

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

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Dan Campbell

ALSO PRESENT: Andrea Llamas, Town Administrator; Richard Martin, Superintendent of Franklin County Technical School; Nathan May, Assistant; Robert MacEwen, Board of Health Chair

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

This meeting was video and voice recorded.

• **FRANKLIN COUNTY TECH SCHOOL BUDGET**

- Superintendent Martin and Assistant May gave a presentation on their FY20 budget
 - Highlighted items:
 - success in their shared music teacher services with Erving
 - 56% of seniors are out on a co-op or a paid co-op,
 - Out of 370 school districts in Massachusetts, FCTS was 1 of 18 (and the ONLY vocational school) to be named in the AP Honor Roll.
 - The FCTS sold their first house (\$238,000) that was built in its entirety; profits from this project allowed to purchase another lot and build another house. Building a house incorporates the landscape, plumbing, HVAC, electrical, carpenters and CAD department programs.
 - Received a \$500,000 welding grant to enable to have state of the art life size robotic arm, steel bending machine, new ventilation system for entire facility (a new space also included)
 - Revamped collision repair center with modern technology
 - Students installed a new light systems for some of the sports areas outside; saving thousands of dollars
- 463 students as of 10/1/2018 (in 2013/14 there were 478 students, 2015 there were also 463).
- 5 Years ago the total amount of 8th graders in the county was at 806, this year that number is 598. This shows the decline in the number of students across the entire county.
- An adjustment counselor position was added, based on numbers, 38.5% of 9th and 10th graders have IEP's; compared to the average of 17.7% in other districts. This information is to show the reason behind the hiring/creating of a new position, and potentially 2 in this position.
- Projecting a total number of approximately 33 students from Northfield next year (6-11 new students)
- Currently \$17,500 is PVRs cost per pupil; \$16,500 Northfields portion of FCTS cost per pupil
- The Capital Assessment from 3 years ago, (a 15 year bond) this year's assessment has decreased from 185,000 to 160,000; Northfields portion is \$8417
- State has changed its formula for chapter 70 state aide; FCTS will be receiving more than last year
- Will be adding a vet science program; in the process, will start fall of 2019. Outbuilding facility to be constructed.
- February 13, 2019 first meeting reviewing the budget, March will be the final budget meeting
- Stearns asked about any comments about shared positions, added regionalization. Martin did state that he has been a part of those discussions and believes it's always good for school districts to look for efficiencies. (Currently already doing some of these shared options like teaching staff and sports)
- Northfield Town Meeting is May 6th, Martin stated he would be available to attend in case any questions come up at the meeting

6:35pm Martin and May leave FINCOM meeting

• **BOARD OF HEALTH BUDGET**

- Stearns had received an updated assessment from the Solid Waste District (voted on 1/16/19). Northfields Assessment is \$11,666. MacEwen stated that assessment has to do with EQV.
- MacEwen encourages town's people who have any questions about the Board of Health budget to talk to him directly. He is available on Wednesday evenings at the town hall in the Board of Health office
- Budget Request for the Transfer Station
 - Wages decreased (5 people share 29 weekly hours)
- Budget for Animal Inspector, level fund
- Board of Health Expenses
 - Increase (added back into budget) BOH telephone (transfer station phone, landline). Not certain as to why it was previously removed
 - Increase \$50 on mileage for seminars and for recycling coordinating
 - Shared health agents going up 2%
- Have a machine that strips wires to get to copper
- Capital Request for FY20
 - \$150,000 (estimated) Building for baling machines, bales can then be stored outside then turned in at a larger scale. This would be saving on the number of hauls and costs savings. Matteo asked about the cost of recycling going up and MacEwen stated that yes, cost is going up. Stearns wanted time frame as to when figure would be more specific; needs number by first week of March if he wants it for FY20. MacEwen stated that there is approximately \$60,000 in the revolving account that could be used towards this project; he would try to get a more precise figure.

6:58 MacEwen leaves FINCOM meeting

• **ZBA BUDGET**

- No one from ZBA is responding to request to present their budget. There is a request for funds for a new computer.

• **REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- Minutes from the January 22nd, 2019 were reviewed
 - *A motion was made by L'Etoile, seconded by Matteo and VOTED unanimously to accept the January 22nd, 2019 minutes as written.*

• **COMMUNICATIONS/MAIL**

- Copy of letter written by Llamas on behalf of those in receipt of the first letter by a citizen
- Monthly balances provided by Gilfeather-Girton and Enterprise Fund balances
- Llamas announced the warrant will be opening up next week and closing March 25th. The Selectboard will be signing in April 8th, 2019. Town Meeting is May 6th

• **MEETINGS ATTENDED REPRESENTING THE FINCOM**

- Porada (Emergency Services Facility Committee): no meeting
- Porada (Town Governance Study Committee): met last week. Town Clerk, Dan Campbell was a guest at meeting. Next meeting on 2/6/19, Llamas will attend. Next few meetings they will combine their reports and findings and determine what they as a group they want to address. Everything is going according to plan and looks like they are on schedule to present their results at Annual Town Meeting. A couple of the committee members presented their mission to the senior center to give them an idea as to what they are working on. It seemed to be well received by those in attendance.
- Matteo (Community Preservation Committee): Met last week, a few people came in to discuss their proposals. One was acted on; the Recreation commission wanted a secure building for their equipment which is currently scattered in various places. Rec is seeking to purchase a shed and have

it placed on a slab. CPC decided to fund the purchase of the building plus some of the cost associated with the slab. Another proposal was for the Field Library, the doors. Only one quote was received (by Michael Humphries) but it was extremely expensive; CPC requested they seek more quotes and come back with their findings. Third proposal discussed was the plaque in the foyer of the town hall. Town did originally appropriate money for this plaque to install it in the 1920's. Project does qualify because it is in a historic building (town hall) however group wants more information about this individual and the significance with Northfield as this is a substantial amount of money. Group is not disagreeing it could use some work. Group would like more information and additional quotes.

- Matteo (HEART): will be meeting 2/6/2019. Group has been working on district agreement; close to finalizing what will be proposed to town
- Stearns: the 4 towns Selectboard and FINCOM's met on 1/28/2019 at Northfield town hall. No public comment, just an opportunity for the Selectboard and FINCOM's to communicate with one another about shared issues (school was most of the conversation). Recommending no increase to the assessment for the towns on the FY2020 budget. The Towns would like a 5 year time limit of paying off the debt, the school administration (stating it's a state requirement) has it in for 10 years. The school administration wants to put the debt repayment in the operating budget, which the towns do not agree with. Llamas has offered to send a letter to the school committee (cc'ing the Superintendent and State Rep) on the town's behalf, requesting it to be a 5 year note instead of a 10 year note and that it is a debt service and not a part of the operating budget.

- *A motion was made by Matteo, seconded by Porada, and VOTED to support the letter to be written by Llamas, addressed to the School Committee and copied to the PVRSD Superintendent and State Representative, asking to reduce the time and to keep the debt service separate from the operating budget. In Favor Votes: Matteo, Porada, Stearns and Kaczinski. Opposed: L'Etoile*

- **BUDGETS RECEIVED WITH FURTHER INFO NEEDED**

- Fire Department and Planning Board have NOT submitted their budget; next week is their last chance to present a budget request.
- Feb. 19th Llamas will present to the FINCOM the Selectboard budget (and all the accounts associated with the Selectboard).
- EMS: Porada would like to have more information on the EMS budget. Status on a MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) between Bernardston and Northfield. Llamas stated that the Selectboard will be reviewing at their next meeting. Copy of memorandum to go to FINCOM. Stearns wants clarification on hours / the extra \$40,000 that is being sought. Perhaps a written documentation to the Selectboard.

- **NEXT MEETING**

- 2/12/2019 at 6pm

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm

Submitted by:

Bethany Walker

FINCOM Secretary

Approved On: 2-19-19
Approved By: Lois M. Stearns