

West Newbury Finance Committee
Minutes of the meeting
Monday, March 20, 2017

Board of Selectmen (BOS)

FinCom members met with Selectmen Anderson and Archibald in the first floor hearing room in the 1910 Building to discuss the current budget. Wage increases, including Cost of Living (COLA), were determined in BOS executive session. *BOS will forward the revised budget to FinCom members.* BOS and FinCom members reviewed line items page by page.

Chairman Codair called the Finance Committee meeting to order at 7:50 p.m. in the second floor hearing room of the 1910 Building with Ms. Grammer, Mr. DeLena, Mr. Ellis, Mr. Phillips, and Mr. Winch in attendance.

There being no public comment, the Committee considered its agenda.

Town Clerk/Town Counsel—Mr. Michael McCarron

Mr. McCarron joined FinCom members to discuss the status of previously approved items or new articles. Mr. McCarron explained that digitizing old records was more expensive than expected because very old bound records needed a professional service to unbind and the rebind the books. Nonetheless, he believes this can be achieved within his expense budget. The added cost is \$3,000.00. Ms. Grammer suggested charging a fee for digitalized copies of genealogical records.

The Committee and Mr. McCarron discussed the idea of setting up articles at the outset so that any left over funds could go directly to Free Cash, without the need for another subsequent article to close out the excess funds. Mr. McCarron said that this could be accomplished by framing the Motion at Town Meeting such that any excess would automatically transfer to Free Cash. At times the Town has been better at this than at other times...

CPC Expenditures and Accounting

Mr. McCarron remarked Community Preservation (CPC) funding amounts may change if grants or other funding is provided. He stated, currently, there is a report of funds remaining but it does not mention active funding.

Ms. Grammer suggested the use of a running chart to understand where in the process each project is. She also noted some projects come under budget. Mr. McCarron remarked the Town Accountant maintains the CPC books. Mr. McCarron continued by stating there are two articles involving CPC funding. This fact, even with sunset clauses complicates tracking of projects. Periodic review of projects may be necessary.

Green Community

Mr. McCarron shared with FinCom the Energy Advisory Committee has recently applied for a green community grant to be used to install energy efficient lighting in Town buildings. If approved, the projected savings for the town is approximately \$20,000.00.

Revolving Funds

Mr. McCarron reported submission of an article requesting a police revolving fund. Collected revenues from police cruiser details would fund the account. Chief Reed projected the department will collect \$7,500.00. In this case, the revolving funds defray the annual purchase of a police vehicle, thus reducing the funds needed to “raise and appropriate”. Additionally, the initiation of the proposed police annual vehicle replacement schedule not only provides safe vehicles for the officers, but low mileage vehicles obtain a greater trade in value.

According to Mr. McCarron, typically, a revolving fund is established for a specific purpose. In some cases, it is possible to roll over revolving funds to free cash. Mr. McCarron continued revolving funds are particularly effective for field related services such as:

- Cable Public, Educational, or Government use (PEG) funds
- Parks and Recreation.

FinCom members stated this was a particularly busy year for police details and therefore it is difficult to determine a specific amount for the fund. Mr. McCarron replied approximately \$7,500.00 have been collected this year. The article cites an amount of \$10,000.00. Mr. McCarron stated that the new generic revolving fund revisions (prompted by state law changes), if approved, would allow the BOS and FinCom to alter the amount. Chairman Codair asked if the failure to pass the purchase of the vehicle affect the Police Vehicle Revolving Fund. Mr. McCarron replied in the affirmative, to the extent that no expenditure for a new police car would be authorized at this Town Meeting.

Annual Town Meeting

Article 3: To determine what sums of money the town will raise and appropriate for defraying the expenses of the town for the ensuing fiscal year and for payment of the town debt. By request of the Board of Selectmen.

FinCom delayed a vote until receiving final budget with salary increases from the BOS. *Mr. Gould will forward the BOS approved budget in the form of a spreadsheet.*

Article 16: (new article) To see if the town will vote to authorize the Police Vehicle Revolving Fund for the Police Department as revolving funds are described in Chapter 44, Section 53E ½ of the Massachusetts General Laws, for FY 2018. This revolving fund would be to accept receipts from fees charged for use of police vehicles for details. The receipts would be expended, not to exceed

\$10,000.00 in FY 2018 by the Police Department for the payment of costs and expenses for replacement of police vehicles in accordance with the vehicle replacement policy established by the Police Department to take any other action relative thereto. By request of the Police Department. *FinCom voted to approve pursuant to statute, 6-0-0.*

Rationale: Mr. Phillips

Ms. Grammer will forward a spreadsheet reflecting changes in numbering warrant articles.

ARTICLE 24: (formerly 23) To see if the Town will vote to amend the West Newbury Zoning Bylaw concerning “Signs” pursuant to the attached document entitled “West Newbury Planning Board Proposed Zoning Bylaw Amendment SIGNS”, 5 pages, dated February 6, 2017 at the Spring Town Meeting by:

1. Deleting Section 7.C. “Signs” in its entirety and replacing it with a new Section 7.C. “Signs”;
2. Amending Section 8.B.3.e. by adding new subsection 8.B.3.e.5., which would read “5. Signs (Section 7.C.)”.

FinCom members expressed some concern regarding enforcement of the current sign bylaw. Mr. DeLena suggested an addition to the bylaw be presented in concert between the Planning Board and the Building Inspector. Ms. Grammer stated the current bylaw does contain both size limitations and restriction of illuminated signs. Mr. Phillips suggested a comparison of the current and proposed bylaws. *Chairman Codair will compare the bylaws prior to a FinCom vote.*

Rationale: Mr. Ellis

Special Town Meeting Articles

ARTICLE 6. To see if the Town will vote to transfer from available funds the sum of \$TBD to fund the Snow and Ice deficit. By request of the DPW Director.

FinCom deferred a vote until an amount is determined.

Rationale: Chairman Codair

FinCom Business

FinCom will meet with the Housing Authority and the CPC to discuss articles relevant to each.

Ms. Grammer will invite the Housing Authority to meet with FinCom on Monday, March 27, 2017. She will also confirm the CPC time slot. Mr. Gould will provide details of open projects and CPC expenditures.

Ms. Grammer reported the application of some of the cable funds went to improving the town web site.

As a new FinCom member, Mr. Ellis requested an explanation of the difference between the Annual and Special Town Meetings. Other members explained Special Town Meeting took place in the spring and in the fall. Spring Annual Town meeting covers the town’s expenses for the Fiscal Year. Funds are not available until the FY begins on July 1 of that year. During Special Town Meetings, discussions focus on unusual and unexpected expenses. Unlike approvals at Annual Town Meeting, funds voted in Special Town Meeting are available for immediate usage.

Minutes

The Committee voted to approve the March 13, 2017 minutes with corrections, 5-0-1, Ellis abstaining.

Future FinCom Meetings

Monday, March 27, 2017

- 6:30-Housing Authority
- 7:00-Meet with BOS and Town Moderator.
- 8:30-Meet with CPC

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elisa Grammer
Secretary

Meeting materials:

Library budget form & letter
Assessor budget form & background
Water budget form & background
Planning Board budget form
Public Works budget form
Health Board budget form
Conservation Commission budget form
Inspection budget form
Police vehicle replacement plan
Police vehicle revolving fund article request
Spring2017 article spreadsheet
Latest omnibus budget