

## **Finance Committee**

TOWN OF HALIFAX  
499 Plymouth Street  
Halifax, MA 02338

### **Meeting Minutes**

**Monday, January 23, 2023**

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

**Audience:** Sandy Nolan, Cody Haddad, Cesar Calouro, Holly Merry, Chief Chaves, Jean Gallant

Tom called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m.

Tom discussed the reorganization of the Committee, and the need to replace his role as Chairman. Tom makes a motion to nominate Todd Dargie as Chairman, Cheryll seconded. Todd said he would accept this role. There being no other nominations, a roll call vote was taken. AIF and the motion carries. Tom congratulates Todd and wishes him good luck and would be happy to help with the transition.

There was a delay of minutes acceptance due to the vacancy of a secretary. Tom discussed holding interviews for the position on January 30, 2023, starting at 6 p.m. with 20 minutes intervals. After referring to the Town Administrator, Cody Haddad, Tom will get approval of candidates to be interviewed. This will be the 1<sup>st</sup> agenda item.

Discussion of scheduled meetings with Wage and Personnel. There will be a public meeting at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, January 25, 2023.

Tom discussed with the committee that the next four months agenda will be concentrated on the FY24 Budget. Fin Com liaisons have already started meeting with their assigned Departments to discuss budgets. Todd suggested meeting with Department Heads started February 6, 2023 and will reach out to them. School, Fire and Police will be put on hold, as the school has not submitted their budget. Jim wanted to know what is expected of him and it was suggested he reach out to Jonathan Seelig who is the liaison for the schools. Frank questioned the procedure of bringing in Department Heads and Tom explained it as the first layer is overview of budgets, and any outliers. The second would be looking at any cuts. Department Heads will need to explain the rationale of their budgets in the open session. Tom reiterated that there is a big drag on the school budget, noting the Special Education transportation. Jean Gallant questioned who her liaison was and was told it was Jim Walters. There was no further discussion of operating budgets.

Todd discussed the possible revenue ideas and the form that will be available to submit ideas. The Town Clerk and previous Collector have submitted the possibility of increasing their rates for services such as birth certificates, late fees and demands, etc. to keep them in line with other towns. Sandy is not sure who would make that final decision, Cody said if there is nothing in the By-laws, it will go to the

Board of Selectmen. Sandy said that these increases will not be dramatic but will help. Tom said it could be substantial giving the dozens of services the town provides. Chief Chaves mentioned the increase in dog fines. Sandy said that each department has their own fees, and she will email Department Heads to look at their fee schedules. The folder will be on the one-drive as Cesar has set up the form in the Finance Committee folder, named "New Revenue Idea Submission". Frank asked if there would be a tracking date, and Cesar explained it is auto generated. Todd explained the form and will be checking folder on weekly basis. Tom talked about ways of operating senior vans and special needs transport, saying we should be finding ways of service sharing.

Tom asked for any other business. Sandy received the notification of free cash (over \$1 million) and explained that free cash comes from unspent expenditure account and more revenues coming in than estimated as she is very conservative. She said the retained earnings – water department is doing well but the recycling/solid waste not doing well. The vendor has a one-year contract extension due to no one bidding and is very high. They want the town to go to totes for trash pickup. Sandy said we are working on the understanding that we will be going to totes (ideally 48-Gallon). **We will be asking** for a \$1.6 million bond and can pay the bond without raising rates.

Todd asked Sandy for Capital requests, Sandy replied that not many have come in. Scott Materna will have numerous requests due to the ADA study and the 5 years to accomplish. She has not heard from the Highway Department. Chief Chaves has asked for one cruiser, Sandy said they could go for two. She does expect more articles in the next couple of weeks.

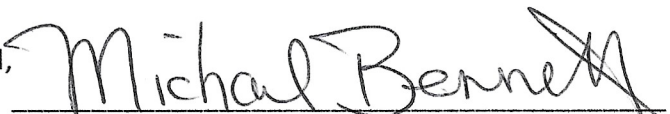
Tom entertained a motion to adjourn at 6:53 p.m.

Motion: Cheryl

Second: Jim

AIF with roll call

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Bennett". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. The first name "Michael" is written in a larger, more prominent script, and "Bennett" follows in a similar but slightly smaller script. The signature is written over a horizontal line.

Michael Bennett, Clerk