



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

Meeting Minutes
Monday, April 1, 2013

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

Others in Attendance: Kendra Kelly, Finance Committee Secretary; Kim Roy, Selectmen; Sandy Nolan, Town Accountant; Wil Corey, Veteran's Agent.

Meeting called to order by Gordon Andrews at 7:07pm

Mail

No mail was received.

Reserve Fund Transfer

A Reserve Fund Transfer request was received from Wil Corey, Veteran's Agent for \$10,000.00 to Veterans Benefits Account 01-543-5770. There is currently \$7,854.61 in the account. That is not going to be enough to cover the May and June Veterans Benefits. There have been additional Veterans who have qualified for benefits than were anticipated at budget time last year.

Peg Fitzgerald made a motion to approve the RFT for \$10,000.00. Seconded by Nikki Newton. Motion passed unanimously.

HES Budget Discussion

Karen is not comfortable with the cuts that have been made so far. Peg feels that they have done as we asked. Stu agrees with Peg. Nikki said that staff is at a minimum now and additional cuts are not a good idea. Karen feels that the text book number is a little much. Nikki agreed however, that number doesn't represent a total textbook replacement. She does not see how they can manage without it. Kim felt that the new position and the 2.5% wage increase were the main issues but now we are looking at positions if further cuts are needed. Peg feels that we are making other departments suffer in order to fund it. Gordon and Karen do not completely agree with that statement.

The committee would like a call made to the Superintendent before Town Meeting to see if any of the lines can be changed.

Veteran's Agent Discussion

Kim Roy is recommending combining both lines. Mr. Corey said that he works about 20 hours now with some of those hours being worked at home. Kim's feeling is that all hours should be worked in the office. Peg said that the Agent does need to do home visits occasionally. Kim suggests funding the line for 16 hours at \$16,702.00. This total is combined with the other line. Compared to other towns we are about average but we do have more being paid out in benefits so the work would therefore be a little bit more than average.

Peg Fitzgerald made a motion to combine the line items for the Veteran's Agent and the Veteran's Service Officer. Seconded by Nikki Newton. Motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer/Collector Discussion

Kathy Shiavone came in to present a change in her requested increase of hours for the Treasurer and Collector's Office. She is now requesting a total of 4 hours instead of 7. One additional hour in the Treasurer's Office and 3 additional hours in the Collector's Office. The Asst. Treasurer has had a large increase in her workload with the change in the retirement laws and the duties of the Wellness Coordinator. She does save a lot of money in insurance by doing the Wellness program but it increases her duties in the office. In order to try to get the 7 hours that are needed, Kathy is proposing decreasing the hours of the Admin in the Treasurer's office by 3 hours and giving them to the Assistant Treasurer. This would mean that the Admin would lose her benefits. She knows that they are tough cuts but the bottom line is that she is in need of 4 hours in the Treasurer's office and 3 hours in the Collector's office. How she gets there is the problem that she is trying to address. Peg feels that it is a major increase but she does not like cutting the hours of an employee that has been there for 10 years. She also stated that the Auditor had some concerns and felt that the Treasurer/Collector's office needed to be brought up to speed. Karen feels that Kathy knows her department best and the committee should take her recommendation.

Town Building Custodial Discussion

Gordon would like to fund half of the requested increase in hours and then incorporate the sign hours that they will save by having the LED sign. Karen feels the hours are warranted. Gordon really feels that the savings would be significant. Peg and Karen feel strongly that the hours are needed and not having enough hours is causing inefficiencies. Kim said that September or October would be the target time for the sign completion so the savings in sign hours won't be for a while. Benefit increases are not included in the calculation of the line.

Cable Committee Discussion

The contract with Comcast has run out for Halifax and Plympton's will run out in December 2013. Right now Comcast pays for the studio and the equipment. They are no longer interested in being involved. The Town will need to start a non-profit Cable Committee to cover the costs to tape meeting etc. There will be a onetime start up fee and it will be a joint venture with Plympton. If there is no funding there will not be a non-profit set up and we won't be ready to take it on. A Board of Directors will need to

be set up for the non-profit. Once that is done, it will no longer be a taxpayer responsibility. It will be run on the licensing fees that are paid by Comcast. The Board of Selectmen will probably appoint the first Board of Directors. Once Comcast is no longer involved, the tapes will be able to be broadcast on the internet without any copyright issues. Nikki Newton is the liaison. Dick Wright is the Chairperson.

Article 5 Line Items

Line 5 – Karen Fava made a motion to approve \$4,100.00 for Selectmen Expense. Seconded by Nikki Newton. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 9 – Karen Fava made a motion to approve \$19,000.00 for Audit. Seconded by Peg Fitzgerald. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 15 – Peg Fitzgerald made a motion to approve \$44,400.00 for Data Processing. Seconded by Karen Fava. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 21 – Peg Fitzgerald made a motion to approve \$55,177.00 for Town Treasurer Clerical. Seconded by Nikki Newton. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 30 – Peg Fitzgerald made a motion to approve \$65,744.00 for Collector Clerical. Seconded by Nikki Newton. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 42 – Peg Fitzgerald made a motion to approve \$156,982.00 for Town Buildings Custodial. Seconded by Nikki Newton. Gordon Andrews voted no, all other voting members voted yes. Motion passed.

Line 45 – Peg Fitzgerald made a motion to approve \$96,396.00 for Police Chief Salary. Seconded by Nikki Newton. Gordon Andrews abstained. All other voting members voted yes. Motion passed. Gordon made a motion to put a note in the Warrant to show that the Committee does not have a recommendation.

Line 70 – Gordon Andrews made a motion to reconsider. Seconded by Karen Fava. Motion passed unanimously. Gordon Andrews made a motion to approve \$250,856.00 for Comm. Center Wages. Seconded by Karen Fava. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 74 – Peg Fitzgerald made a motion to approve \$4,834,222.00 for Elementary School Costs. Seconded by Nikki Newton. Karen Fava voted no, all other voting members voted yes. Motion passed with a 4-1 vote.

Line 75 – Peg Fitzgerald made a motion to approve \$99,000.00 for Vocational Education. Seconded by Nikki Newton. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 76 – Peg Fitzgerald made a motion to approve \$1,179,121.00 for Special Needs Tuition. Seconded by Nikki Newton. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 77 - Peg Fitzgerald made a motion to approve \$381,931.00 for Special Needs Transportation. Seconded by Nikki Newton. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 78 - Peg Fitzgerald made a motion to approve \$4,047,897.00 for Silver Lake Assessment. Seconded by Nikki Newton. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 79 - Peg Fitzgerald made a motion to approve \$535,771.00 for Debt Exclusion FY11 Budget Silver Lake. Seconded by Nikki Newton. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 109 – Karen Fava made a motion to approve \$2,610.00 for Recycling Office Expense. Seconded by Peg Fitzgerald. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 113 – Peg Fitzgerald made a motion to approve \$218,035.00 for Trash Collection/Disposal. Seconded by Karen Fava. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 118 – Peg Fitzgerald made a motion to approve \$20,000.00 for Landfill – Engineering & Monitoring. Seconded by Karen Fava. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 120 – Nikki Newton made a motion to reconsider the line. Seconded by Peg Fitzgerald. Motion passed unanimously. Nikki Newton made a motion to approve \$147,976.00 for Council on Aging Wages. Seconded by Peg Fitzgerald. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 123 – Peg Fitzgerald made a motion to approve \$16,702.00 for Veteran’s Agent Salary. Seconded by Nikki Newton. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 124 – Nikki Newton made a motion to approve \$1,269.00 for Veteran’s Agent Expense. Seconded by Peg Fitzgerald. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 126 – Peg Fitzgerald made a motion to approve \$110,000.00 for Veteran’s Benefits. Seconded by Nikki Newton. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 137 – Peg Fitzgerald made a motion to approve \$1.00 for Cable Committee. Seconded by Nikki Newton. Motion passed unanimously. Gordon Andrews made a motion to reconsider the line. Seconded by Nikki Newton. Motion passed unanimously. Gordon Andrews made a motion to approve \$10,000.00 for Cable Committee. Seconded by Nikki Newton. Motion passed unanimously.

Line 138 – Peg Fitzgerald made a motion to approve \$500.00 for Historical Commission. Seconded by Karen Fava. Motion passed unanimously.

STM Articles

SA – Peg Fitzgerald made a motion to recommend. Seconded by Gordon Andrews. Motion passed unanimously.

SB – HOLD as there is no figure provided.

SC – Peg Fitzgerald made a motion to recommend and modify the wording to come from available funds. Seconded by Nikki Newton. Motion passed unanimously.

SD – Gordon Andrews made a motion to recommend. Seconded by Karen Fava. Motion passed unanimously.

SE – Gordon Andrews made a motion to not recommend. Seconded by Karen Fava. Vote was 3 – 1 – 1. Gordon Andrews, Karen Fava and Peg Fitzgerald voted yes, Nikki Newton voted No, Stu Hall abstained. The Committee was unable to come to a majority decision so the motion did not pass.

SF - HOLD as there is no figure provided.

SG – Gordon Andrews made a motion to recommend. Seconded by Nikki Newton. Motion passed unanimously.

SH – Gordon Andrews made a motion to recommend. Seconded by Peg Fitzgerald. Motion passed unanimously.

SI – HOLD for Town Meeting

SJ – HOLD for Town Meeting

ATM Articles

1 – Gordon Andrews made a motion to recommend. Seconded by Karen Fava. Motion passed unanimously.

Gordon is working on the letter from Fin Comm. for the Warrant. He will turn it in to Charlie tomorrow. He plans to discuss new growth spending and the 2.5% increase that

is being supported by Fin Comm. He will also explain that this is only a recommendation. More can be spend but taxed will increase to a 4.5% increase.

Kendra will post a meeting for Monday, April 8, 2013 at 7pm.

Karen Fava made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Gordon Andrews. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:25pm.

Nikki Newton
Corresponding Clerk