

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

**ALSO PARTICIPATING IN VIDEO CONFERENCE:** Andrea Llamas, Town Administrator; Beth Walker, FINCOM Secretary, Barbara "Bee" Jacques, Selectboard Member and Historical Commission Member; and Tyler Bourbeau, BNCTV

*The FINCOM meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Stearns  
This meeting was broadcast live via Facebook and on BNCTV*

*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 APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- Minutes from the March 1, 2021 meeting were reviewed
  - ***A motion was made by Spanbauer, seconded by Campbell and VOTED unanimously to accept the March 1, 2021 minutes as presented.***

• **DELIBERATIONS AS TO FINCOM RECOMMENDATIONS RE DEPT BUDGETS & CAPTIAL REQUESTS**

- Discussion on the CONSCOM budget request and whether or not to recommend their increase budget to include secretary wages.
  - ***A motion was made by Porada, seconded by Matteo and VOTED unanimously not to recommend to fund the additional \$2812 for clerical wages on the CONSCOM budget.***
- Discussion on the Council on Aging budget; wanted to make sure their budget was not including tile repair as those types of repair cannot be done until the Town Hall back parking lot drainage project is resolved. Llamas will clarify with Senior Center Director.
- Library had a reduction in the amount originally requested; Llamas made the adjustment
- Historical Commission budget reduction was adjusted per Llamas to show the change in the number of books they will be purchasing.
- Llamas added the PVRs Capital Assessment into the budget report/omnibus
- Discussion on the Town Hall Capital Plan
  - Per Llamas, she will be seeking \$5000 for carpeting. The Selectboard furniture project is on hold.
- The Chief of Police had reached out to Stearns and Llamas about the new State Law going into effect pertaining to Part time policing on July 1. There will no longer be a part time police academy, only full time. Leighton believes this will affect the budget in some way, but there is no way of knowing exactly by how much.
  - Discussion on possible ways to resolve financial impacts of this change.
  - ***A motion was made by Campbell, seconded by Spanbauer and VOTED unanimously to increase the Reserve Fund by \$10,000.***
- Discussion on the Sewer Enterprise Fund budget request
  - Sewer does not have any capital projects
  - Llamas would like to have Sewer Commissioners work on (within their own budget) to set up funding for sewer projects each year so it would be a gradual source of savings.



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**VIDEO CONFERENCE VIA ZOOM**

- Discussed Sewer budget line items. Concern as to whether or not the increase of the salary of the Chief Operator violated the Wage and Classification Policy; it did not, as the raise was a step change, not a grade change.
- *A motion was made by Spanbauer, seconded by Campbell and VOTED to recommend the amount that was requested for Salary from the Sewer commissioner for the Plant Operator. In Favor Votes: Porada, Spanbauer, Campbell, Matteo and Kaczenski. Abstained: Stearns*
- Certified Free cash for the Sewer Enterprise Fund is \$191,945
- Discussion on the EMS Enterprise fund budget request
  - Spanbauer inquired about the life of an Ambulance and the cost estimated for a new one
  - The only amount to be paid by the tax payers for FY22 is for the payment of the Ambulance, which was the voted agreement.
  - The \$10,000 from Bernardston and the \$15,000 from Erving is going directly into an "Ambulance Donation Account" per Llamas
  - Llamas reminded the FINCOM that the EMS Enterprise Fund was never legally accepted as an enterprise fund, it is merely running as one. To have it be a true Enterprise Fund, it would need to go through state legislature, which has not happened.
  - *A motion was made by Spanbauer, seconded by Matteo and VOTED unanimously to recommend the EMS budget with provisions that it be funded out of receipts, excess revenue and the Ambulance be funded out of taxpayer funds*

• **ATM WARRANT ARTICLE DISCUSSION**

- Warrant Closes on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of March
- Article pertaining to COA; recommended to adjust the name within the article of the "Senior Center Stove" to "Town Hall Stove"
- The 350<sup>th</sup> Committee will be seeking funds each year to help with costs
- Eliminate the Contingency Article
- The Revolving fund for Tax Title; first year requires a town meeting vote
- Fire Dept. Rescue Truck was believed to be pushed to FY23; Llamas to look into and will remove if this is correct.
- OPEB balance is \$368,236.27
- Stabilization balance is \$1,527,630. Llamas again recommends a Capital Stabilization Account
- Free Cash balance does NOT include Cell Tower Sale Funds. The Cell Tower sale was \$472,221.80 and has specific rules in spending.
- Article to change the CONSCOM from a 7 member board to a 5 member board.
- Discussion on the Local Option Tax
- FINCOM advised Llamas to use Free Cash for Capital Items; she will draw up a draft and revise the Warrant as well for next meeting

• **COMMUNICATIONS**

- Per Llamas, still waiting to hear back from ZBA about their budget and making sure their budget is no longer funding outside internet costs

• **REPORTS OF MEETINGS ATTENDED AS REPRESENTATIVES OF THE FINCOM**

- Matteo (CPC): The 4 proposals were voted on; only 3 will be recommended. The CPC will be recommending the Trails Project, The Storage Building for the Senior Center and \$25,000 towards the repairs that had been done on the project regarding the Steeple. The 4<sup>th</sup> proposal that was not getting recommended is the Pavilion for NES as it has too many requirements. The issue with the Town Clock was discussed as to who is responsible for maintenance and repairs going forward. CPC funds can not cover it. It was recommended that someone gets an estimate on the cost associated with

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maintenance of a town clock and perhaps present a budget article in the future to cover such an expense. Jacques to reach out to other Historical Commissions to see if they know of an individual to do such work.

- **NEXT MEETING**
  - 3/15/2021.

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:10pm

Submitted by:  
Bethany Walker  
FINCOM Secretary

Approved On: 3/15/2021

Approved By: Daniel R. Campbell