Finance Committee

TOWN OF HALIFAX

499 Plymouth Street

Halifax, MA 02338

**Meeting Minutes**

**Monday, February 3, 2020**

**Committee Members Present**: Cheryll Zarella Burke, Drew McGlincy, Melinda Tarsi, Bill McAvoy and Fred McGovern

Also, in attendance in the audience were: Sue Lawless and Jean Gallant

The meeting was recorded by Area 58

**Melinda called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm**

Melinda asked for status updates on liaison meetings. Cheryll said she had spoken to all but 3 of her departments. She believed that there was no need for any of the departments to meet with the Finance Committee (with the exception of the Accountant’s office and the Selectmen’s office) at this time due to the fact that they had all requested only minimal or no change to their budgets. Melinda suggested that the Selectmen’s budget and Accountant’s budget should be moved from tonight’s meeting to the meeting on 2/10 since Charlie and Sandy were both not present.

Melinda stated that she still had to make a couple more appointments with her departments but had met with most of them. Bill said that he had not yet met with his departments but should be meeting with them in the next week or so and therefore would be a couple weeks out on presenting to the Finance Committee on them. Fred stated that he just has the schools and has been regularly attending the meetings and we are just waiting to see a final budget for them. We should be able to have a good idea of standing going into the Tri-Town meeting on 2/24. Bill said that Capital Planning should be ready to present on 2/24 and most of the requests are based around the Highway Department. Bill said they will present after the Tri-Town meeting on 2/24.

**Melinda entertained a motion to table the following agenda items; Accountant’s budget, Selectmen’s budget, Waterman Grievance (executive session) and Waterman grievance open session, due to the fact that the Town Accountant and the Town Administrator were both not at the meeting.**

Motion: Bill

Second: Cheryll

**AIF**

**Melinda entertained a motion to accept the minutes of the 1/27/20 meeting**

Motion: Cheryll

Second: Drew

**AIF (Bill and Fred both abstained as they were not at the meeting)**

**Melinda entertained a motion to accept the minutes of the 1/13/20 meeting**

Motion: Bill

Second: Fred

**AIF**

Melinda discussed the Youth and Rec budget notes that were attached to the member’s packets. Linda Cole advised that Sandy had asked that the “rough figures” be passed along to the Finance Committee.

Melinda led a discussion about upcoming meeting dates. Finance will meet on 2/10 and 2/24 but not 2/17 (due to the holiday). They will also plan to meet 3/2, 3/9, 3/16, 3/23, and 3/30. If we have no agenda items for those nights, we can always cancel a meeting or if we find we need further meetings to handle budget issues, we can add more nights near the end of March. Melinda said the Wage and Personnel Board should be making recommendations to the Finance Committee in or around 3/23. Melinda noted that this meeting would likely take a significant amount of time and W&P should probably be the only item on the agenda for that night. Melinda noted that the meeting notices for W&P should be posted soon.

Melinda asked Sue Lawless, director of the Council on Aging, if she could speak to the Committee about her budget. Everyone took a moment to introduce themselves to the new Director. Melinda stated that she had met with Sue already. Melinda stated that Finance would not be addressing the wages line as it would be waiting for recommendations from W&P.

Sue notified the Committee that she had just been informed on the previous Friday that the company who has produced the COA Newsletter for the last 10 years, was no longer willing to produce it for the COA. She said there was a change of ownership and the new owner had reviewed the account and determined that this account had been running at a deficit to the company for 10 years. Sue explained that we did not pay for the newsletter, we just got ads but that was not generating enough money. Sue said that the current company was going to send a price and that she had also reached out to Harding Print for a price. She wanted to let the Fin Com know that this would be an added expense in their budget. Melinda asked that Sue come back when she had prices to share or email the Fin Com with the list of prices. Melinda mentioned that it would be the COA expense line that would increase. Sue also let the Fin Com know that there is a kiosk at the Senior Center that is being used but that no one had ever allotted for the maintenance fee of it in a budget. She said the annual maintenance costs $1200 and she believed that for the upcoming budget season it would be moved into the IT budget. Sue said that she believed that the Generations group had paid the first annual fee but that it would need to absorb into a regular budget now. Bill asked what the kiosk is used for? Sue said they seniors sign in on it when they come in and they log the reason they are visiting (ie: transportation, a class, a meal). Sue said that it helps her track the information she needs for some of the COA grants. Sue said she had called the State to see if any of the State grant money could be used to help pay for it, but she has not heard back. Bill asked if Cesar has already put the $1200 in his FY20 budget. Melinda said we could address that question to Charlie because he is the head of IT. Melinda pointed out that the COA was also asking for a slight increase in their electricity line, but that it seemed to fit with the trend of other departments as they all seemed to expect a slight increase. Jean Gallant asked if the COA has the new LED lights in their building? Sue said that she did not believe they did. Jean said the LED lights in the library have helped to lower the electricity bill. Melinda asked if anyone had any further questions. No one did. Melinda advised Sue that they may request her to come back once they have more information from all departments including the school. Jean asked why the COA had a separate line item for the Electricity whereas the library has it rolled in as part of their expense line item. Melinda said that it was probably a historical reason that would have to be run by Sandy.

Melinda asked if there was any public participation? Bill asked if we knew anything about why the Waterman Grievance as on the agenda. Melinda stated that she believed Charlie could give us more information when he was in attendance.

Melinda asked Drew if he wanted to talk about his request to discuss Environmental issues. Drew said he is interested in finding out if any of the municipal buildings have/would consider solar panels as a source for electricity? Melinda said that is a question that would be better answered by Charlie. Melinda suggested that Drew might want to consider being the Fin Com representative to a board such as the Waste Management Committee because it considered things like environmental issues. She said the Finance Committee is limited in the scope of their mission and in what other Boards/Committees they can serve upon, but there are some Committees that they can act as representatives to. Fred said that there has been a survey sent out about what residents might be interested in, but the Waste Management Committee is still waiting to receive the responses back. Jean added that a grant was used for the LED lighting in the library and that it was all part of a grant to reduce costs through more effective environmental factors.

**Melinda entertained a motion to adjourn at 7:24pm**

Motion: Bill

Second: Cheryll

**AIF**

Respectfully submitted,

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

Fred McGovern, Clerk