

PARTICIPATING FINCOM MEMBERS: Lois Stearns, Dan Campbell, Tony Matteo, Jack Spanbauer and Bernhard Porada

FINCOM MEMBERS ABSENT: Sue Kaczinski

ALSO PARTICIPATING IN VIDEO CONFERENCE: Andrea Llamas, Town Administrator; Bethany Walker, Board of Assessors; Heath Cummings, Selectboard Chair (6:52); Bee Jacques, Selectboard member; Alexander Meisner, Selectboard member; David Balk, Board of Health, Chair (7:00); Phil Baker, Board of Health (7:00); Bob MacEwen, Transfer Station (7:01); Stephen Seredynski, Planning Board, Chair; Tyler Bourbeau BNCTV

Live via BNCTV & Recorded via Zoom

Stearns called the meeting to order at 6:00pm

Stearns read the following statement as per the agenda:

"Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, MGL, C30A. s20, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Town of Northfield Finance Committee will be conducted via remote participation. These minutes will be posted on the Town of Northfield Website as soon as possible after the meeting"

- **BOARD OF ASSESSORS BUDGET DISCUSSION**

- Walker presents BOA budget.
 - Increases on the mapping account line item and the account formerly listed as Property Inspection Services, now named Professional Services. Mapping increased by \$100 and Professional services increased to cover the cost of regular inspection services done by Mayflower as well as an interim appraisal for Firstlight. The Town's of Northfield and Erving are splitting the cost (50/50) for this service for First light; a cost to Northfield of \$18,000.
 - Decrease on Meetings/Seminars as well as a decrease on the bookbinding account.
- (1) article was submitted for Annual Town Meeting in the amount of \$8,000 for services related to a Solar specific review/appraisal in preparation for a PILOT for a very large proposed solar array.

6:15 Walker leaves FINCOM Zoom meeting

- **SELECTBOARD BUDGET DISCUSSION**

- Stipend for Selectboard members requested to increase. Meisner explained the reason for this increase (approx. a \$5,000 increase) basically due to the amount of time the selectboard members spend on the board. Cummings also spoke in favor of the requested increase, reiterating the amount of time spent for items related to this board. Jacques wants FINCOM's input on this; Stearns advised they would review when reviewing all budgets. County data from FRCOG and information from other Boards to be produced as Jacques feels this information would be helpful. Jacques would also like public comment. Porada inquired when the last time there was a review on the stipends for all town boards. Porada feels the Selectboard should present this at town meeting and let the towns people vote as an article, not as a budget increase. Spanbauer spoke not in favor of this increase, Matteo also not in favor. Llamas will put forth an article for ATM. Stearns noted that FINCOM does not have a stipend (FINCOM is appointed by town moderator, not elected)
- Two other increases in selectboard budget; advertising & technology

- **BOARD OF HEALTH BUDGET DISCUSSION**

- MacEwen stated that the Transfer Station budget is requesting level fund; no changes (other than the COLA)
- Capital request for the Transfer Station is a compactor. Currently have 4; 2 for paper/cardboard and 2 for solid waste. The new one would be a replacement for one of the existing compactors. Cost is approximately \$21,000. Life span of these are about 10-15 years. MacEwen would eventually like to have a cover-based building to be able to provide some protection for these compactors. Campbell

asked if there is some way to perhaps create a replacement schedule; MacEwen stated that the others have been replaced over the last few years and no need to replace others for a while.

- Balk & Baker presented the Board of Health budget.
 - Septic Inspection fees need to increase, currently running at a deficit; this was attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic (more people home causing more issues with the septic systems and high volume of house sales and failing systems). Llamas will assist in the deficit situation
 - Board of Health registered nurse is an estimated cost as FRCOG has not provided the assessment figure yet, currently only the COLA is factored in.
 - Stearns asked for a Mosquito control update; Llamas has reached out to coordinator of program; it is in the works. The Recreation commission had requested equipment for mosquito control and Stearns had recommended to the Rec chair that they speak with the BOH. Llamas stated that no capital request has been submitted by the Rec Commission.

7:49 MacEwen, Balk and Baker leave FINCOM ZOOM meeting

- **PLANNING BOARD BUDGET DISCUSSION**

- Seredynski presents Planning Board budget.
 - Adding a new line account \$6000 for planning board stipends (\$3,000 for the chair, \$1,500 for the vice chair and \$500 for other members). Planning Board has never had a stipend. Seredynski explained reasoning for this request and listed off a 4 year review of all the projects and involvement that the Planning board has been a part of. Campbell backed up the amount of work this board does and it being a 5-year term for each elected member. Porada asked about the disparity for the stipend request between the chair and the other members. The chair has the most involvement with each issue; Llamas backed up the fact that the chair does have the most interaction concerning each project.
 - Increase in budget for advertising

Seredynski leaves FINCOM ZOOM meeting at 8:02pm

- **UPDATES & BUDGET REVIEW OF SELECTBOARD & OTHER ACCOUNTS WITH TOWN ADMINISTRATOR**

- Town Administrator Account no increase other than COLA
- Town Hall budget changes; increase on line items for legal, technology (computer services), sewer & rubbish. Cell phone for maintenance removed from budget (now under highway)
- Animal Control increase - subject to change if other towns join in to participate
- Street lights slight increase
- Veterans' Services assessment lowered. Soldiers' Relief fund, Llamas decreased it slightly.
- FRCOG slight increase on assessment
- Workers' comp, slight increase. Increase on health insurance, life insurance, Medicare,
- Llamas advised an oversight on the Accountant and Treasure/Tax Collector budgets; she will put something together to add to an agenda at a future meeting
- Feb 28th contains large budget departments as it includes Highway, Police, EMS and Sewer.
- Public Safety Complex update:
 - Meeting next week with the interviewing for architects,
 - Met with David Eisenthall, Financial Advisor and Treasurer, Michele Turner; retained bond council
 - Llamas has been in touch with Tom Scanlan for audit, will do FY2021 audit that includes a review of FY2020 and later this coming year will do FY2022 audit.
 - Working on acquiring property, waiting on appraisal- Public Safety committee will see if they can acquire using existing funds. Perhaps do a special town meeting to give a presentation for complex as it would be too much to cover at ATM.

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VIDEO CONFERENCE VIA ZOOM

- Llamas working on several grants. Submitted to the state (5) for feedback/review; a service that typically only offers 1-2 for feedback.
- Llamas may still submit a capital project article for handicap access to the building.
- Stearns asked if grants available for sewer, Llamas stated that the engineer they hired should be helping with that but suggested the FINCOM follow up with Sewer when they are in to discuss budget (Feb 28th)
- **REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES OF 2/7/22**
 - Minutes from the 2/7/22 meeting were reviewed.
 - *A motion was made by Porada, seconded by Spanbauer, and VOTED unanimously to accept the February 7th, 2022 meeting minutes as written.*
- **REPORTS OF MEETINGS ATTENDED REPRESENTING FINCOM**
 - Porada (Emergency Services Facility): Llamas gave update, nothing to add
 - Matteo (CPA) meeting last week had (1) project proposal, from the historical society to paint the Pine St building (Old School House)– in preparation for the towns 350th celebration.
 - Matteo (HEART) still waiting on regional agreement
- **OTHER ITEMS NOT GENERALLY ANTICIPATED 48 HOURS IN ADVANCE OF THIS MEETING**
 - NONE
- **NEXT MEETING**
 - 2/28/2022

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:17 pm

Submitted by:
Bethany Walker
FINCOM Secretary

Approved On: 2/28/2022

Approved By: Daniel R. Campbell