Finance Committee

TOWN OF HALIFAX

499 Plymouth Street

Halifax, MA 02338

**Meeting Minutes**

**Monday, August 17, 2020**

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

Also, in attendance in the audience were: Charlie Seelig, Sandy Nolan, Jill Proulx, Gordon Andrews

The meeting was recorded by Zoom

**Melinda called the Finance Committee meeting to order at 6:04 pm**

Melinda asked about the new COA van pricing that the Committee had received in an email. Charlie said the pricing was about $67,000. He said we usually do a grant in conjunction with Brockton Area Transit, that helps us lower the price. Charlie said the problem is that the van needs to be replaced very soon because it is unsafe to run, but the BAT grant usually takes about a year to process through and Charlie is not even sure when the next grant that BAT does will be. Charlie said if the Board of Selectmen (BOS) decide to do an additional Special Town Meeting on September 12th then they would likely put this as an article on that STM. Charlie said that the Finance Committee and the Capital Planning Committee will have to start making decisions on exactly what they want to recommend or not recommend because we have a request for more funding then is available. Fin Com will have to prioritize.

Melinda asked the School Committee members to discuss what they know about the school reopening plans and how it will effect the budget plans. Melinda asked Gordon to speak for the HES school committee. Gordon said on the elementary school plan they need to come up with the exact number of students that would be riding the buses. Buses will be the biggest expense. Melinda asked Jill if there was anything that the Fin Com should know that would impact the budget, that hadn’t been discussed yet. Jill said that they don’t know the ongoing cost of PPE because they have never dealt with this before but they have to be able to provide it to kids that show up without anything. . Also she said they don’t know the MOAs yet and are negotiating with the Teacher’s unions. She said you might see a new paraprofessional position request that would staff the room where children showing symptoms could wait to see the nurse. She said there is a lot of push from the unions to support such a position. She said the State also recommended bus monitors, but there doesn’t seem to be a lot of support for hiring those positions. Jill said these are some of the possible expenses. Melinda asked Charlie and Sandy if she thought it would be a good idea to hold another meeting with the School Administration closer to the ATM on 9/12/20. Sandy said it might not be a bad idea the week before ATM (Melinda pointed out that Monday is the holiday). Melinda suggested putting a place holder on the agenda for 8/31/20 for the school. Jill said the school goal is to hopefully have everything more nailed down by 9/12/20 because they start school on 9/16/20. Melinda suggested the Fin Com and the School Committee co-post for the meeting on 8/31/20. She said Fin Com could start their meeting at 6pm and then based on the timing of the budget discussions for the school committee, the Fin Com could adjourn from the Fin Com meeting and join the School Committee meeting to discuss budgets.

Charlie said that as of right now, the last budget Sandy submitted “looks good.” He said he and Sandy had discussions earlier in the day that the Storm Water Management line might need to be increased slightly so there are less requests for line item transfers. Charlie said the biggest budget issue to be looked at right now is for Fin Com to determine how much money exactly they want to leave “on the table” over and above the normal $300,000 they leave on the table. Melinda asked Sandy and Bill (as representatives of the Capital Planning Committee) if they knew of any big ticket items in FY22 or FY23 that should be considered because if FY22 doesn’t bounce back the way the State is hoping, any money left on the table might be needed for those purchases. Bill said he did not know off the top of his head. Sandy said there was an ambulance coming down the road, but she wasn’t sure when exactly.

Melinda said she wanted to hold off on passing along any Wage and Personnel Recommendations until she confirmed with Gordon Andrews that Fin Com would be discussing them just in case Gordon wanted to be at the meeting as he is the other Wage and Personnel rep.

There were no RFT or LIT requests.

**Melinda entertained a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes from 08/10/20**

Motion: Bill

Second: Fred

**AIF**

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Public Participation: Melinda checked with Charlie if it was ok for her as Chair to do the Employee Evaluation for the Fin Com Secretary or if all members needed to be in on the discussion. Charlie said the Committee could vote to just have Melinda do it, or they could all report to Melinda their opinions. Melinda asked the Fin Com members if they had a preference. Bill said either way was fine with him. Hearing no other opinions,

**Melinda entertained a motion to appoint the Fin Com Chair as the person responsible to do the evaluation for the Fin Com Secretary.**

Motion: Bill

Second: Fred

**AIF**

Gordon Andrews said he wanted to thank all the members of the Finance Committee for their hard work during this especially long budget season which was extended due to COVID.

Sandy Nolan asked if the members had a chance to look over the articles and determine which ones they wanted to fund and which not, because currently the article $ is in a deficit. Melinda said she thought it might be better to wait on that discussion until the next meeting so that gave the Fin Com time to hear what was going on with union negotiations and what impact that might have on the budget. Sandy said that would work.

Melinda asked Linda to remind the Fin Com om Monday 8/24/20 to discuss when and where they would meet the morning of ATM, just in case there were any last minute details to be worked out.

**Melinda entertained a motion to adjourn the regular meeting at 6:35pm and enter into Executive Session by roll call.**

Bill: yes

Fred: yes

Cheryll: yes

Drew: yes

Melinda: yes

Respectfully submitted,

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

Fred McGovern, Clerk