

Town of Fairhaven

Finance Committee

Minutes of the meeting for <February 25, 2016> at the BPW Administration Building,
5 Arsene St., Fairhaven, MA

Members in attendance:

Chairman-Scott Fernandes, Robert A. Furtado, Padraic Elliott, Kathi Carter, Lisa Plante,
Tracey Diggins, John Mota, Thomas Alden

Member absent:

Ann Ponichtera DesNardis

Town of Fairhaven:

Mark Rees- Town Administrator

Wendy Graves- Collector/Treasurer/Finance Director

Michael Myers- Chief of Police

Timothy Francis- Fire Chief

Todd Correia- Deputy Fire Chief

Andrew Tillett- Capital Planning Committee Chairman

Meeting was covered by government access television.

Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Announced that the meeting was being recorded by government access TV. Chairman has to be notified if anyone else present is recording the meeting by video or audio.

Motion made by Lisa to accept the minutes from February 18, 2016. Seconded by John.
Vote: Unanimous

- Chairman distributes copies of the Fin Com budget and recommends level funding the budget from last year.
 - Pat motions to recommend a level funded budget for the Fin Com for FY2017. Seconded by Lisa. Vote: Unanimous.

- Mr. Tillett distributes copies of the 5 year Capital Plan and reviews it with the committee.
 - Mr. Tillett explains that the plan has changed since the printed plan was produced. Mr. Tillett states that the MSBA has approved the Hastings Middle School roof project. Mr. Tillett states that the MSBA has estimated the cost of the project at \$802,000, of which they will reimburse the Town \$439,701.
 - Mr. Tillett states the Town must appropriate the entire amount at Town Meeting, and the MSBA will reimburse the Town on an ongoing basis.
 - Mr. Tillett explains in order to fund the roof project, money will have to come out of the Capital Planning Stabilization Fund.
 - Mr. Rees tells Mr. Tillett he has plans laid out for the roof financing.
 - Mr. Tillett states the amount of money in the CP Stabilization Fund now, is not enough for the project, and more must be contributed this year.
 - Chairman points out it takes 2/3 vote at TM to take money out of the account.
 - Mr. Tillett runs down the remaining Capital Planning projects. These include: 2 New police cars, \$150,000 for Highway Dept. equipment, \$300,000 for roadwork, \$40,000 for a new Harbormaster truck, \$30,000 for a Fire/Police station feasibility study, \$153,408 for the remaining section of floors at the Hasting Middle School, and \$30,000 for a Police Safe Boat.
 - Lisa asks if the Police/Fire feasibility study compares to the Master Plan discussed last week?
 - Mr. Tillett and Mr. Rees explain the 2 studies are different.
 - Mr. Tillett explains the police boat.

The police have 2 boats now that will both be replaced by the new boat. The boat would be purchased from the City of New Bedford. The \$30,000 is for the boat only, with no power or other equipment, but the boat is worth \$90,000 as it sits now. The agreement with the police is that the Town will only pay for the boat purchase, and the police would be responsible for finding grant funding for the additional equipment needed.
 - Chairman asks if they need the boat to get the grant.
 - Chief Myers states you have a better chance of getting the grant if you have the boat in hand, but they will not purchase the boat if they cannot outfit it.
 - Mr. Tillett states that the boat could be sold for more than we are paying for it, in a worse case scenario. Mr. Tillett states that totally equipped the boat would be worth \$190,000.
 - Mr. Tillett states that the Water Dept. has no Capital Projects this year, because they do not have the money for them.
 - Sewer Dept. has several significant projects planned for this year and they fall within the budget of the dept.

- Pat asks how many of the Town's boats are out at the same time.
 - Chief Myers states that during the summer, the police boat is out at least 5 days a week.
 - Fire Chief Francis states that the Fire Dept.'s boat is in the water year round, and is busy with oil spills. He states that it takes 2 boats to put booms in place for an oil spill.
- Pat asks if there is an overall budget in place for the Capital Planning Committee.
 - Mr. Tillett states they had originally discussed 2% of the Town's budget when the committee was formed.
 - Mr. Tillett states that dept. heads don't want to see their operating budgets cut to fund the Capital Plan.
 - Chairman states that one time money that comes goes to the Town is set aside for Capital Planning.
 - Mr. Tillett states that the CP committee did turn down some requests, repaving the bike path this year was one of them.
- Pat asks about the HMS roof project.
 - Mr. Tillett states that this is the last phase of the roof project.
- Pat asks about taking money out of the CP Stabilization Fund already.
 - Mr. Rees states it is worth it in order to get the MSBA grant for the roof.
- Chairman states that the roads will be voted on in a separate Article.
- Mr. Rees states that the money for the HMS roof may be in the STM in order to get the state money.

7:40 PM. Mr. Tillett leaves the meeting.

- Chief Francis and Mr. Rees present a letter from the Fire Dept. outlining anticipated budget overages for the FY16 budget, and look for guidance as to Reserve Fund Transfers or STM funding.
 - Chief Francis states he is requesting \$5,000 for repairs to vehicles that were unforeseen.
 - He is also requesting \$3,400 for training, \$3,000 for Equipment for Men, \$10,000 for Overtime, and \$10,000 for EMS overtime. These expenses were incurred because 2 firefighters have left the Town and must be replaced.
 - Chairman states he would not have a problem with Reserve Fund Transfers for the Purchase of Services, but the Chief should discuss the salaries with the Selectmen and possibly look at the STM for this.
 - Pat asks what happens to the clothing of the existing firefighters when they leave.
 - Deputy Chief Correia states that they recycle what they can or hold it as spare clothing, but the turn-out gear usually has to be custom fitted to the person.

7:51 PM. Chief Francis and Deputy Chief Correia leave the meeting.

- Mr. Rees presents a copy of emails outlining budget overages anticipated in the Police Dept.
 - Chief Myers explains \$35,000 is needed to cover the buyout and overtime coverage for a retired officer.
 - Chairman again states he would rather see salaries come through the Special Town Meeting.
 - Chief Myers states that the dept. is presently fully staffed.

 - Mr. Rees states he is anticipating an approximately \$20,000 deficit in the legal budget.
 - Mr. Rees also states his desire to hire legal counsel.
 - Kathi asks why the deficit in the legal budget?
 - Mr. Rees cannot give a specific reason, but states he is just extending out the monthly average for the remainder of the year.
 - Chairman states he would rather see the labor counsel expense come from the STM, but if he ends up with a bill he needs to have paid, we would consider a Reserve Fund Transfer.
- 8:00 PM. Chief Myers leaves the meeting.
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- Mr. Rees states he will present his budget to the Selectmen on February 29. They will have a budget workshop on March 7. Selectmen will vote on the budget on March 14.
 - Mr. Rees will present his budget to us on March 3.

 - Chairman states he will have the big depts. in and anyone else who requests to come in.
 - Chairman advises that our meetings will likely be longer in the future.

8:08 PM. John motions to adjourn. Seconded by Tom. Vote: Unanimous

Respectfully submitted by:

Robert A. Furtado
 Finance Committee Secretary
 (accepted 3-3-2016)