



Finance Committee
Town of Halifax
499 Plymouth St.
Halifax, MA 02338

Meeting Minutes
Monday, February 1, 2016

	Gordon Andrews	Linda Braga	Mel Conroy	Nikki Newton	Stu Hall	Julianne Crawford	Vacant
Present	✓	✓	✓		✓		

Others in Attendance:

Sandy Nolan, Town Accountant; Charlie Seelig, Town Administrator; Ted Broderick, Police Chief; Jason Viveiros, Fire Chief; Matt Tucker, Communications Director; Kim Roy, Selectman.

Chairman Gordon Andrews opened the meeting at 7:03pm.

The meeting was recorded by Area 58.

Mail

An email was received from Joy Marble of the Halifax in Lights Committee requesting a meeting with the Finance Committee before April 1, 2016. She also attached a copy of the Article that the Committee would be putting in the ATM Warrant requesting \$2,347.21 for extra detail (Fire and Police) at this year's 4th of July Celebration. Kendra to set up an appointment.

Meeting Minutes

Nikki Newton made changes to the minutes for 1/25/16 so Kendra will make the changes and resubmit the minutes for review to all members before the next meeting.

Reserve Fund Transfer

Chief Jason Viveiros requested a Reserve Fund Transfer in the amount of \$14,151.00 for Radios, antenna and repeater installation. The Highway portion of the equipment is over 30 years old and the license has run out. The school, building dept., water and EMA frequency was not renewed in time so they need a new one. Some of the equipment was damaged in the repairing of the water tower. When the antennas were moved, the cables were damaged beyond repair. The sheathing on them was torn; they are full of water, etc. There is a spreadsheet provided by Sandy Nolan that shows the equipment that needs to be replaced and where the funding for that equipment will be coming from, aside from the requested amount in the RFT. AT&T has offered to replace our equipment for cost while they are here so that is about a \$10,000.00 savings in labor alone. We will be looking at an insurance claim for the cables and possibly a claim against the contractor as

well for costs. Both Chiefs are familiar with the system and will be running point on this project. We will be replacing the broken equipment with a digital system. This will cut the system in half. All departments will use the same repeater and antenna and each department will be able to back each other up if there is a failure. Cell phone use would be a last resort option as well. If there were a lightning strike or other environmental type of disaster, nothing would really change from what is in place now. We can borrow radios from MEMA or the company we are purchasing the system from. Expected life cycle of the system is 15 years. The total project is \$48,615.21. We were able to come up with \$25,464.52 in alternate funding through budgets. Add in \$1,000.00 for licensing fee for a total left over of \$14,150.69 for the RFT. Keep in mind that Highway is spending out almost half of their vehicle maintenance line so they may need to come for a transfer if something comes up between now and May.

Stu Hall made a motion to approve the Reserve Fund Transfer in the amount of \$14,151.00. Seconded by Linda Braga. Motion passed unanimously.

7:15 Meeting with Fire Chief

Chief Viveiros was present to discuss his FY17 budget. Line 52 & 53 are level funded. Line 54 may include a request for an increase in personnel from 6am to 6pm when they receive the greatest number of calls. They are looking at a 4 day on, 4 day off schedule for a call firefighter. This would diminish the need for mutual aid. Tonight this subject is not before the Committee, it will be discussed further in April when there has been more data gathered. Line 55 is no longer appropriated, Line 56, training would increase would increase with wages and salaries. This line would increase if additional staff is added in Line 54. Line 57 & Line 58 Level funded. Line 59, there have been RFT's and LIT's in the past. The line is clearly running too tight. Engine 1 is experiencing a lot of repairs and it would be in the best interest of the town to increase that line to avoid any RFT's or LIT's in the future. Line 60 & 61 are level funded.

7:15 Meeting with Communications

Matt Tucker was present to discuss his FY17 budget. Line 70 is contractual increases. Line 71 has been removed. Line 72 has the inclusion of expenses of grant funding. Two state grants that they currently receive do not reimburse timely, very often not even in the same FY. There has been discussion of changes as to what will be awarded in these grants and we may feel financial impacts. Making this change will prepare us just in case these changes come to fruition and will cover an infrastructure for Police, Fire and Communications. Right now there are two reimbursement accounts in a negative balance and they have been that way since June 30, 2015. It hits our Free Cash. If we make the changes, it will instead come back to us as local receipts/revenue to the town. Mel expressed concern about that being a short term solution if grants are going away. Kim Roy explained that the grants are not going away as a result of not being regional any time soon.

7:15 Meeting with Police Chief

Chief Broderick was present to discuss his FY17 budget. Most of his budget lines are level funded or contractual increases. Line 51 remains level funded as the maintenance

on the cars is mostly covered by warranty items. Next year he may be able to decrease the maintenance budget if we stay on the same replacement schedule for the cruisers. All 11 staff are on the road and working. They had a few glitches but things are going smoothly. When asked to comment on his opinion regarding regionalizing with other towns, he stated if we go regional, who makes the phone calls? There will be no one in the station. We would need to address needed extra staff to cover “dark” times so it may not be cost effective even if the grants go away to go regional. Once you make a regional jump, you are somewhat stuck there.

Silver Lake Discussion

Version 1 of their budget has been released and there is an increase of 4.77%. SPED is up \$49,000.00 but the majority of the increase is coming from regular day. Short term repairs equal 1.2 million which is the amount that they have in the E&D account. Long term we will need to borrow money to do repairs listed in the packets sent to us. They have an additional Capital Plan that does not include these repairs.

Gordon calculated an assessment of \$391,000.00 increase not using the \$100,000.00 under funding. A total assessment of \$4,518,692.00 is what Gordon has figured. That does not include the decrease for refinance or increase for population. The budget is not level serviced. It includes a Food Service Director position, Girls Ice Hockey Coach and Night School Stipends.

Calendar

2/4/16 – Tri Town Meeting with Silver Lake
2/8/16 – COA, 8:00 HES School Committee
2/15/16 – off
2/22/16 – Halifax in Lights

Nikki Newton made a motion to adjourn at 9:27pm. Seconded by Stu Hall. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mel Conroy
Clerk