

Finance Committee Meeting
July 27, 2010

Members present:

G. Lillian Whitney
Kevin Stetson
Suzanne Caron
Chris Haynes (Chair)
John Margosiak
Joseph Armstrong-Champ (Secretary)
Brian Foster

Public present:

Martha Svedberg
Mary Kraft

Meeting called to order 7:32pm

Minutes

The meeting notes from the last meeting of July 20 were read, voted and accepted after removing names of committee members. The committee agreed that names should not be mentioned in meeting notes unless approved by the person named. The reason this decision was made is so that committee members are not inhibited in their discussion.

Transfers

No transfers were presented to the committee.

Miscellaneous Discussion

Discussion: changing future agenda items after the meeting notice had been posted. It was decided that the law states that it is ok to change the agenda but we will only do this in emergency situations. If a non-emergency item is brought to the committee's attention after the meeting has been posted it will be put on the agenda for the meeting after the next one.

Michael Ward from the Collin Center will attend the August 10 Finance Committee meeting to give an update.

Chris asked that the members notify him if they are unable to attend a meeting so that he will know ahead of time if there will be a quorum. Notification by email or phone works for him.

Chris reminded the members that they need to take the ethics training. There are several members yet to do so.

Lillian wanted it noted in the minutes that she "is here to help".

Budget Discussion

Chris had an informal discussion with the Board of Selectmen (BOS) after their last meeting about this year's budget process. The following items were discussed:

- In general, the BOS liked the fact that the direction that the FinCom is taking with regard to creating a Reserve Fund Policy.
- The BOS will meet with the FinCom to discuss the budget process to help us come up to speed on how the process works. This is different from past years when the 2 committees didn't meet that often.
- A representative from the BOS will try to attend the second FinCom meeting in August.

Chris presented his ideas about how he thinks the budget process should unfold. He wants to include the BOS in the process from the beginning by having them attend our meetings as much as possible. There was some opposition to this idea but nothing was decided. Chris also wants the initial budget figures to be determined by the FinCom and then the department heads brought in for further clarification. This initial budget would be used as a fall back in case there were problems arriving at agreements between the department heads and the FinCom. It was decided that the initial figures should come directly from the department heads since they are the people with the most knowledge about what will be needed. More discussion on the budget process will be had at future meetings.

Other Discussions

Clarification on Warrant Article 54B was asked for as well as clarification about warrants in general. Specifically, the question was whether the BOS see the details of warrants or just the total figure. Nobody was completely sure of the answer or even whether warrants come under the jurisdiction of the FinCom. It was decided that more research is necessary.

Clarification of the street light budget item was also discussed. The question was asked about who is responsible for it and why was it all spent at the same time at the end of the year. It was determined that the Highway Department is responsible for this item but no one could say why the spending of the account happened the way it did. More research will be done into this question.

Next meeting agenda items:

- More discussion on how the budget process will work this year
- More discussion on crafting the Reserve Fund Policy

Meeting adjourned at 9:15pm

Next meeting on August 10 at 7:30pm