

FINCOM
Meeting Minutes – December 11, 2013
All Boards

Members Present: Alice, Rudy, Steve, Laura, Don, Alan, Heidi

Not Present: Bob, Bruce

Others: Lorraine, Tim

All Boards Participants:

- BOS: Marie Sobalvarro, Stu Sklar, Leo Blair, Ron Ricci
- BOH: Tom Philippou
- CPIC: David Kassel, Keith Cheveralls, Debbie Ricci
- School Committee: SusanMary Redinger, Pat Wenger, Bob Sullebarger, Keith Cheveralls
- Planning: Erin McBee, Kara Minar, Joe Hutchinson
- Library: Marty Green, Mary Wilson
- Historical: Ken Swanton
- Police: Chief Denmark
- Fire: Chief Sicard
- DPW: Rich Nota
- Ambulance: Steven Beckman
- Park & Rec: Joe Schmidt, Pat Nelson
- COA: Debbie Thompson, Pam Frederick, Connie Larrabee, Susan Guswa, Fran Nickerson
- Pond: Peter Von Loesecke, Bruce Leicher

Location: Volunteer Hall, Public Library

Alice opened the meeting at 7:03 PM

Budgets:

- Alice reviewed Budget status
 - All received except for BOS & BOH
 - Compiling budgets at next meeting
 - Scheduling meetings where needed
- OPEB Working Group update:
 - Long term funding strategy is major discussion
 - Preparing questions for actuary
 - \$250K in budget is less than recommended but got us started and in the state investment fund
 - Proposed funding source discussions:
 - Debt off the table
 - Rates now up in the 6-6.5% range
 - Debt impacts town rating calculations

Town Administrator State of the State Report:

- Cautiously optimistic outlook
- Slow growth in local economy projected
- Federal budget impact on state
- Tech Tax repeal impact (loss of \$164M)
- State revenues \$273M above YTD benchmark as of October
- Two main issues: Pensions (50-60% funded) and OPEB (no real game plan)
- Potential impacts to town inflows: Chapter 70 funding and Local aid
- Town local issues:
 - Wage increases (wages = 70% budget)
 - Pension funding in Worcester County Fund - Fully funded in 2040
 - OPEB continued funding to 60% (approx \$12M)
 - Early FY15 budget item to redo actuary study
 - Capital needs funding
 - Unknown future legislative issues

Finance Director State of the Town Report:

- Handout on FY15 Draft Recap
 - New growth is estimate
 - Cherry sheets level funded since real number not received from state yet
 - Budgets reflect those submitted to date without COLA increases but with STEP increases
 - Cherry sheet charges level funded
 - Capital warrant article placeholder
 - OPEB \$250K placeholder
 - Reserve fund \$350K
 - Leaves \$250K surplus without COLA
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BOS Report: Marie Sobalvarro

- Town Hall project update:
 - Public forums held on 12/5 and 12/7 at Center on Common
 - Tuesday meeting they will compile remarks
 - Still have the 2012 appropriation for project
 - Jan/Feb will order feasibility study
 - Try to meet as many needs as possible
 - Recommend a design to run by town in February

Capital Report: Keith Cheveralls

- 5-Year Capital Needs submitted
- Keith thanked the departments for the quality of the submissions
- Handout: Spreadsheet of Capital Submissions
 - Work in progress
 - Items accepted in FY15 CPIC process
 - Aug/Sept solicit updates

- Questions to requestors
 - Schedule meetings with requestors
 - Apply CPIC rating matrix to evaluate
 - Make final recommendations
- Strong town appetite for capital over next 5 years:
 - \$4.2M Town
 - \$2.3M Schools
 - \$6.5M Total FY15 requests
- In conjunction with School Committee, recently:
 - Notified selectman that they will no longer be using Bromfield House as Administrative building
 - Reduced the scope and cost of Science Lab work
- Looking at best long-term funding plan
- Handout on CPIC Funding Options Analysis
 - Highlights funding source options
 - Current CPIC fund runs out in FY19
 - Strong preference for capital exclusion (One and Done) which requires:
 - 2/3 majority at ATM
 - Majority vote at ballot
- Potential for future capital override need to replenish fund – challenge is to figure when
- Currently dependent on free cash funds exclusively
- Looking for a dependable source for funding

School Committee Report: SusanMary Redinger

- SusanMary acknowledged the Joe Connelly and administration for their hard work on the budget
- 3rd year in a row with zero based budgeting
- Dr. Linda Dwight will be new Superintendant of Schools and is now mentoring with Joe through this year's budgeting process
- Budget submitted as level funded before COLA
- \$11,871,755 Draft 1 Budget submitted
- \$2,5M in offsets

No Q&A

Other Boards were solicited to make remarks:

Pond: Bruce

- No draw down this year.
- Using available funds for more monitoring.

COA: Debra

- Meeting with new Town Planner, Planning Board and Zoning Boards
- Met with Capital
- Appreciated extra hours approved last year – had a positive impact

Park & Rec: Joe

- Pond parking issue resolution
- Going back to 5:00 PM closing hour

Ambulance: Steve

- Moving to omnibus budget cycle this year

DPW: Rich

- Level funded budget submitted
- Turnover (payroll changes) helps ability to keep level
- Few capital projects – priority is asset management

Fire: Chief Sicard

- Capital request: Station evaluation study

Planning: Kara

- Announced hiring of Town Planner Bill Scanlon through June 2014

Library: Mary

- Less than 1% increase in budget submitted
- Personnel largest driver
- Afterschool needs still an issue (93 students that day)
- Strong connections with Schools and COA

Police: Chief Denmark

- Transition to regional dispatch
- 50% turnover in staff last 2 years
- Increased coverage model within budget
- Joint training with Littleton and Boxboro

Historical: Ken

- Town Hall renovations involvement
- Delighted with consensus to restore within budget
- Shaker cemetery connections with ConCom
- Powder house repair with Town Administrator

BOH: Tom

- Budget includes request for more clerk hours

Next meeting 12/18 7:00 PM Town Hall

The meeting adjourned at 8:04 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Don Ludwig