

FINCOM MEMBERS PRESENT: Lois Stearns, Dan Campbell, Bernhard Porada, Sue Kaczinski, and Jack Spanbauer
FINCOM MEMBERS ABSENT: Tony Matteo
ALSO PRESENT: Richard Martin, Superintendent of Franklin County Technical School; Andrea Llamas, Town Administrator

*The FINCOM meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Stearns
This meeting was video recorded and voice recorded*

• **FCTS BUDGET PRESENTATION**

- Martin displayed a power point presentation of his budget
 - Budget has not yet been voted on by the FCT School Committee (March is the final vote)
 - Large increase in special education population; hired various types of positions.
 - Increase demand in different studies (i.e. electrical shop, veterinary science) determined that additional instructors also needed to be hired
 - Veterinary program received a \$275,000 grant
 - Certified Medical Assistant will be a new addition to program in the fall with a LPN evening program
 - Welding Program received a \$500,000 grant for a shop renovation
 - Cafeteria renovations were completely funded by surplus funds out of the cafeteria account
 - 485 in-district students currently enrolled (509 total student population); projecting 515 (however number could be around 550 with in and out of district students) for next year. 115 seniors to graduate in June; 200 applications for enrollment in fall.
 - Northfield student enrollment was estimated high last year (predicted 30, actual number is 27). This causes a reduction in assessment for FY21. Martin is predicting 37 students for next year. There are currently 16 Northfield student applications approved; and applications are still being reviewed, so number could increase. Northfield will have 6 seniors graduate in the spring.
 - Local minimum contributions; 27 Northfield students. Assessment per pupil has increased, although overall assessment per pupil across all 19 member towns dropped from 13, 320 to 13,097. Last year Northfield was at 16,500, now at 17,100 (based on a formula dictated by the state).
 - Capital Assessment is down from last year; 10,600
 - Sources of funding; taxation – overall about a 3% increase for all member towns, capital assessment, Chapter 78 increase, regional transportation increase, tuition for non-member towns went down (but number should trend back up due to new programs being offered), self-contained pre-employment program for students with significant disabilities that they continue to have surplus funds that help towards the budget, Medicare revenue, E & D is at 520,000. Martin then explained how each source of funds is used.
 - 300,000 of the 520,000 E&D funds will be going into Capital Stabilization. Martin explained that they are going to be building a state of the art Veterinary Clinic and their goal is not to seek any funds from the towns. They are trying to be very fiscally conservative and plan over the course of several years to be able to fully fund this clinic without going to the towns for money; will save taxpayers money down the road if they are budgeting correctly now.

6:44pm Martin leaves FINCOM meeting.

6:44 Robert MacEwen (Board of Health) joins FINCOM meeting

6:50 Skip Dunnell (Fire & Emergency Mgt.) joins FINCOM meeting

• **BOARD OF HEALTH BUDGET PRESENTATION**

- MacEwen presented BOH budget
 - Solid Waste district figure is the final figure/assessment
 - Changes include transfer station increase (tipping fees).

- Transfer station used to make money off of tonnage (previously \$40-50 per ton, now \$6-8 per ton). New changes determined that the town will have to pay \$94.50 per ton
- Discussion on recycling, what has value and what does not
- Line item for legal consultation. Stearns advised that this is not allowed. Departments cannot have their own legal line account; needs to be filtered through Town Administrator
- MacEwen wants a Well at the Transfer station; funds were encumbered (\$25,000-\$30,000 last year) and MacEwen had plans to put well in at an estimated cost of \$15,000. Timing issues prevented this project from happening and any encumbered funds went into the General account; project on hold.
- MacEwen to come back to FINCOM with stronger figures for his budget, 7:00pm on 2/25/2020
7:19 MacEwen leaves FINCOM meeting

- **FIRE DEPARTMENT & EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT BUDGET PRESENTATION**

- Dunnell presented Fire Department budget
 - Other Purchased Services increased \$1000; repairs on apparatus
 - Salary has increase of 3%
 - All other items in operating budget are level funded
 - Fire Department Hoses & Equipment increase of \$3,000
 - Capital item: Jaws of Life power unit portion only; adapters and hose (\$15,000)
- Dunnell presented the Emergency Management budget
 - Dunnell needs to follow up on this budget with Llamas. Budget originally funded the Code Red cost and Salaries were covered through a Vermont Yankee fund. There is question on where the money went from the Vermont Yankee account.
7:35 Dunnell leaves FINCOM meeting

- **CONSIDERATION OF POTENTIAL ARTICLES FOR TOWN MEETING**

- The Warrant for Annual Town Meeting will close on March 5th.
 - March 10th, Stearns reserved room for meeting to go over the articles
- Llamas updated group on figures. Hopeful that in the next few weeks the FY21 expenditures will be all in the system. FY20 is in the process of getting closed out. Free cash figure is still not determined.
- Llamas stated that the work that is being done in the Accounting office (previous accountant Deb Mero is helping) is being paid out of the Accountant Salary; which at the end of year the funds may need to be replenished.
- Articles are being put together by Llamas. Stearns noted particular articles that should be on (Contingency, Stabilization etc....)
- Llamas does not feel that there is a need for a Special Town Meeting; everything can be rolled into the Town Meeting.
- 350th Committee may need to request a budget
- Local Option tax discussion (short term tax, meals tax and marijuana tax)

- **REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- Minutes from February 4, 2020 were reviewed
 - ***A motion was made by Campbell, seconded by Spanbauer and VOTED to approve the February 4, 2020 minutes as presented. In Favor: Stearns, Campbell, Porada and Spanbauer. Abstained: Kaczinski***

- **PVRS**

- Llamas received new figures today.
- Administration had removed a position; however it has since been added back (adjustment counselor)

- **COMMUNICATIONS**

- The date for the 4 Town meeting has been changed to March 23rd at 7pm. so all 4 towns can attend (Bernardston Senior Center). Agenda items to be gathered.
- FINCOM received a copy of a letter sent to the PVRs school committee to request the School Committee to reconsider the dropping of the School Adjustment Counselor

- **MEETINGS ATTENDED REPRESENTING THE FINCOM**

- Porada (Emergency Services Facility Committee): no meeting
- Spanbauer (Business Park Committee-NOT A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE FINCOM): write up in newspaper about the business park plan; no meeting
- Campbell: potential Caucus date is March 17th

- **NEXT MEETING**

- 2/25/2020

*A motion was made by Campbell, seconded by Porada and **VOTED** unanimously to adjourn the FINCOM Meeting.*

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 pm

Submitted by:
Bethany Walker
FINCOM Secretary

Approved On: 2-25-20

Approved By: Lois M. Stearns