



TOWN HALL | 39 SOUTH STREET | HINSDALE, MA | 01235 | 413-655-2300

FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES / December 5, 2019 at 6:45pm

Community Room - Downstairs

posted 6:15pm on 1/11/2020

Minutes of the December 5, 2019 Finance Committee

Members

Shaun Galliher
Chair

Bonnie Conner

Chris Pike

Russ Parks

Mary Rice

Dick Scialabba

Jim Chivers

Heather Brown

Nancy Smith

The meeting was opened at 6:45 pm.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes of the November 7, 2019 as written. The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Galliher went over the Expense account and noted nothing outstanding. Committee members agreed. Bob reported that the trees are now all removed at the Transfer Station and the Industrial Washer installation at the Fire House has been completed (this was a FY19 project). Bob reported that we are still waiting to hear if we were successful in our application for Grant funding to repair Old Dalton Road. He expects the Governor to announce the results on January 23, 2020. He also found out that the engineering study will meet the qualification for "shovel ready", and that we can apply every year. He also reported that he received notice that we are on the TIP (Transportation Improvement Program) for Rt. 143, which he did not know anything about. Apparently our previous Highway Superintendent had submitted an application, but the Select Board was unaware also. However, there is some confusion as we were not on the latest list. He will be checking into this and report back at our next meeting.

Bob reported that he has looked into outsourcing the Assessors Assistant Position in a effort to reduce costs. He will have Chairman Galliher email to the Committee members a three year proposal from a company that does this for many local towns, as well as across the State. Bob and Vivian attended a demonstration in the Town of Otis and were extremely impressed with the knowledge and expertise of the staff. It is expected that our currently elected Assessors will still be needed to staff the local office, as most of the communication is done by computers and face time with the staff at their main office.

Bob presented a brief overview of how this service works and it is quite impressive. He would like the Committee to review the proposal and possibly attend a demonstration at one of the local Towns that contract with this company. This would need to go out to bid and funding requested at the ATM in May of 2020. This was discussed at the Select Board Meeting on December 4, 2020 with our current Assessors in attendance. The savings will be in the full time Assessor Assistant position that includes benefits.

He was also told by this company that they are watching carefully to see how the State is going to proceed with charges for Utility Companies that operate within a Town, and how to properly assess their property. This has been a concern of the Select Board and Finance since former Assessor Assistant Karen Tonelli reported to us that most Utilities have been severely under assessed in Towns in which they own property and operate. Where she is working now has taken steps to address that issue and she wanted us to be aware as we have an Eversource facility in the North end of the Town.

Jim Chivers reported that he has not yet been officially approved as a member of the School Building Committee, as they have not had a meeting. That Committee is moving forward and have completed several preliminary requirements such as; 60% of the drawings are complete, they are getting bids, utility relocation had been completed, and several other steps have been completed to date.

Chairman Galliher reported that he emailed a spreadsheet for budget planning to all Committee members. He also asked that Bob require quotes from department heads for any projects they are requesting funding for. That will allow the Committee more accurate estimates used in the budget process.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn at 7:31 pm. The motion passed unanimously. The next regular

Other

Viv Mason, Select Board

Bob Graves, Town Administrator

meeting of this Committee is Thursday, January 9, 2020 at 6:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary A. Rice, Secretary