

FINCOM
Meeting Minutes – February 4, 2015

Members Present: Alice, Don, Laura, Heidi, Rudy, John
Not Present: Alan, Bruce, Steve
Others: Tim, Lorraine, Steve Gordon, Wyona Lynch-McWhite
Location: Town Hall meeting room

Alice opened the meeting at 7:05 PM.

Minutes of the Wednesday, January 28 meeting were reviewed and approved unanimously.

Public Commentary: None.

Review of Parks and Recreation Budget:

Wyona and Steve were prepared to answer the Committee's questions on their budget request. The areas we discussed were:

- **Beach Expenses-** They have compiled an inventory of all beach equipment, assessed each item's condition with a rating on a 5 point scale, and propose replacing all items with a poor condition rating which will cost an estimated \$9,000. They noted the replacement of these items has been put off for years and the new items will help provide a safe and fun experience for residents.
- **Maintenance of Town Fields-** They have requested an additional \$35,000 in FY16 to hire a company to provide services to improve the condition of the town's fields. Steve noted most of the fields are not in good shape and would benefit from regular aeration, fertilization, liming as well as mowing. They currently rely on DPW to mow the fields but DPW does not have the expertise required beyond regular mowing. Steve has received a \$35,000 estimate from Diamond Turf for this work and our committee informed him typically we need three bids and approve the lowest bid. Lorraine will check to see if Diamond Turf is on the state's approved bidder list. Given the short time before Town meeting and that all fields are snow covered making it impossible for a bidder to provide an estimate of the work needed, we believe it will not be possible to secure additional bids for this work in time for this year's budget. We suggested developing a similar spreadsheet for all fields and assessing each field's condition and needs, similar to the beach equipment assessment they conducted. This assessment could be used by Park & Rec. to develop user agreement on the priorities of work by field and secure more precise bids for the priority work they require.
- **Scheduling of Field Use-** We discussed the need to develop a centralized field reservation process which does not exist today. We were very supportive of the need for such a process and urged them to also clarify the cost to use each field by user group which would demonstrate to the Town they are doing due diligence to have users share the cost of maintaining the fields with the Town.
- **Stone Wall Rebuild-** The funds used for the stone wall rebuild are coming from a CPC approved fund that still has money available.

The Committee thanked Wyona and Steve for a productive discussion and answering our questions.

Warrant Articles: Tim distributed a list of the six warrant articles to date. We suggested changing Seasonal Mowing to Roadside Tree Maintenance, and added the COA's request for an additional outreach coordinator for \$20,026. We requested a meeting with the Planning Board to discuss their \$60,000 request for Town Planner.

Tim told us the Planning Board is meeting Thursday night to finalize this request and he will ask them to come to our next Wednesday meeting.

Town Administrator Report: The State reported today that Gov. Baker is using his 9C Emergency Powers to reduce various state budgets by \$514,000 to address the budget deficit. The reductions identified will have minimal impact on Harvard. The Group Insurance Commission reported a \$165,000 to \$190,000 shortfall suggesting that premium revenue is not covering costs. Tim believes it is likely the state will cover this shortfall—not currently included in the $\frac{3}{4}$ million dollar deficit.

Finance Director Report: Lorraine handed out the latest FY16 Budget Recap as of 2/4/15. She confirmed it includes all budget requests as submitted. It also includes the higher health insurance premiums she let us know about. Other points made for our information:

- New Growth conservatively estimated at \$75,000 could be increased to \$100,000, still below the prior three years.
- Library Trust Fund has not been contributing to the Town Budget for the past 5 years. We used to collect \$5,000/year when interest rates were higher and it was making higher returns.
- We could consider showing the OBEB as a separate line item for transparency at Town Meeting (it is currently included in the benefits/insurance total).

The Committee will carefully review the rollup against the list of all departments' incremental spending requests that Alice will compile for discussion at our next meeting.

Liaison Reports: None.

Next Meetings: We will meet at 8:15AM on Saturday, February 7 in the Town Hall meeting room. The next meeting will be at 7PM on Wednesday, February 11 in the Town Hall meeting room.

The meeting adjourned at 9:10PM.

Respectfully submitted,

John W. Seeley, Secretary