation secretary. She thought that possibly Zoning and Planning may want to consolidate themselves.

Conservation Commission may want to keep separate considering their regulations are different and demanding to know all. Frank asked if any conflict if secretarial position associated with the Finance Committee would have any conflict with taking another position. Sandy and Tom agreed that they are taking notes and not passing judgment.

Sandy also reminded Committee that the Wage and Personnel Hearing is January 25, 2023, at 7 p.m. which all should attend. Also proposals for wage and personnel changes need to be in by the 11th.

Todd asked if Sandy had received the free cash certification, Sandy had not as of today but will reach out to Department of Revenue representative for answers.

Todd also discussed the folder for new revenue ideas, with discussions with Cesar regarding the form. Tom said the folder is still on the shared drive. Cesar said the purpose of form was to made it public. Tom questioned if it creates an obligation to respond to each one. Todd agreed to start small. Tom explained from experience that lots of ideas come in that are not doable and thought to keep it small and not public yet because of limited resources. Cesar wants Fin Com to confirm that they have access to one drive. Cheryl cannot get on with her laptop and Cesar will call to assist her tomorrow.

Darlene Regan had questions of the \$100,000 that was earmarked for the COA, who responds to that. Also had questions for Sandy regarding the FY24 budget. Sandy explained that when they go forward with the Senior Center, it will be a capital item and that being short and in need of a bond or other means would be a decision for Capital Planning and an article would be written for this year. Frank recalled the money was protected for 4 or 5 years for this project. Frank also mentioned that with the new Town Administrator coming on, he believes he will be helpful with this. Frank asked Sandy if sending out budget requests for Wage and Personnel went smoothly and Sandy replied she has not heard back from many departments. She said the liaisons will hear from their departments. Frank also asked if the committee will stay with zoom meetings, Tom believes they get quorums more often this way.

Tom entertained a motion to adjourn.

So moved – Michael Bennett
Second – Cheryll Zarella Burke
AIF with roll call vote.

Respectfully submitted,


Michael Bennett, Clerk