

Finance Committee Meeting  
August 12, 2010

Members present:

G. Lillan Whitney  
Chris Haynes (Chair)  
Joseph Armstrong-Champ (Secretary)  
Brian Foster

Public present:

Alice Bauman  
Tim Bauman  
Oliver M.  
Jamie Miller  
Mary Kraft

Meeting called to order 7:30pm

No transfers were presented to the committee.

Michael Ward from The Collins Center presented the status of the Town Analysis Project.

There are 6 parts to the project:

1. Review the Town Administrator position
2. Create an Organization Chart of the town
3. Write job descriptions of all town employees
4. Write a personnel policy
5. Write salary comparisons for all town positions
6. Ad-hoc policy recommendations.

Regarding task 1, about 20 town employees have been interviewed so far. A draft proposal will be ready near the end of next week for the selectmen to review. The report will contain 4 – 5 scenarios with 2 – 3 recommendations. The Collins Center is willing to present if asked.

The org chart will come in 2 versions. One will be a complete chart with all personnel listed. The other version will be smaller and based on functional area. The 2 versions should be ready by next week.

Some members of the public and the committee voiced concern over the fact that the project is taking much longer than promised. According to Mr Ward, this is due to the fact that the project is being done during the summer months when people are away. The initial estimate was for a much shorter time period.

The question was asked whether there would be a “no Town Administrator” scenario for task 1. Mr Ward stated that if there was it probably would not be recommended but an Executive Secretary position could be considered instead.

Someone asked when Mr Ward thought interviewing for the Town Admin position could start to which he replied that it could start as soon as the first task of the report was ready.

Mr Ward also stated that other tasks will be finished within 6 weeks of the first task being completed.

There was discussion about the letter that Lillian sent to the Nancy Chew, the Town Moderator. Lillian was concerned about the fact that the FinCom had voted to omit names from the meeting minutes unless expressly asked to include them. According to Nancy’s interpretation of the laws around this issue it was not necessary to include names. Some members of the committee asked that in the future that all concerns that members have be brought to the committee before going outside the group. Lillian was the secretary for the July 22 meeting where this was discussed and she will edit the minutes accordingly. The letter also stated that the scope of the committee was to prepare a budget , not oversee appropriate expenses. Finally, the letter also expressed concern about FinCom members being able to work in a “positive and productive working relationship with each other”.

Joe sent the minutes from the July 29 meeting to an email address which he thought pointed to members’ addresses. Since none of the members received the minutes it will be sent to all the members and discussed at the next meeting. Lillian will receive a paper copy in the FinCom mail box in the Town Hall.

A presentation of a proposed budget process was presented by Chris. Main points were

- The Board of Selectmen (BOS) will have a presence and voting rights at every meeting. This idea was met with strong disagreement from some of the FinCom members and it was decided that the BOS would be encouraged to attend the budget meetings but that they would not have a vote.
- The ‘First Pass Budget’ will be arrived at by using the numbers from 2011 and adding state mandated numbers and adjusting for unstable commodities and inflation. These numbers will be the starting figures to come up with the initial budget. The numbers from 2011 may be adjusted if changed are made at the Special Town Meeting in the fall.
- A member of the FinCom will be assigned to each Town Department to talk the the department head. After this the department head can come to the FinCom meetings to discuss further adjustments to their budgets.
- There will be a ‘parking lot’ concept used to hold people’s comments which aren’t related to the discussion at hand. The chair will write the person’s comments down and will return to them when the discussion relates to the comments.
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A discussion of our Reserve Fund (RF) policy was started but more discussion is needed. The following points were outlined as what is needed to apply for a RF transfer:

- Fill out the RF transfer form
- Attach documentation supporting the need
- A brief explanation as to why the transfer is necessary
- The date by which approval is required
- Send everything to the town Administrative Assistant who will send copies of everything to the FinCom and BOS
- Once the transfer has been approved or rejected the BOS and FinCom will send the signed form back to the Administrative Assistant who will in turn notify the department of the decision.
- Approval for the transfer is needed before the spending can take place

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 9:30pm

Next meeting on August 24 at 7:30pm