

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Lois Stearns, Dan Campbell, Bernhard Porada, Bonnie L'Etoile, Tony Matteo and Sue Kaczinski

ALSO PRESENT: Deb Mero, Town Accountant; Willie Morales, Town Administrator; Tracy Rogers, Selectboard Chair; Julia Blyth, Selectboard Member; Jack Spanbauer, Selectboard Member; Sandra Wood, Selectboard Secretary and Bethany Walker, FINCOM secretary

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Stearns.

This meeting was video recorded.

- **BUDGET DISCUSSION FOR ACCOUNTS UNDER THE SELECTBOARD JURISDICTION**

- Selectman's Expense
 - Brief discussion on cell phones, who has them and if there is a policy set for them. Morales stated that no policy in place as of yet. Also discussed how many cell phones, who has them and the potential of moving individual ones to their respective department budget (those currently under the Selectmen's expense i.e. Town Maintenance possibly go under Highway Department Expense) L'Etoile requested a count of cell phones.
 - Meeting and Seminars has shown in past limited use. Morales stated there are many beneficial meetings for the Selectboard Members, however, attending these meetings would be at their own discretion; Morales feels it is important to leave funds available for them should they choose to attend.
- Town Administrators Expense (based on a revised submission from Morales)
 - Other Supplies to include office supplies which is level funded
 - Mileage increase based on Morales Contract
 - Capital waiting on more information
 - Increase / New for (3) new memberships that the Town Administrator never had before. ICMA (International City Managers Association) is \$736 and LGHN (Local Government Hispanic Government) is \$100; available per Morales's contract. STAMM is \$30 and MMA is \$80
- Computer Supply and Service
 - Discussion on increase to this account. Morales explained the programs BMSI (accounting software) and POINT (tax collector/treasurer software) to the group. Cost increase due to the migration for the accounting platform onto the new server. Having this accounting on server allows for multiple users (i.e. Accountant AND Financial Assistant both able to work simultaneously). Also adding a module for direct deposit.
 - Number of users increased from 14 to 19 on the Computer service side of things, which adds costs associated with each user. Per Morales, Town is now compliant with email storage laws.
 - Miscellaneous Replacement Equipment is budgeted at \$4000; per Morales, this is an internal attempt to budget the replace cost of computers as time goes on based on Guardians (computer IT/Support Company) recommendations. L'Etoile asked about the status of the Police computers and how leasing has worked out. Morales stated that the lease is up in June and they will have a better idea at that time, not at this time.
- Copy Machine Supply/Service
 - Leased machine; level fund
- Town Hall Maintenance
 - Figures shown for actual amounts used are not accurate per Mero as they only reflect up to November 15th and only the bills turned in to that point. Bottom line requested amount may be less than \$49,500 depending on how much less fuel was used now that the pellet boiler has been installed. Currently in a group bid purchase for this fuel through the FRCOG.

- Street Lights Account
 - No figure has been given so Morales left it at last years requested amount (\$15,500)
 - Porada asked about our Green Community status; Morales stated that Northfield is in the process of renewing the grant; Replacing street lights are in Morales plan for MIA grant submission in 2020.
 - Soldiers Relief
 - No way of predicting amount needed; level funding at \$42,000
 - Veterans District
 - Increase from \$6172 to \$6294
 - Health Insurance, Life Insurance and Other Insurance are all requested to be level funded
 - Medicare increases from \$21,000 to \$22,500
 - Alexander Hall; the Selectboard to work with the Building Utilization Committee as to the funding of this.
- **Budgets Not Received to Date (Under the Selectboard)**
 - Building Commissioner, Dog Officer, Emergency Management and Fire Department
 - **Financial Concerns of Budgets submitted by Departments (Under the Selectboard)**
 - Stearns was concerned about Selectboard changes that conflict with a Town Meeting Vote. Highway Superintendent wants to place the Maintenance Person budget under the Highway and not under the Selectboard. L'Etoile suggested the Selectboard to rethink the Town Maintenance Supervision and commitment to town buildings. L'Etoile asked the Selectboard to find out what projects didn't get done and why and how many projects are out there that need to be done.
 - Stearns also brought up Titles of Cemetery Commission and Tree Warden; those positions were eliminated by the Town with the approval of the State Legislature and now the responsibilities fall under the Highway Superintendent. Those old Titles should not still be used per Stearns.
 - **Other Budget Request Discussion**
 - Council on Aging Director had inquired about WIFI for the downstairs (senior center area). Morales is looking into it, however he is waiting for all of the wiring to be completed. Morales is hesitant on using the \$500 figure when it comes to technology.
 - Stearns wanted to know what the financial implications are of the Floating Administrative Assistant (secretary to boards/committees) that the Selectboard has discussed in recent meetings. Filling the vacancies for some boards/committee is showing to be difficult.
 - Discussion on PVRs about the possibility of them requesting to delay budget discussion. Stearns concerned about the assessment. FINCOM can't complete their budget process without knowing the PVRs assessment
 - Jack Spanbauer compiled a Guide to Budget and Tax Information for the town. Available online and packets put out. Spanbauer wanted to give information to the townspeople so they perhaps could understand better why our tax rate increased and what the Selectboard and FINCOM did with the money that was coming in from the campus. Spanbauer wanted to clear up any misinformation that may be out there.
- 7:02 Franklin County Tech School Superintendent Rick Martin and Business Manager Russ Kaubris join FINCOM meeting
- **Franklin County Technical School Budget Presentation**
 - Martin and Kaubris presented a slide show
 - Some staffing was reduced to reflect student enrollment
 - Business Technology enrollment was declining so they closed that program saving about \$50,000

- Library position hours were cut; savings of approximately \$45,000
- Some staff has retired
- A co-op coordinator position was created
- There are Curriculum shared initiatives such as a Music teacher (1/2 with FCTS and 1/2 with Erving Elementary) and a Spanish Teacher (1/2 with FCTS and 1/2 with GCC).
- Total student population, county wide, has been decreasing over the years; there are just fewer kids.
- It is appearing that Northfield's Assessment will be decreasing by approximately 69,000, however it is a very early figure and no basis should be made on this.
- Northfield's actual enrollment is down which is why there is a decrease

7:47 Rogers, Spanbauer, Blyth, Wood, Morales, Martin and Kaubris leave FINCOM meeting

- **MINUTES**

- Minutes from the January 22nd, 2018 meeting were reviewed. *A motion was made by L'Etoile, seconded by Matteo and VOTED to accept the January 22, 2018 meeting minutes as written.*
In-Favor: Stearns, Porada, Matteo and Kaczinski Abstained: L'Etoile and Campbell.

- **MAIL**

- Account balances to the end of January
- Copy of Jack Spanbauer Guide to Budget and Tax Information
- Invitation from the Northfield Elementary PTO for the State of Our Town Spaghetti Dinner and program on April 7, 2018

- **MEETINGS ATTENDED AS REPRESENTATIVES OF THE FINCOM**

- Porada: No meeting of the Public Safety Facility Committee
- Porada: Town Governance Study Committee (TGSC); No word from any members.
- Matteo: Community Preservation Committee met. CPC had received (3) proposals. Committee meeting again on 2/15/18 to make decision.

- **NEXT MEETING**

- 2/26/18 6pm

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:03 pm

Submitted by:

Bethany Walker

FINCOM Secretary

Approved On: 3-5-18

Approved By: Lois M. Stearns