



Town of Holland, MA – Finance Board

Meeting Minutes

January 7, 2015

Call To Order

The Chairman called to order a meeting of the Holland Finance Board at 7:30 PM on January 7, 2015 at the Holland Town Hall.

Roll Call

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

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the December 10, 2014 meeting were approved.

The minutes of the December 17, 2014 meeting were approved.

Open Issues

FY16 Budget Development Schedule: There were no changes to the meeting schedule shown in the December 16, 2014 revision.

New Business

Review of Board of Assessors Budget Request for FY16:

Members of the Board of Assessors (JoAnne Higgins, Christian Petersen, Diane Rhodes Gregoire and Cynthia Poirier) attended the meeting, presented their Budget Request and responded to questions about specific items in the Request. The budget request for FY16 is about \$4,000 greater than the FY15 budget. It includes a 2.5% salary increase request for the Principal Assessor, increases in education expense for Board members and an increase in 'Other Expenses'. The additional education expense is for new member certification and re-certification for existing Board members. The additional amount in the 'Other Expense' line item is for vendor updating of assessors maps.

Review of the Tax Collector's Budget Request for FY16:

The Tax Collector, Steve Anderstrom, presented his Budget Request and responded to questions about specific items in the Request. The requested budget is about 9.3% greater than the FY15 budget and includes a 5% salary increase. The total expenses reflect an increase of about 15.3%, but a breakdown of expected expenses was not provided. The Collector indicated that he will probably need to purchase a new printer during FY16. Approximately \$1,500 of his FY15 expenses was used for a consultant to balance certain accounts, but this will not be needed for FY16. Also, a portion of the amount budgeted for 'software contracts' is paid from the Treasurer's budget, so it appears that the line should be ~\$6K rather than ~9.5K.

Steve indicated that he does not have much money left in his FY15 budget, but does not expect to need to request additional funds. He purchased large amounts of supplies early in the FY, and should not need much additional supplies through the end of the year. He will provide a breakdown of his actual FY 15 year-to-date expenditures to the Board and a revised FY16 Expenses list.

The Collector indicated that the amount of uncollected taxes over the last 30 years is probably about \$500,000. Much of the uncollected amounts is attributable to properties originally owned by the now defunct American Properties. Because these properties do not have clear title, they cannot be auctioned off or taken by the town. He noted that the 'Tax Title Expense' is in the Treasurer's budget, but should perhaps be in the Tax Collector's budget and not the Treasurer's. The Chairman will talk to the Treasurer to see what the Tax Title funds are used for, and why there are fluctuations in this expense.

The Chairman asked about the impact of the increase in Demand Fees from \$5 to \$20 has had on the timely payment of taxes. The Collector thought that there have been fewer late payments, but did not know the exact results.

Missed Christmas Party:

The Chairman distributed the flyer concerning the 'missed' Christmas Party—Deb Tierney is organizing a party to be held on Thursday, January 15.

Free Cash:

The Town received notification from the State that the amount of certified Free Cash as of July 1, 2014 is \$282,435. This amount is about \$175,000 greater than the FY13 amount. A significant portion of this amount may be due to the health insurance expense being significantly less than what was originally budgeted.

Highway Department Budget Request:

The Chairman has received the Budget Request from the Highway Department. He will pass it along to John Phelps so that John can input the information into the Budget Request spreadsheet.

School Committee Meeting/Budget Meeting:

The elementary school budget meeting will follow the regular Holland elementary school committee meeting on January 8. The elementary school meeting will start at 6:00. The Chairman will attend, and invited all Board members to also attend.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 14. The Board of Health Budget Request will be reviewed.

Adjournment

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 9:45 P.M.

Minutes submitted by: Mike Brady, Secretary