

TOWN OF HARVARD
Finance Committee
Minutes

Meeting Date: Wednesday, January 16, 2013

Meeting Place: Town Hall Meeting Room

Members Present: Alice von Loesecke, Laura Vilain (Associate), Steve Colwell, Alan Frazer, Heidi Frank, George McKenna, Rudy Minar

Members Not Present: Don Ludwig (Associate), Bob Thurston

Others Present: Tim Bragan – Town Administrator; Lorraine Leonard – Finance Director;

- Pond Committee: Bruce Leicher (Chair), Peter von Loesecke
- Board of Health: Tom Phillipou (Chair)
- Library: Mary Wilson, Director
- Library Trustees: Gail Coolidge (Chair), Pete Jackson (Sec), Charles Redinger (Treasurer)
- Friends of the Library: Charles Frechette (Chair)

Meeting Time: 7:05 PM Adjournment Time: 9:10 PM

Discussion and Actions

- Meeting Minutes - NA
- Public Commentary – NA
- Bare Hill Pond Watershed Committee FY14 Budget Review
 - Bruce led a brief, concise review of the budget answering questions submitted earlier by FinCom. We were advised that no future grant money is expected or planned for FY14 and that monies from state grants are “purposely not for funding operational activities.”
- Library FY14 Budget Review – The Director was accompanied by a number of representatives from the Library Trustees and the Friends of the Library. Highlights in response to prepared responses to FinCom’s earlier submitted budget questions;
 - The Library provided comprehensive activity metrics in support of its budget.
 - The MAR – The MAR calculation was presented in detail. To a question about the Level Service budget request being “\$8,456 over the MAR,” the proposition was posed that FinCom has historically tended to view the MAR as a ceiling whereby the Library Trustees view the MAR as a floor. Should they receive “only the MAR budget” (floor), the Library would either have to use State Aid funds to cover the deficit or need to consider reducing hours. This is after inclusion of the \$10,000 offset (up from \$7000 in FY13) from the Library’s Book Fund fundraising.
 - 75% of the budget is represented by Personnel with the mandated 16% driven by MAR purchases.
 - A significant discussion revolved around the request for an additional part time-employee primarily to supervise the significant influx of an average of 85 students arriving independently at the library each afternoon. The Library Trustees have committed to funding this position for FY14. However, there is general agreement that there should be a collaborative effort involving The Schools, Park and Rec, the Center on the Common, as well as the Library to address this issue over the mid-to-long term. FinCom expressed its full support in that regard, particularly since this same issue was discussed during the Schools and Park & Rec budget meetings, and recognizes the contribution the Library

Trustees have made to address this pressing concern in the near term. This involves not only a pull on Library staff; it also involves instances of vandalism as well as raising the larger question of safety and security.

- Board of Health FY14 Budget Review – Tom led a discussion in response to the 9 questions or points of clarification posed by FinCom in advance of the meeting. Highlights;
 - The BOH suggests there may be an opportunity for greater collaboration and/or organizational synergy with the COA. As an example, both groups use Minuteman Health Services for seniors. The takeaway from the conversation is that the two groups should engage in a dialogue to determine what opportunities may exist.
 - Tom posited that the current number of budgeted hours for the BOH clerk is insufficient to guarantee departmental compliance as well as maximizing the ability to collect fees that are legally collectible at this time. No resolution was reached, FinCom requested further review.
 - The budget request for \$150 to cover anticipated relocation expenses related to the Town Hall project was rescinded when it was pointed out that last year's TH warrant article included relevant relocation expenses for all affected departments.
- Town Administrator Report – NA
- Finance Director Report - NA
- Liaison Reports
 - Schools Superintendent Search Committee – Laura advised that one of the two finalists withdrew at the last minute and that School Committee would reconvene in two days to consider the situation.
 - Schools – Steve informed us there will be a \$75,000 capital request for Bromfield House repairs
- Meeting adjourned at 9:10 PM