

PARTICIPATING FINCOM MEMBERS: Lois Stearns, Chair, Tony Matteo, Jack Spanbauer, Sue Kaczinski, and Bernhard Porada

ABSENT FINCOM MEMBER(S): Dan Campbell

ALSO PARTICIPATING IN VIDEO CONFERENCE: Andrea Llamas, Town Administrator; Bee Jacque, Selectboard member; 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"

• **REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES OF 3/30/22 MINUTES**

- Minutes from the 3/30/22 meeting reviewed
 - Typo re: driveway on the sewer plant – motion says \$200,000 but it should be \$20,000
 - Typo re: NES bathroom - number amount says 2.4 million, should be \$240,000
 - Date at the top of the minutes state 3/28/22; meeting was on 3/30/22
 - ***A motion was made by Spanbauer, seconded by Porada and VOTED to approve the 3/30/22 minutes as amended. In Favor: Stearns, Porada, Spanbauer and Matteo. Abstained: Kaczinski***

• **TOWN ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE**

- Funding received from various COVID accounts; amounts were originally unknown so there was estimating involved as to what would be covered and what would not. There is a bit of a short fall in the amount of \$9532.93. Llamas would like FINCOM input on how to cover this shortfall.
 - ***A motion was made by Spanbauer, seconded by Porada and VOTED unanimously to use the transfer option that Llamas proposed (using current year funds)***
- Llamas received an email from Beth Walker, in Assessors Office, regarding the current overlay balance which is at approximately \$150,000. The abatement period just closed on Friday, April 1, 2022, and a couple of (potentially significant) abatements had come in. Every year, historically, only \$50,000 goes into overlay. The accountant has mentioned in the past that the annual \$50,000 amount is low. Assessors suggesting upping the overlay. Walker gave scenarios of different amounts of overlay contribution and how it will affect the tax rate
 - If increase to 100,000 in overlay; tax rate projected to be \$14.57
 - If increase to 150,000 in overlay; tax rate projected to be \$14.65
 - ***A motion was made by Spanbauer, seconded by Porada and VOTED unanimously to change the overlay contribution to \$150,000***
- Matteo asked about updates for CPA funds; Llamas to ask Erin and Pete (Accounting)
- Stearns asked about a potential article regarding Regional Ambulance Service. No article this year per Llamas. Llamas stated that they did receive a Regionalization and Efficiency grant from the state (\$40,000 was received) and they will be working with the Collins Center to look at and review everything for regionalization and what the needs are in this area for such a service.

• **REVIEW & ADJUST ANY RECOMMENDATIONS NEEDED FOR THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**

- Llamas put the articles pertaining to the Stipends (Selectboard and Planning Board) for sources of funds to Raise and Appropriate; in the event they do not pass, then it will not affect the tax rate.
 - ***A motion was made by Porada, seconded by Kaczinski, and VOTED unanimously for the stipend articles (2) to have the source of funds be Raise and Appropriate***
 - Selectboard is meeting tomorrow, 4/5/22 and Llamas will advise the outcome of their position on their own Stipend increase request

- **PVRS BUDGET & CAPITAL REQUESTS**

- Email was received, per Llamas, which stated the numbers were changing slightly as they had discovered an error in their calculations for enrollment figures; as a result, Northfield will now be going up 2.2 %
- Actual figures still not sent yet, so Llamas is continuing to use original figures. As soon as Llamas knows the actual figure, she will adjust and send out
- Llamas has also not received anything on Capital Assessments for PVRSD
- Llamas still does not have a figure for land purchase related to the Public Safety Building

- **PLAN INFORMATION SESSION WITH SELECTBOARD RE FINCOM RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Historically the FINOCM invites the Selectboard to their meeting to go over the FINCOM recommendations or will Llamas be providing the information to the Selectboard tomorrow; Llamas believes and has in place in the Financial Policy to have the two groups meet. Stearns suggested that the Selectboard joins the FINCOM meeting Monday April 11, via ZOOM

- **COMMUNICATIONS**

- The public forum for the proposed water district is this Wednesday, April 6th at PVRS

- **REPORTS OF MEETINGS ATTENDED REPRESENTING FINCOM**

- Porada (Emergency Services Facility): April 6th is the next meeting
- Matteo (CPA): No meetings
- Spanbauer (Business district): no meetings, group has not met in quite some time. A bit of uncertainty with the progression of this group per Spanbauer

- **OTHER ITEMS NOT GENERALLY ANTICIPATED 48 HOURS IN ADVANCE OF THIS MEETING**

- NONE

- **INTEREST IN 4-TOWN MEETING?**

- It is a group of about 40+ individuals; made up of the 4 towns Selectboards and FINCOM's to discuss school budget. This was created a few years ago, before COVID. Stearns had sent an email asking if anyone would be interested in having another 4-town meeting: several responded NO. The Northfield Selectboard also wanted to make it more about the school in general and not just about budget items. FINCOM suggest next year having budget presented to the 4-town member group

- **NEXT MEETING**

- 4/11/22
- 5/2/22 Town Meeting

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

Meeting adjourned at 6:53pm

Submitted by:
Bethany Walker
FINCOM Secretary

Approved On: 4/11/22

Approved By: Daniel R Campbell