Finance Committee

TOWN OF HALIFAX

499 Plymouth Street

Halifax, MA 02338

**Meeting Minutes**

**Monday January 25, 2021**

**Committee Members Present**: Cheryll Zarella Burke, Fred McGovern, Melinda Tarsi, Tom Connolly, Lauren Carmichael

Also, in attendance in the audience were: Charlie Seelig, Sandy Nolan, Jean Gallant, Barbara Gaynor, Kendra Kelly, Susan Lawless and an unidentified resident

The meeting was recorded by Zoom

**Melinda called the Finance Committee meeting to order at 6:03 pm**

Sandy told Fin Com members she had started to compile the budget synopsis but the big budget ticket of the Silver Lake School budgts has not been submitted yet an that the is the biggest part of the budget. She wanted them to be aware that is why it didn’t make sense as of this moment. Sandy said members should feel free to contact her if they had questions about the budgets sheets or synopsis. Charlie said during the MMA conference the Lieutenant Governor had said that State Local aid should see about a 3% increase. Charlie said instead of dropping by 5% which is what he and Sandy had taken an educated guess at back in November, it would now likely increase 3% over the original numbers. Charlie said he feels fairly confident in this estimation by the Lieutenant Governor.

Linda Cole said the Board of Health and Library had reached out to be scheduled with the Finance Committee at the next meeting to discuss their budgets. The Finance Committee thought that would work and Melinda told Linda that if any others came up they could be scheduled as needed. Linda said they also had a few scheduled for the week after that.

**Melinda entertained a motion to accept the meeting minutes from 1/11/2021**

Motion: Cheryll

Second: Tom

**AIF**

There were no Reserve Fund Transfers

Linda said that the only correspondence was regarding the Wage and Personnel Hearing petitions as well as the letter of resignation from Bill McAvoy. Melinda asked Linda to write up a letter to Bill to thank him for his many years on the Finance Committee and also working as their liaison to the Capital Planning Committee. Melinda discussed splitting up Bill’s liaison assignments. Melinda said for now she can reach out to all of Steve Hayward’s departments. Tom offered to help and said he would handle the Recycling and Water departments. Melinda said the Finance Committee will also have to decide upon someone to act as liaison to the Capital Planning Committee. Melinda asked Charlie to reach out and send an email blast asking for members at large for the Capital Plan Committee.

Charlie told the Fin Com members that probably none of the Selectmen would be attending the Wage and Personnel hearing tonight so the Fin Com should proceed without them. Charlie said this meeting was just a formality of reading the petitions.

Melinda read the proposals (see attached) and let people know that they could offer some input if they had authored the petition.

1. Charlie said the had submitted the grade 6 and 7 proposal to make sure it included everyone in those grades. He said he had already had a couple requests about changes within those grades and those grades come up every year and it is important to look at all the positions in the grades and not just some of the positions. Tom asked if it was an equity proposal or just for the sake of good order. Charlie said it was both. He said last year Wage and Personnel decided both grades need to be considered for changes. Charlie said as soon as he got in a couple this year he wanted to make sure it was equitable for all. Charlie said that he wanted to clarify that ALL administrative assistants are in grade 6 currently and only Statutory assistants are in Grade 7. He pointed out that statutory assistants are different then admin assistants because they have to assume the responsibilities of the department if something happens to the department head but the same would not be expected of the admin assistants. He said a statutory assistant would take over but we would never ask the Police or Fire Admin to take over as the police or fire chief, they have deputies or the equivalent for that. Charlie said so if you move people you have to keep that in mind. He said maybe a wage scale revision is what needs to be considered. Tom inquired about who does the “market pricing” for a wage scale consideration? Charlie said it would probably fall back on him but others may help. He didn’t think he had time to do it all by himself. Melinda said they had some research they had done before. Jean Gallant suggested communication via department heads ahead of this meeting would be good. If everyone knew what everyone else was requesting then no one would feel as if they got left out. Jean wanted to know how she could get a copy of all the proposals. Linda suggested asking the Town Clerk as she has the official copies of all proposals time stamped. Charlie said in the future maybe a department head meeting a day or two before the due date would be a good idea. Melinda agreed the communication would be good.
2. The second request was for the fire Admin Assistant. Tom said Sandy had explained to him the difference between admin assistants and the statutory assistants. Melinda gave a brief explanation of the rubric used in the past.
3. Police Admin- Tom asked if this again was because of the difference between Admin assistant and stauatory. Melinda said the rubric was very helpful in seeing the difference in accountability between positions and risks for different jobs.
4. Fire Call proposals: Melinda read the all
5. Board of health request for uniform allowance
6. Proposal regarding minimum wage-Charlie said minimum wage becomes a problem in the wage scale and in getting qualified applicants in higher grades if they are only making minimum wage. Sue Lawless agreed saying that she had a hard time getting applicants for van drivers when the rate of pay was so low.

Melinda asked Charlie to figure out when the Selectmen could meet with Finance to discuss Wage and Personnel issues. She would like at least 2 selectmen to attend the next meeting.

Barbara Gaynor questioned two other notices she had in her folder regarding Wage and Personnel but Charlie said they were just procedural changes and did not need to be announced in the meeting. It was just “cleaning up” the changes now that there was no W&P board.

There was no public participation

Melinda confirmed that Fin Com is scheduled for every Monday.

No As May Arise

 **Melinda entertained a motion to adjourn at 7:11pm**

Motion: Fred

Second: Cheryll

**AIF**

Respectfully submitted,

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

Fred McGovern, Clerk