

FINCOM
Meeting Minutes – January 6, 2016

Members Present: Alice, Don, Steve, Laura, Heidi, Bruce, John
Not Present: Rudy
Others: Tim, Fire Chief Sicard, Jason Cotting, Will Stevenson
Location: Hapgood Room, Old Library

Alice called the meeting to order at 7:04PM.

Minutes: The Minutes of the December 16 meeting were unanimously approved with two amendments.

CPIC FY17 Capital Process Update: Heidi, as our liaison to CPIC, walked us through their top 10 capital project ratings. Several of their projects need more precise cost estimates, most of which are expected by the end of the month. CPIC will continue to refine their priorities and get back to us when updated.

Heidi also shared CPIC's recommendation on use of Free Cash--\$760,000 to Town Hall (saving the Town about \$60,000 annually in debt service), \$600,000 to the Capital Fund, and \$200,000 to pay off BANS on the Fire Truck, Water, and Pond Road Paving projects. It was noted that free cash must be used for capital projects or unexpected expenses—implying it may not be possible to fund incremental contributions to OPEB with Free Cash.

FY17 Budget Reviews: We invited two departments to meet with us and discuss their FY17 budget requests:

- **Ambulance** – Jason Cotting, Co-Director, and Will Stevenson, Asst. Director for Finance of the Ambulance provided additional information on their operation, the only remaining all volunteer ambulance in Worcester County. They have about 60 volunteers, many of them working out of town, making it a challenge to respond to calls during work hours. They request their volunteers to protect 24 hours/month to be on call, recently increased from 16 hours/month. The budget they submitted included hiring a full time and a part time EMT at a roughly incremental \$100,000 expense to the town per year. Without this incremental expense, Will told us that Lorraine told him the Ambulance is on track to have sufficient funds to purchase a new ambulance in FY18. We asked them to discuss work week coverage options with the Fire and Police Chiefs to see if there are lower cost solutions that share existing fire and police staffing when needed for ambulance calls and/or administrative work.
- **Fire** – Chief Sicard told us that the new Fire Truck will arrive in the next couple of weeks. We discussed his answers to our three questions and no further concerns surfaced. We urged him to pursue the SAFER Grant application to fund an incremental EMT/Inspections position that would take a large inspections workload off of the Chief. The grant, if approved, would cover training, salary and expenses related to this new hire for two years, after which the Town would be responsible for this cost. This position could also help address the Ambulance EMT shortage. Chief Sicard will apply for this grant in the next two months, but informed us it may take up to a year to get a decision.

DPW and Library have been invited to our meeting this Saturday. The School Committee is booked for Saturday January 23. Tim will ask Park and Rec. to attend our meeting either January 13 or 20. Alice will develop a list of Trusts that could be accessed to fund various departments/committees and have that for our review on January 13.

Town Administrator Report: Tim distributed answers to our Selectmen department questions. He informed us that Hildreth House window installation will begin this Friday, and the Town Hall project is on schedule with interior wall insulation, painting, and carpet installation scheduled.

He presented a Reserve Fund Transfer request for the Board of Selectmen for the Water and Sewer project in the amount of \$15,000. This was approved unanimously.

Finance Director Report: Tim distributed for Lorraine the FY16 spending by department to date we requested at the last meeting. He also told us that the communication charge for regional dispatch is estimated at \$170,000 for FY17 and \$150,000 for FY18. The actual amount for FY17 is expected on February 2. Tim will ask Lorraine to run an updated FY17 one page summary roll up to understand where we are given budget requests submitted to date.

Liaison Reports: None.

Next Meeting: Our next meeting is Saturday, January 9 at 9AM at the Old Library. We will meet with DPW and Library and review answers to our questions for all departments not covered to determine if we need to meet with anyone else. Laura also has additional school questions for our review.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35PM.

Respectfully submitted,

John W. Seeley, Secretary