

# Town of Fairhaven

## Finance Committee

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Minutes of the meeting for <March 9, 2017> at the Jeffery W. Osuch BPW Administration Building, 5 Arsene St., Fairhaven, MA

Members in attendance:

Chairman-Scott Fernandes, Robert A. Furtado, Padraic Elliott, Kathi Carter, Lisa Plante, Tracy Diggins, Bernard F. Roderick, Thomas Alden

Town of Fairhaven:

Mark Rees- Town Administrator :in @7:13 PM

Wendy Graves- Collector/Treasurer/Finance Director

Vincent D. Furtado- BPW Superintendent

Meeting was covered by government access television.

Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Announced that the meeting was being recorded by government access TV. Chairman has to be notified if anyone else present is recording the meeting by video or audio.

Motion made by Bernie to accept the minutes from February 16, 2017. Seconded by Tom.  
Vote: Unanimous

- Chairman distributes a copy of the Park Dept. Reserve Fund Transfer request.
- Chairman states he has emailed committee members the link to the Town Administrator's budget.
- Chairman states the deadline for Article submission is Monday, March 13th. We discuss them next week.
  
- Brief discussion of the Capital Improvement Plan:
  - Bernie asks if we will discuss each item. Chairman states we will discuss each item recommended this year.
  - We will not vote on the items until we have the Warrant.

- 7:08 PM Park Department Reserve Fund Transfer request
  - Mr. Furtado requests \$5,000 to cover additional expenses at Fort Phoenix, repairs to equipment, and replacement of the beach rescue board.
  - Chairman reminds members this was discussed at the last meeting and Mr. Furtado consolidated all the amounts on one transfer request.
  - Mr. Furtado states he may also be out of Ice & Snow money if this week's storm is as bad as forecast.
    - Pat motions to transfer \$5,000 to the Park Dept.- Purchase of Services.  
Seconded by Lisa. Vote: Unanimous.
  
- 7:12 PM. Mr. Furtado leaves the meeting. Chairman calls a recess, to allow Mr. Rees to arrive. Back in session at 7:13 PM.
  
- Mr. Rees presents his budget and highlights the major changes:
  - Contracts for the Police, Fire, Dispatchers, and Clerical Unions have been negotiated.
  - Mr. Rees advocates hiring a Human Resource Director
  - It is proposed that the Animal Control department be merged with the Police Dept. and overseen by the Police Chief.
  - Mr. Rees recommends hiring an additional Firefighter/EMT to work the day shift, on the ambulance.
  - Mr. Rees recommends a 3.25% increase to last year's school budget, not the 3.5% increase they are requesting.
  - Mr. Rees recommends Snow & Ice removal from the Bike Path as well as the sidewalks around Oxford and Rogers Schools.
  - Mr. Rees recommends moving the Recreation Center budget into the General Fund and no longer operate as an enterprise fund.
  - Mr. Rees also recommends establishing a reserve fund for Special Education Expenses in the School Dept.
  - Chairman states the money for the SPED Reserve will come from Free Cash.
  - Chairman states the committee will have to see the labor contracts.
  - Bernie asks if all the contracts are up at the same time.
    - Mr. Rees states yes. Clerical & Fire have settled, Police has 1 management issue to settle, Highway has tentatively settled, Sewer & Water are negotiating.
  - Lisa asks if the money budgeted for labor counsel was used?
    - Mr. Rees states the attorney was used for the final contract & some strategy. Most of the negotiating was done in house.

- Discussion of last year's reserve for salary increases.
- Discussion of how the amount of increase in salaries was determined.
- Lisa questions how the stipends in some peoples' salaries affect the raises.
  - Mr. Rees uses his own salary in the budget to explain how they work.
- Discussion of the number of ambulance runs and the committee again asking for revenue versus expenditures for the 3rd ambulance.
- Discussion of the Revenue & Debt service numbers being balanced.
- Mr. Rees discusses the changes to State Aid.
- Mr. Rees recommends \$7,500 in the Selectmen's budget for the Wellness Committee.
- Mr. Rees recommends \$1,000 in the Selectmen's budget for Sister City Support.
- Information Technology will now change because it is going to be handled as a collaboration between Town Government & the School Dept.
- Treasure/Collector has to be changed because the Vadar system does not allow combining the numbers.
- Elections is down because there will be less elections this year.
- Town Hall- Contracted Services is up to allow for upgrade of the alarm system. Minor Equipment is up to cover installation of a shed behind Town Hall, security cameras, handicap ramp repairs, and repairs to the driveway.
- Bernie asks about the Custodian Fill-in. Mr. Rees states he covers when the custodian is on vacation.
- Police budget includes full year funding for the new Captain and Lieutenant positions. Ms. Graves states Police & Fire Depts. will be at our meeting next week. Discussion of the new Police Dept. command structure.
- Animal Control now is part of the Police Dept. budget.
- Lisa questions the animal shelter acting as a regional shelter.
  - Mr. Rees states we do take in other communities animals, but are paid for their care.
- Tom asks Mr. Rees about the command structure of the Fire Dept. Questions the lack of a Captain.
  - Mr. Rees states the Lieutenants over see the Firefighters, the Deputy Chief oversees the Lieutenants, and the Chief oversees the Deputy Chief.
- Fire Dept. Replacement Equipment - includes money to replace 3 Toughbook laptops for the Ambulances.
- Chairman asks Mr. Rees what number he is using for gasoline this year.
  - Mr. Rees states he is going with \$2.10/gallon.
- Marine Resources- Minor Equipment- includes \$9,500 for the installation of a Parking Meter system at Hoppy's Landing. The money will come from the Waterways Account.
- Mr. Rees states the School Dept. is requesting \$20,062,696, but he is recommending \$20,015,826, a reduction of .25%, as a way of holding the budget in line.

- Bernie asks if there were any turn backs from the School Dept. last year. Ms. Graves states she does not believe so.
  - The School Dept. will attend our March 30th meeting.
  - Mr. Rees has level funded GNBRVTHS from last year. He states the Fairhaven enrolment is down from last year.
  - B.C. Agricultural School is an estimate at this point.
  - Highway Dept.- Snow & Ice Removal is increased \$20,000 to allow for clearing of the Bike Path and the sidewalks around the Rogers & Oxford Schools.  
Discussion of clearing the Bike Path.
  - Trash & Garbage Removal is increased \$27,000. \$16,000 is to reinstate leaf collection and the remainder is an increase in the contract.
  - Mr. Rees again states that the Recreation Center is part of the General Fund. He states it will still operate the same way. It is more of an accounting issue.
  - Fairhaven Retirement is up to reflect the increase in the COLA Base from \$13,000 to \$14,000.
  - Mr. Rees states the Group Insurance (health insurance) is going up 3%.
  - Bernie asks what is the percentage the employees contribute.
    - Mr. Rees states the Town pays 60% and the employee 40%.
  - Mr. Rees states the Workman's Compensation insurance is going to go up.
- Lisa asks what date the YTD totals on our pages run to.
    - Ms. Graves states the date is posted on the bottom of the page.
  - Chairman states we will have the Articles next week. He asks Mr. Rees how much time he needs to present them.
    - Mr. Rees states 30 to 45 minutes should be enough.
  - Chairman states there will be no Special Town Meeting within the Annual this year. It will all be handled in the Annual Town Meeting.
  - BPW and associated depts., will be in on March 23rd.  
School Dept. and Town Hall will be in on March 30th.
  - Mr. Rees states the Selectmen have voted in favor of all the Capital Planning items except the Union Wharf Project which they want more information on.

- Mr. Rees states the Town has received 3 grants:  
One grant for an IT Consultant for integrating the Town and School Dept. IT systems.  
One grant to further work on the Personnel Study.  
One grant for developing an Economic Development Plan.

8:46 PM. Tracey motions to adjourn. Seconded by Lisa. Vote: Unanimous

Respectfully submitted by:

Robert A. Furtado  
Finance Committee Secretary  
(accepted 3-16-2017)