

**TOWN OF HARVARD**  
**Finance Committee**  
**Minutes**

**Meeting Date:** Wednesday, March 7, 2012

**Meeting Place:** Town Hall Meeting Room

**Members Present:** Bob Thurston (acting chair), Steve Colwell, Alan Frazer (assoc.), Alice von Loesecke, Rudy Minar, Laura Vilain (assoc.)

**Members Not Present:** Marie Fagan (chair), Heidi Frank, George McKenna

**Others Present:** Tim Bragan - Town Administrator, Lorraine Leonard - Finance Director; Keith Cheveralls, chair, School Committee

**Meeting Time: 7:25 p.m.      Adjournment Time: 8:40 p.m.**

**Discussion and Actions**

- Bob Thurston (acting chair) opened the meeting at 7:25 p.m.
- No public comment
- School Committee's budget request

Keith Cheveralls, chair of the School Committee, requested an additional \$20,000.

**A motion was made to adjust the Schools' Budget for an additional \$20,000.** Discussion included the World Language program, and an issue in anticipating more savings than was actually realized. The Finance Committee asked if this might affect the 4th grade situation around increased enrollments. The answer was possibly, and that money may be tight, but they will own this risk.

**The vote was 4:0 in favor (to increase the budget by \$20,000).**

- Minutes for Wednesday, February 29, were reviewed, and approved with changes.

**A motion was made to accept the Minutes for February 29, 2012.**

**The vote was 2:0 in favor, 2 abstentions. Rudy and Alice were not present.**

- New Warrant Article and Funding Requests

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**MassGIS Project:** Lorraine Leonard, director of the Finance Department, presented financial information regarding the Massachusetts' Office of Geographic Information (MassGIS) project. She presented the need for \$6,700 as a Warrant Article for the one-time funding of the set-up fee and some dimensional-data conversions. She also requested \$1,800 for the annual hosting fee and ongoing maintenance of the geo-database. This is the result of the State standardizing digital parcel maps and setting up a state-wide geographical database.

**A motion was made to initiate a Warrant Article for \$6,700.**

**The vote was 4:0 in favor.**

**A motion was made to increase the Finance Department's budget by \$1,500 for FY13. The vote was 4:0 in favor.**

**Personal Property Exemptions:**

**A motion was made to recommend for approval the Personal Property Exemption from \$2,500 to \$5,000 which will have a small effect on the bottom-line.**

**The vote was 4:0 in favor.**

- Book Assignments

Rudy and Alan shared their State of the Town draft. This will be emailed to the Committee with updates.

- Direction for Financial Assumptions Provided by the Finance Committee (see pg 27 of the FY11 Annual Report)

Financial assumptions are needed for the Calculator, and financial projections.

1. The Capital Plan for FY13-17 (correct for years)
2. No new programs (same)
3. Local aid (Cherry sheet) remaining flat (change from decrease)
4. A Total Stabilization Fund balance of not less than 5% (same)
5. Budget revenues and expenditures will be affected by:
  - a. Total payroll costs will increase 2% (change from 4%)
  - b. Health insurance costs 6% (same)
  - c. Interest rates for new debt will average 4% (change from 4.5%)
  - d. General expenses (non-salary) - 1% (same)
  - e. Increases in tax revenues from new growth - \$75,000 (change from \$100,000)
  - f. Local receipts - level (same)
  - g. Assessments from State (Cherry Sheet charges) - 3% (change from 5%)

- Other Discussion

The Committee discussed that the Cemetery's roof is actively leaking. And that road work will need to be done. It was suggested that the Cemetery Commission work with the DPW to take care of this. The Cemetery's expendable trust has accumulated \$82,000. The Committee has decided to hold off on a vote for a reserve fund transfer.

The Board of Health has purchased file cabinets for this year.

- No Town Administrator Report or Finance Director Report

- Liaison reports

The Council on Aging is appreciative of the MART dispatcher's relocation.

The Library maintains that they were denied level-service funding because of the \$3,000 decrease to its budget. The Library does plan to cover the additional expenses through other funds so that this will not affect other services.

It has been decided that there is no funding in the budget for a Planner, at \$65,000.

- Next meeting – Saturday, March 10, 2012, 9:00 a.m., Town Hall meeting room  
– Town Meeting, April 28, 2012

Meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Laura Vilain