

# Finance Committee Minutes

## February 4<sup>th</sup> 2019

The meeting was called to order at 7:13PM. This was joint meeting with the Board of Selectmen. Present were Mr. Steven Klein, Mr. John Pshenishny, Mr. Robert Miller, Mrs. Marilyn Fracasso, Mrs. Prudence Spaulding, Mr. Douglas Newman, Ms. Tara White, Ms. Michele Shalaby, Mr. Nathaniel Yohalem, and Ms. Mari Enoch. Guests were Mrs. Marsha Pshenishny and Mr. Peter Schuyten (from the Five Village News), with Ms. Rebecca Schreiber, Mrs. Lucinda Schumulsky and Mrs. Claudette Callahan.

The purpose of the meeting was to provide information relating to the proposed financials basis upon which the budget for FY20 would be built. Ms. Enoch had a board of information and several handouts to support the information on the board.

1. A paper schematic of the board containing information regarding the FY20 budget was provided to each member (see attached).

2. Added to this there was a handout with the FY19 revenues, and available Funds, the Expenditures and the Reconciliation.

3. The Debt Service Schedule was provided (see attached).

4 A draft of the Proposed FY 2020 Budget Calendar (see attached) was also provided so that all members of both committees would have the timeline leading to the final presentation of the budget prior to the town meeting.

During the discussion it will be noted that additional information was added to these forms.

When reviewing the informational sheet relating to the proposed FY 20 budget it was noted that some of the information would not be available until late in the budget process, for instance correct figures for "New Growth" rarely was available until November, the "Vote" Education was never finalized until April 1<sup>st</sup>, State Aid was not available early and the Broad band Payment will depend upon the completion of the service by Charter. The school assessment has not been finalized, and the revenues from the solar pilots were still being negotiated. However, it is helpful to have the other information on hand to update or change as information becomes available.

Mr. Klein stated that the requests for the FY 20 using EXCEL had been sent to all participants and they were asked to return them by February 15<sup>th</sup>. Regular meetings of the Finance Committee will be scheduled on Thursday evenings from then on and members should plan to reserve that time. Since the budget requests will be handled electronically, those departments heads who do not have access to a computer can come to the town hall and will be helped to complete their budget there. Mr. Pshenishny

stated that he wished to have a paper copy of the submitted budgets. Such copies will be made available.

Reviewing the Proposed FY 2020 Budget Calendar, it was decided that should the Finance Committee and/or the Board of Selectmen have questions about some of the budgets, the appropriate department heads might be better served by coming in to a joint meeting of these two committees, with the possible date during the week of March 4<sup>th</sup>! (Possible department heads might include Highway, Fire, Police, Library, and EMS). Such a joint meeting of the FC and BOS is tentatively scheduled for March 16<sup>th</sup> with the budget presentation to be during the week of April 27-May 3<sup>rd</sup> (probably on a Tuesday evening since that seemed to work last year!) Monday April 29 is the final deadline to post the Warrant.

Mr. Yohalem stated that it was very important for the members of both the Finance Committee and the Board of Selectmen to attend the Finance Committee meetings of the Berkshire Regional School District. The first meeting will be held on Wednesday February 6<sup>th</sup> and there will be subsequent meetings. Information about these meetings will be available on the SBRSD web site or by calling the school.

Mr. Newman then introduced information on the new state law that required those involved in taxing "Airbnb" and other forms of short term rentals. This would provide extra income to the town. Since it is a new and recently passed law, there is still some question as to how this will work. The Finance Committee had discussed the possibility of obtaining some funds from a restaurant tax. Mr. Yohalem stated that before this was instituted discussion with those running restaurants within the town should be consulted to see if such a tax would prove a hardship for these establishments.

Prior to the close of the Finance Committee meeting it was decided that the minutes for the meeting held on November 20<sup>th</sup> would be reviewed at the next meeting.

A motion to adjourn at 8:15PM made by Mr. Newman, and Mr. Klein 2<sup>nd</sup> passed unanimously. Mr. Klein will set up the next meeting as soon as some of the budgets requests have been received.

Respectfully submitted.

Prudence Spaulding, Secretary.

Those who are reviewing these minutes on the web will need to go to the town hall to obtain the attachments referred in the minutes.