



Town of Swampscott

Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

Monday, February 24, 2020

1st Floor Conference Room, Swampscott Town Hall
22 Monument Avenue, Swampscott, MA 01907

MEMBERS PRESENT

Tim Dorsey (Chair), Mary Ellen Fletcher (Vice Chair), Gail Rosenberg, Cinder McNerney, Jill Sullivan, Eric Hartmann, James Goldman, Matthew Kirschner

MEMBERS ABSENT: Joan Hilario

OTHER TOWN OFFICIALS PRESENT:

Ron Mendes (Assistant Town Administrator)

Chairman Tim Dorsey called the Finance Committee meeting to order at 7:01pm.

Mr. Dorsey introduced Mr. Kirschner, newly appointed to fill the vacant seat.

PUBLIC COMMENT: There were no comments, but Mr. Williams, candidate for Select Board, was present at the meeting and indicated that he was interested in attending these meetings.

DISCUSSION OF SCHOOL DEPARTMENT BUDGET:

Mr. Dorsey began a discussion about the School Department budget and asked Ms. Fletcher to review for the committee the results of the recent School Committee meeting on the presentation of the School Dept's budget. There was some further discussion about the comments made at the meeting from members of the Finance Committee that were present at the meeting. Ms. Fletcher said that there was some confusion about the School Department's request for \$230,000 in capital expenses for technology. Ms. Fletcher, as liaison to the Capital Improvement Committee, indicated that there was no reason why there would be any confusion because it was announced clearly at several CIC meetings that technology would not be allowed to be included as a capital purchase. There was then some discussion about this point. The School Department's decision was ultimately to send a request to the Capital Improvement Committee for this funding to make technology purchases.

There was then some discussion about the guideline that was adopted by the Select Board and the Finance Committee that provided the tax levy would increase by 2%, plus \$425,000 representing tax revenue derived from new growth.

The discussion then returned to School technology purchases and there was debate about whether these technology purchases could be capital or not.

There was then some discussion about these topics as they were discussed at the financial summit in January. Mr. Dorsey brought up the discussion led by Mr. Spellios at the summit about instituting a formula that would divide new growth revenue between the School Department and the municipal departments.

The discussion then turned to the other details of the School Department budget.

There was then some discussion about the financial forecast, and Ms. McNerney requested that excluded debt service be broken out from non-excluded debt service on the financial forecast so that the Finance Committee will be able to conduct further analysis.

There was then some discussion about the school department's utilization of circuit breaker funds. Ms. Fletcher wanted to understand circuit breaker funding more. There was then some discussion about the method of utilizing circuit breaker funding.

DISCUSSION ABOUT PRIORITIZATION OF BUDGET TOPICS:

There was then some discussion about the need to have department heads come to committee meetings. The committee would like the school department to meet with the committee. There was consensus that both Chiefs (Police & Fire) should come in to meet with the committee. Mr. Mendes suggested that a meeting concerning the recommended additions to the Senior Center be with Bob Powell, as Chair of the All Ages Committee, and Marzie Galazka and Sean Fitzgerald.

There was also discussion about a meeting that the committee would have when Mr. Mendes provides a revision of the 10-year financial forecast that breaks out the excluded debt service from the non-excluded debt service.

Additional topics for committee meetings during this budget season would include: School Department is meeting with the Committee next Monday; possibility of scheduling an executive session regarding school negotiations; meeting with Sean to discuss larger issues, such as the resiliency grant, sea wall repairs, Police overtime, etc.

Mr. Kirschner asked to add a discussion about the bond rating, as well as a discussion about the Hadley School project.

Mr. Dorsey will compile an invitee schedule for meetings with departments over the budget period.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Motion to approve (Sullivan) minutes of 1/6/2020 meeting as presented, SECOND (Fletcher) it was VOTED to approve the draft minutes from 1/6/2020.

On **MOTION** (Dorsey) **SECONDED** (Hartmann) it was **VOTED** (unanimous) to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned 8:54pm

True Attest,

Ronald Mendes, Assistant Town Administrator

Minutes APPROVED by vote of the Finance Committee 04/06/2020