



Town of Holland, MA – Finance Board

Meeting Minutes

February 11, 2015

Call To Order:

The Chairman called to order a meeting of the Holland Finance Board at 7:35 P.M. on February 11, 2015 at the Holland Town Hall.

Roll Call:

Finance Board members present: Andrew Harhay (Chairman), Ernest Fancy, John Phelps and John Ebersold. Also present was Select Board Chairperson Lynn Arnold.

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes of the February 4, 2015 meeting were approved, as written.

New Business:

Highway Surveyor Johnson called the Chairman on the afternoon of February 4th to indicate that he would not be able to attend this meeting, as scheduled, to review the Highway budget request for FY16. Highway will be rescheduled to our February 25th meeting.

Fortunately, representatives of the Council on Aging and the Community Center were able to accommodate FinCom's last minute request to attend tonight's meeting and allow us to continue moving forward with the budget development process. These two budgets had been distributed in January and briefly reviewed by the Board.

Review of the Council on Aging (COA) Budget Request for FY16:

Christine Haller and Susan Sanders, respectively the Chairman and the Treasurer of the COA, attended to highlight key accomplishments, future objectives and to review the COA FY16 budget request.

- The COA has worked with the Community Center staff to increase the participation of Seniors in a number of new daytime and evening activities.
- A major goal in FY16 is to improve accessibility at the Center through the installation of automatic door openers to the main entrance and to bathrooms. FinCom suggested that the COA solicit bids for these upgrades to the facility, so that submitting an article to Annual Town Meeting can be considered.
- During FY16 the COA will research the feasibility of acquiring a handicap-equipped van to support the needs of Seniors.
- The budget proposed for FY16 totaled \$7,960, which is a 2.7% increase over FY15.

Review of the Community Center Budget Request for FY16:

Paula Bak, Director of the Community Center, attended to discuss the many new activities initiated in FY15 and the desire to further expand the programs and operating hours offered to Seniors and the overall Holland community.

- In addition to improving handicap accessibility at the Center, the Director would like to have stairs installed to the basement and put that area to effective use for activities.
- The Director proposed that the hourly wage for her position be increased from the current \$15.45/hour to \$18/hour, as well as the number of paid hours increased from 19 hours/week to 24 hours/week. Paula indicated that meeting the Town's objective to increase use of the Center requires her presence many more than the 19 hours/week that she was originally hired to work, and that increasing the wage would put the position more in line with other Community/Senior Centers in the region. FinCom indicated that it would need comparative numbers from other towns in order to evaluate the request.
- Without the consideration of the salary for the Director position, the requested increase in the Community Center's general FY16 budget would be \$1,816 or 6.4%; including the Director's salary request in the calculation would provide an overall increase of \$9,019 or 20.6%.

Open Issues:

Revised Tax Collector Budget: The Collector had submitted a revised budget on 2/9/15 that provided more detail on expense items and showed a decrease of \$1,060 in the amount requested. The Chairman had sent the Collector a follow-up email requesting the following:

- Confirmation that the Collector's share of the FY16 cost for VADAR would be \$7,615, rather than the \$6,000 mentioned at the January 7th budget meeting.
- Indication of where the money for his contracting of accounting services is included in the budget submitted.

Brimfield Ambulance Financial Accounting: On 2/8/15, the treasurer of Brimfield Ambulance sent each of the Tri-Town Finance Committee Chairs the Ambulance financials for FY14 and for FY15 through 12/31/14. This routine reporting of financial information had been previously requested by the Holland, Wales and Brimfield Finance Committees. The accounting showed a net operating loss of \$14,908 as of 12/31/14 and a projected loss of \$1,207 at the close of FY15.

Action Items Being Carried:

- The Police Chief will provide follow-up on the purchase of two Tasers.
- The Collector will provide a response to the two budget questions asked of him.
- The Chairman will determine if information is available through MMA regarding Community/Senior Center Director salaries in comparable towns.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting will be at 7:30 P.M. on February 18, with the key item being the review of the Fire Department Budget Request.

Adjournment

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 9:35 PM.

Minutes submitted by: Andrew Harhay, Chairman