



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

Meeting Minutes
 Monday, March 17, 2014

	Gordon Andrews	Karen Fava	Margaret (Peg) Fitzgerald	Nikki Newton	Stu Hall	Summer Schmaling	Vacant
Present	✓		✓	✓	✓		

Others in Attendance: Kendra Kelly, Finance Committee Secretary; Sandy Nolan, Town Accountant; Cassandra Hanson, School Committee Chairperson for HES and SL; Kim Roy, Selectman; Tom Millias, Building Inspector; John Shiavone, Board of Assessors.

Meeting called to order by Gordon Andrews at 7:12pm

Silver Lake Assessments

\$4,197,478.89 includes steps and lanes increases. It is less Capital in house expenditures. The debt is not included. The total assessment is up by 3.6% for a total of \$4,748,360.41. This budget has been voted by the Silver Lake School Committee so there will be no change in the number. Sandy would like to know how the other two towns feel especially since we had an agreement to support each other. Plympton is meeting tonight and Kingston has not met yet so their thoughts on the current budget are not know at this time.

HES Budget

Right now Version 2 of the budget for HES is the current number. There will be Vo-tech increases and Sped decreases as the calculation rate was incorrect. HES School Committee will be voting on the budget on April 7. A change in the number is unlikely at this point.

Levy Discussion

We were going to try to not spend the excess levy that was left on the table, however, what is our philosophy going to be going forward? Peg feels that Overlay surplus is short because the levy is not being closed on time. You are subsidizing income with using the extra levy. Sustainability is going to be a problem for next year if the SL Chrome book program is funded. You will be looking at a \$120,000.00 increase per year. Peg also feels we should see what the departments need, vote accordingly and then go back if needed. Gordon said that we have no control over the local receipts number. We can talk all we want but we have no control. Peg stated that we can actually use it to budget with. Money can be available but not put on the recap sheet so the raise and appropriate

is kept higher. Right now we are about \$75,000.00 away from a 4% tax rate increase across the board.

7:45pm Gordon Andrews made a motion to adjourn to executive session with all the people currently in the room. All members cast a yes vote. Motion passed unanimously.

8:23pm Executive Session adjourned back to the regularly scheduled meeting.

Assessors Expense Line

Tom Millias and John Shiavone were present to discuss an increase in the Assessors Expense line as there is an unexpected need for extra classes. They have a newly hired Principal Assessor and she needs to get certified through a session at UMass. The request is increasing the line by \$1,200.00 This is the only thing that this candidate did not have and it looks better to the DOR if she is fully accredited.

Cable Committee Update

At this time they are only asking for \$1.00 in the line. There is no new request to the Article. Once the license is signed they can form a non-profit and move forward from there. At this time they are just waiting.

Snow and Ice Deficit Spending

The Selectmen approved a request from the Highway Surveyor to deficit spend the snow and ice line. If this happens, at the end of the FY the money is taken off the top from the tax recap or they can sometimes take the money from other lines with money left over.

Peg Fitzgerald made a motion to approve the snow and ice deficit spending. Seconded by Nikki Newton. Motion passed unanimously.

CART

Stands for Computer Assisted Real Time and is similar to closed captioning for the hearing impaired. Charlie would like to use it at Town Meeting to see if it improves the ability for people to clearly hear what goes on at the meeting. It will cost approximately \$1,000.00 and would need to be put on the Warrant as an Article. We would be paying for a service so there is no equipment purchase. There are no requirements for providing this service at this time. We do have people that can't hear what is happening at the meeting for a variety of reasons. There has been no ADA complaint at this time. There would be a big screen at town meeting that would be shown as the meeting is going on. This would not set precedence and would not require the service to be provided again next year. A RFT would be an option and perhaps better than an Article. Gordon, Stu, Nikki and Peg would be inclined to support the request. Charlie will submit a RFT for next week's meeting.

Youth and Rec

They are requesting \$13,216.00 for their expense line in order to refinish the floors twice per year with 2 coats per application. The expense is increasing as is the need for the extra coat. The gym is open from 7am – 9pm every day with kids in it the entire time. In

addition they have been repairing anything in that area. The gym lights and scoreboard were done this year. The bathrooms are in tough shape but those should be the schools cost.

Weights and Measures

The expense line is increasing because he has to purchase a 10lb weight. He has been sharing the weight with the other two towns that he works in; however, Halifax will need their own once he retires. This is a onetime purchase and the increase should be backed out of the total for next year's budget. Dues have also increased. He also rotates the payment of the dues yearly between the three towns he works in and this year is Halifax's turn for the payment. In the future the town may need to purchase \$900.00 of weights to be used on the Pharmacy scales so they are reliable and accurate. Nikki will call Herb Wolfer to advise him to speak to Wage and Personnel regarding his wages for this year.

Capital Plan Recommendations

Sandy explained that the 2 items below the line on the Capital Plan sheet along with the radios and sprinklers are being recommended. The Elementary school has increased their amount requested for new computers both in their budget and in their Article. That will be an every year increase.

Article 5 Line Items

Line 8 – Gordon Andrews made a motion to recommend \$5,600.00 for Town Reports. Seconded by Peg Fitzgerald. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 19 – Peg Fitzgerald made a motion to reconsider the line. Seconded by Nikki Newton. Motion passed unanimously. Peg Fitzgerald made a motion to recommend \$10,900.00 for Assessors Expense. Seconded by Nikki Newton. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 67 – Nikki Newton made a motion to recommend \$802.00 for Sealer Weights/Measure Expense. Seconded by Peg Fitzgerald. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 85 – Peg Fitzgerald made a motion to recommend \$48,500.00 for Highway Equipment. Seconded by Stu Hall. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 98 – Gordon Andrews made a motion to recommend \$43,119.00 for Water Clerical. Seconded by Nikki Newton. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 110 – Gordon Andrews made a motion to recommend \$69,959.00 for Recycling Center Wages. Seconded by Nikki Newton. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 126 – Gordon Andrews made a motion to recommend \$130,000.00 for Veterans Benefits. Seconded by Peg Fitzgerald. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 133 – Nikki Newton made a motion to recommend \$13,216.00 for Youth and Rec Expense. Seconded by Peg Fitzgerald. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 152 – Gordon Andrews made a motion to recommend \$934,616.00 for Plymouth County Retirement. Seconded by Peg Fitzgerald. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 153 – Gordon Andrews made a motion to recommend \$882,460.00 for Group Insurance – Town Share. Seconded by Peg Fitzgerald. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 154 – Gordon Andrews made a motion to recommend \$103,384.00 for Medicare – Town Share. Seconded by Peg Fitzgerald. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 155 – Gordon Andrews made a motion to recommend \$253,300.00 for Insurance. Seconded by Peg Fitzgerald. Motion passed unanimously.

Upcoming Meetings

3/17/14 – Discuss all lines that have increases and have not been voted yet. School Budget discussion. Mail from this week that we were not able to get to.

Kendra will ask Karen and Summer to read over the Executive Session minutes so they are familiar with the discussion before the meeting.

9:30 pm Stu Hall made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Gordon Andrews. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nikki Newton
Corresponding Clerk