

Finance Committee Meeting

October 9, 2012

Regular meeting called to order: 7:30 pm by Kevin Stetson, Chair

Present: Kevin Stetson, Kathy Panagiotes, Sue Caron, Joe Armstrong-Champ

Guest: Harald Scheid, Regional Tax Assessor

Pubic: Lillian Whitney

Minutes: September 26 reviewed. Accepted with correction: Under New Business *the FD \$900.00 was an estimate to repair the ambulance turbo.*

Minutes of June 26, 2012 reviewed and accepted by both Caron and Panagiotes (only two members present at that meeting)

New Business:

Mr. Scheid discussed:

1. FinCom idea of Tax Forgiveness Program.

- Need legislative sponsor to propose new bill
- MGL Ch. 59 (would be a proposed law outside of this one)
- Harvard did not pass
- Hamilton started process 3 years ago
- Sudbury is on hold
- What exactly is community looking for?
- Clause 41D allows for exemption for elderly above the senior work-off program
- There is a hardship deferral plan 18A
- Hardship exemption is available

*needs to be approved by Board of Assessors

*comes out of assessors overlay; criteria and amount voted by town

*\$500.00 has been specific for 40+ years

*suggest article be on TM warrant for vote to increase dollar amount

*state reimbursement is \$500.00; higher limit falls to town budget; consider \$1000.00

*tax collector can have place on bill that specifies average/above designated as tax relief funds

2. monies due to school comes out of 3rd & 4th quarter tax bills (an increase), then tax bill would decrease as new total is then spread out over 4 quarters.

3. *FC asked how tax rate is set; 2.5% now; can it be set less?

* Kevin was interested in a particular line item; Engine_____

* Kathy asks how grant money is received and who manages it

* who keeps track of department spending; several line items have had a significant decrease and it is only October.

*FinCom would like warrants 11-P and W12B

*Department Meetings: we understand there are regularly scheduled department meetings. FinCom would like to attend

Other items of interest:

- Average tax bill in Ashby is \$3400.
- Property tax is about 50-55% of town budget revenue
- Computer still not available in FinCom office.

Great thanks to Mr. Scheid for taking time to educate FinCom.

Next Meeting: October 23, 7:30 pm

Adjourned: 9:08

Respectfully submitted,
Kathleen Panagiotes