

PARTICIPATING FINCOM MEMBERS: Lois Stearns (6:16 pm), Dan Campbell, Sue Kaczinski, Tony Matteo, Jack Spanbauer and Bernhard Porada

ALSO PARTICIPATING IN VIDEO CONFERENCE: Rick Martin, Franklin County Tech School Superintendent; Joseph Stacy, Recreation Commission Chair; Stacy Bond, Recreation Commission; Amy Neil, Recreation Commission Program Director (7:04 pm); Gretchen Licata, PVRSD Facility Director (6:58 pm); Andrea Llamas, Town Administrator; Bee Jacques, Selectboard member; Bethany Walker, FINCOM secretary; Tyler Bourbeau BNCTV

Live via BNCTV & Recorded via Zoom
Campbell called the meeting to order at 6:09pm

Campbell 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"

• **FRANKLIN COUNTY TECH SCHOOL BUDGET DISCUSSION**

- Martin stated that the FCT School Committee will be voting on the budget Wednesday, March 9th.
- Martin presented the online version of the Budget Booklet; this booklet will be distributed to all once the budget is finalized.
- E & D Northfield portion \$5,667, a reduction in assessment
- Increases to the overall budget explained. There is an increase in enrollment, which leads to an increase in instructors. Plant Operations and Maintenance increase. Martin also noted that they are building a new Veterinary Clinic
 - New veterinary clinic will be built on site, to help elevate the internal space. This is a steel building hopefully to be put up in the summer and the students will work on it in the fall.
- Capital Assessment \$11430.05 (based on EQV factor)
- Northfield's cost per student is \$16,235
- Converted the Assembly Hall into (4) 1000 sq. ft. classrooms; the school is running out of space. Again, stating that moving the Veterinary Clinic to its own building will help provide some much needed space.

6:43pm Martin leaves ZOOM FINCOM meeting

• **RECREATION COMMISSION BUDGET DISCUSSION**

- Bond and Stacy explain the budget is level funded; however there is a shift in allocations within the budget.
 - Some money from the Other Purchase services account, which usually covers the registration software program is being allocated to the Program Director salary, to allow for more hours
- Discussion on hiring process for the grounds keeping/mowing for NES ball fields. Previously this task was handled by a parent of a student, who also happened to have a landscape business; this is no longer an option and Llamas explained the hiring process going forward. Stacy would like to participate in the hiring, Llamas explained the process of going out to bid and contacting (3) local businesses that could potentially take this job.
- No Capital Articles

7:12 Stacy and Bond leave ZOOM FINCOM meeting

• **TOWN CLERK BUDGET DISCUSSION**

- Campbell discussed the Town Clerk Portion of budget
 - New Assistant is a \$10,000 increase
 - Decrease in budget for Meetings, Postage, and Office Supplies.

- Elections portion of budget was reduced on the "Other" line item
- Registrar portion of budget has an increase to the Census line item and an added \$1,500 for Codification Update
- The Selectboard will review the Job Classification for the Town Clerk Assistant position on March 8th.
- Discussion on Capital Request. Campbell explained that there was a request and support for an electric sign to be out front of Town Hall. Quotes ranged from 20-30k, this figure does not include the support of the sign (i.e. brick pillars). Campbell stated this would be aesthetically pleasing as possible. Campbell did some research and since Town Hall is a Government entity, it is exempt in needing a special permit. Discussion on the proposed electric sign vs. the town's by-laws. Concerns about this sign also included the thought of setting a precedent and it being a distraction to drivers.
- **OTHER CAPITAL PLANS**
 - Licata spoke on the NES project to renovate and refurbish the south building bathroom.
 - Estimate high end is \$240,000, but is all dependent upon which design/configuration they go with. NES principal does not want one large bathroom to congregate; would like to have several individual bathrooms. ADA compliant
 - Hope to have the project go this summer
 - Question was raised about the district grant to assess the (3) school buildings, BES, NES and PVRs. Licata stated that process is a 3-year process and these bathrooms cannot wait that long, so that is why they are moving forward with this project.
- **ANY OTHER SPECIAL ARTICLE REQUESTS FOR ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**
 - Stearns stated that if the CONSCOM wants a capital article, then a representative from the CONSCOM needs to come before the FINCOM. The request is for hardware (Laptop computer). Llamas is trying to work with CONSCOM to resolve this issue by using the services of the Boards Clerk whom already has the hardware needed.
 - Stearns revisited the BOH Transfer Station request for a new compactor at \$21,000. Llamas to work with BOH to try to get a Replacement Schedule going and do some capital planning with them
 - Llamas would like to bring back the Local Option tax for room rentals (i.e. Bed & Breakfasts, Inns etc.).
 - There are several big projects coming up that the town would benefit from this tax: Campground and (2) large, new Bed and Breakfast establishments.
- **PVRs BUDGET UPDATE**
 - Northfield 1.72% increase. Northfield assessment approximately 4.75 million
- **REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES OF 2/28/22**
 - Minutes from the 2/28/22 meeting were reviewed.
 - *A motion was made by Campbell, seconded by Porada, and VOTED unanimously to accept the February 28th, 2022 meeting minutes as written.*
- **TOWN ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE**
 - ZBA did not submit a budget; Llamas to have it level funded
 - The Accountant budget has an increase (it is a contracted position with a flat percentage increase)
 - Treasurer/Tax Collector has a small decreases due to salary change/employee change
 - The Tax Title portion has an increase
 - The Town Building ADA grant was not funded. The 504 Transition plan and ADA study had funds appropriated and that study was conducted. Llamas is breaking down the study's conclusion and getting quotes and pricing on some of the projects. Llamas stated that she is trying to be as responsive as possible to all the noted issues.

- - Quote is out for the back entrance doors and the concrete landing portion; all would be ADA compliant
 - NES has some findings and areas that need to be addressed. The secretary's office and section that leads to principal's office is very narrow and the counters are too high.
 - Report showed that throughout Town Hall, Library and NES grab bars and proper (interior & exterior) signages are missing. Llamas stated that the Maintenance Person position will be doing most of the work; however it is the cost of the materials that will be expensive.
 - Discussion on the CONSCOM and using the services of the Board Clerk
 - Llamas brought up the East Northfield Water Company and the possibility of an article to create a water district. Long discussion on the Towns obligation on this. FINCOM members want more information provided before it goes to town meeting. ARCAP (who ^{PROVIDES SERVICES} is the engineer on this potential project) did a presentation at a Selectboard meeting a few weeks ago. FINCOM wants Llamas to contact the individual who did the presentation and have them do one for FINCOM
 - Llamas is working on a master spreadsheet with all the budgets to see where everything is at
- **REPORTS OF MEETINGS ATTENDED REPRESENTING FINCOM**
 - Porada (Emergency Services Facility): nothing to update/no new meetings attended
 - Matteo (CPA): Reminded FINCOM of the (1) project they approved. CPC also discussed increasing the allocations of funds- 10%
 - **COMMUNICATIONS**
 - NONE
 - **OTHER ITEMS NOT GENERALLY ANTICIPATED 48 HOURS IN ADVANCE OF THIS MEETING**
 - NONE
 - **NEXT MEETING**
 - 3/13/2022

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:43 pm

Submitted by:
Bethany Walker
FINCOM Secretary

Approved On: 3/14/2022

Approved By: Daniel R. Campbell