

**HOLLISTON FINANCE COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
September 3, 2013**

The Committee convened in Room 105 at the Town Hall at 7:35 PM. Present from the Committee were Chairman Ken Szajda, Vice Chairperson Michelle Zeamer, Clerk Charles Kaslow, Dan Alfred, Bill Dowd and Beth Liberty. Michelle Johnson was absent.

1. Minutes – Moved by Charlie Kaslow to approve the minutes of August 13, 2013. Seconded by Michelle Zeamer. All in favor.
2. Recording Secretary – Ken Szajda reported that he had received an application for the position and, unless there were objections from the Committee, he would interview the person and determine if there was a good fit. Bill Dowd inquired as to whether or not the candidate was a current Town employee. Ken said the candidate was not.
3. Issues Log – (Attachment I) The Issues Log was reviewed and updated. With regard to Item 19, Paul LeBeau reported that the part time plumbing and wiring inspectors are considered employees and therefore Medicare Tax is applicable. However, they are not eligible for employee benefits. They are covered by Worker's Compensation. Paul said that both the Federal and State governments have strict rules on employees vs. contractors with a strong bias for employee.
4. Other Administrative Business – Bill Dowd inquired about the minutes of April 18, 2013 that were never approved by the Committee nor posted. Ken agreed to follow up and get this resolved. Bill inquired about the March 6, 2013 Executive Session minutes that remain un-released. Ken advised that the matter involving property acquisition through the Open Space Committee remains open and the minutes will remain unreleased until it is resolved. Bill suggested that the link to the old FinCom website be disabled since it is very out of date. Ken agreed to take care of this. Bill asked that the full fall meeting schedule be provided to the Town Clerk for posting to the calendar and Ken agreed to do that as well. Bill suggested that the Committee consider the use of a college intern for research and information gathering. Ken and others expressed reluctance to this given the pending concerns and lawsuits around whether these "intern" arrangements are actually unpaid employees. Bill inquired about the issue of posting timely and accurate agendas. Ken said he tries to post an agenda as early as possible and then update it before the posting deadline if it changes. This past week, the Monday holiday pushed the posting requirement to Thursday and he missed it. There was a sense that the Committee should do its best to post a correct agenda by the posting deadline.
5. Open Meeting Law Reminder – Ken reminded the Committee about the importance of avoiding deliberation by e-mail. He said it was ok to send information to the Committee, but that members should not "reply all" with

substantive comments or questions. Those should wait for a properly posted public meeting.

6. Review of Budget Worksheet – Ken informed the Committee that after conferring with Paul LeBeau, he had determined that Paul’s version was correct and that it shows a “surplus” of \$31,403 going into fall Town Meeting. Ken said he would update the sheet and distribute a corrected version with dates and version controls included. Bill Dowd asked Ken to make sure there were explanations of changes so that members were not required to lay old and new spreadsheets side by side to find changes.
7. Plan for Capital Reviews – Ken asked the Committee for input on messages to departments with Capital spending requests. There was broad consensus that departments seeking Capital dollars should submit their requests in advance, electronically, using assigned liaison links and prioritizing the requests. Charlie Kaslow referred to it as the business case for the expenditure. There was a discussion about requiring a thorough Capital plan inventory. However, given the impending work on building a comprehensive Capital Plan, there was a sense that these requests should be handled as they have been in prior years. Ken asked Paul to circulate the usual Capital memo to department heads and asked the Committee liaisons to reach out as well.
8. Building Inspector Revolving Fund – Ken reviewed the situation with the Building Inspection Revolving Fund having overspent it’s \$50,000 annual limit by \$2,491.17. He suggested the Committee consider setting a percent-of-fund-expended limit at which the Department/Town Accountant would alert the Committee. Bill Dowd suggested that the Committee allow the Selectmen/Town Administrator to explain or describe the corrective action they were taking, if any. Paul LeBeau reported that he had already spoken to the Building Inspector and made sure he was aware that it was not ok to overspend the account. He also reported having discussions with the Town Accountant about setting up a percent-of-fund-expended trigger that would result in notice to him and the Committee. Based on these steps having been taken, Bill Dowd moved to approve the FY13 overspend of the Building Inspection Revolving Fund by \$2,491.17. Seconded by Dan Alfred. All in favor, the motion passes.
9. Non-Personnel Upgrade/Promotion costs deferred from May Town Meeting – Ken reported that he only knows of three; an increase in hours of an employee in the Conservation Department, and additional part time employee in the Council on Aging and additional hours for a clerk in the Board of Health. Ken indicated that the Board of Health request was not persuasive because it was related to covering hours spent taking minutes at Board meetings. As for the other two, Ken suggested that the matters be addressed by the Selectmen first. If the Selectmen support the proposal, the Committee can then deal with them along with other spending matters at Town Meeting. There was again a discussion about whether it makes sense to even consider the requests if there are not sufficient funds to cover them. Dan Alfred expressed a concern that other departments could feel left out if the Committee deals only with the three items above and not the needs of

other departments. Ken assured the Committee that as far as he was aware, only those three items represent unresolved FY14 budget requests. Ken suggested that the Selectmen would be mindful of the financial situation as they deliberated. Bill Dowd pointed out that the Finance Committee is the only place in Town Government where all spending proposals are evaluated and prioritized across all departments and Boards. He suggested that the Selectmen – and others – deal with their own priorities on the merits and let the FinCom decide what to recommend to Town Meeting based on this full horizontal rationalization. The sense among the Committee was that the number of known items to consider is small and, once the sponsoring boards have concluded their work, the FinCom will schedule its own reviews.

10. Other Business – Bill Dowd inquired about the Town's involvement with the Suburban Coalition. Paul LeBeau reported that it was very limited. Bill said he would try to make the meeting on September 18. Bill pointed out to the Committee the most recent issue of Boston Magazine that ranked the school systems inside Route 495. Holliston ranked very high on performance and low on cost per pupil.
11. Adjournment – At 9:15 PM, Moved by Dan Alfred, Seconded by Michelle Zeamer to adjourn the meeting. All in favor.

Issues Log additions from this meeting:

1. Provide Town Clerk with full fall FinCom meeting schedule for posting to the Calendar. Ken or Charlie responsible.
2. Look into possible College intern. Bill responsible.
3. Schedule Executive Session to discuss Police contract negotiations with Selectmen after receipt of Items 11 and 12. FinCom responsible.
4. Provide updated budget worksheet reconciled to Paul LeBeau's version and explaining variances from prior distribution. Ken responsible.
5. Set a trigger point in Revolving Account management to ensure advance awareness of potential overspending. Paul and Town Accountant responsible.
6. Interview candidate for recording secretary and either hire or return to posting. Ken responsible.
7. Update Liaison Assignments to reflect Charlie Kaslow in lieu of Michelle Johnson on Water and Michelle Johnson in lieu of Charlie Kaslow on Parks and Technology.

Approved September 10, 2013

Finance Committee
Issues List

Item	Meeting Date	Issue Description	Responsible	Resolved	Description of Resolution
1	6-Aug-13	Following action by the Selectmen, the FinCom will have to consider approval to spend more than currently authorized from the Building Inspection revolving fund.	FinCom	Closed	Approval / Authorization approved by FinCom vote on September 3, 2013
2	6-Aug-13	The current \$50,000 limit on the Building Inspection revolving fund should be reviewed prior to October Town Meeting.	FinCom		Item revised by consensus of FinCom on September 3, 2013 to address prior to "May" town meeting whereas previously stated before "October" town meeting.
3	6-Aug-13	Paul agreed to advise all department heads that communication to the FinCom should be electronic whenever possible, and sent to all members at the FinCom mailbox.	Paul LeBeau	Closed	Item completed by Paul LeBeau email of September 3, 2013
4	6-Aug-13	Dan agreed to put together an analysis of the current financial reserves and the potential for a rating upgrade if reserves are increased. This will include an estimated saving associated with the rating upgrade.	Dan Alfred		September 3, 2013 meeting Dan Alfred advised that analysis taking more effort than originally anticipated.
5	6-Aug-13	The FinCom needs to adopt an updated reserves target guideline in advance of other financial decisions to be made for October Town Meeting. Tentative consensus on adopting Paul's recommended 6.5% was put on hold pending #Dan Alfred's analysis of the current financial reserves and potential for rating upgrade.	FinCom		Issue to be discussed at October 5, 2013 FinCom meeting
6	6-Aug-13	Ken will review the liaison assignments to see if there is a way to add other members to some of the 22 departments/budgets he is all alone on. Bill offered to be added to any as a number 2 as Ken sees fit.	Ken Szajda	Closed	Item completed by listing conveyed by Ken Szajda to FinCom and confirmed by Paul LeBeau email with Board of Selectmen assignments.
7	6-Aug-13	The Ken version of the letter to the Planning Board needs to be sent. All members should receive an electronic copy of the letter that is signed and sent.	Ken Szajda	Closed	Ken emailed copy of the signed letter to Charlie Kaslow for correspondence archive. Charlie Kaslow emailed copy to FinCom member on 4 September, 2013.
8	6-Aug-13	Add Planning Board letter to correspondence log and archive	Charlie Kaslow	Closed	Letter has been added to correspondence archive as listed.
9	6-Aug-13	Ken will bring a proposed post Labor Day meeting schedule with him to the meeting on Aug. 13.	Ken Szajda	Closed	Post Labor Day Schedule has been provided to FinCom members and Clerk has circulated member calendar for planning purposes.
10	6-Aug-13	Poll members for fall meeting schedule to determine availability and post for committee / chair.	Charlie Kaslow	Closed	FinCom members with exception of Michelle Johnson have responded and list provided to members at 3 September meeting.
11	6-Aug-13	Paul is going to obtain from Mary a listing of all pay types in the police contract and an indication as to whether they are pension eligible earnings and whether they impact overtime pay calculation.	Paul Lebeau	Closed	Paul LeBeau 3 Sept Email
12	6-Aug-13	Paul is going to ask Stone for more specifics on its recommendation and the backup data on police pay steps.	Paul Lebeau		
13	6-Aug-13	Bill is going to provide Ken with suggested 8/13 agenda topics.	Bill Dowd	Closed	Bill Dowd has provided Ken Szajda with recommended list of topics.
14	6-Aug-13	The Selectmen should be officially provided a copy of the FinCom consensus position on the Stone Report recommendations from the General study which is a part of the 7/16 minutes.	Ken Szajda		
15	6-Aug-13	All members who have not responded to Erika Plunkett's proposed school committee meeting dates in September need to do so ASAP	FinCom	Closed	Overcome by events.
16	6-Aug-13	Ken to circulate the communication from the Town Accountant regarding closing out article appropriations.	Ken Szajda	Closed	Ken Szajda has completed as of 3 September meeting. Duplicate of item # 20 & 22

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17	6-Aug-13	Ken to circulate the communication from the Town Accountant regarding expenditures out of the Building Inspection revolving account.	Ken Szajda	Closed	Ken Szajda has completed as of 3 September meeting.
18	13-Aug-13	Provide draft meeting minutes for 6/27 meeting	Bill Dowd		
19	13-Aug-13	Determine who is the employee being paid from Bldg Insp revolving account that is incurring Medicare expense	Ken Szajda	Closed	Based upon discussion at 3 September meeting, Paul LeBeau advised that the "contract" inspectors are treated as employees for purposes of medicare and as a group they are the ones being paid. Duplicate of item # 26.
20	13-Aug-13	Ken to circulate the communication from the Town Accountant regarding closing out article appropriations.	Ken Szajda	Closed	Closed - Duplicate of item # 16 & 22
21	13-Aug-13	Ken to circulate the communication from the Town Accountant regarding expenditures out of the Building Inspection revolving account.	Ken Szajda	Closed	Closed - Duplicate of item # 16 & 21
22	13-Aug-13	Consider different approach to FY15 budget review with fewer longer meetings.	Ken Szajda		
23	13-Aug-13	Add version and date controls to budget worksheet.	Ken Szajda		
24	13-Aug-13	Put budget worksheet on-line for view only	Ken Szajda		
25	13-Aug-13	Prepare a template and framework for a Capital Plan.	Bill Dowd		
26	13-Aug-13	Determine why Medicare costs were charged to the Building Inspection Revolving Fund.	Ken Szajda	Closed	Closed - Duplicate of item # 19
27	13-Aug-13	Develop a list of topics/info the FinCom needs from the Town Accountant	FinCom		
28	13-Aug-13	Start quarterly in-person reviews with the Town Accountant	FinCom		
29	13-Aug-13	Schedule a discussion on Bill Dowd's memo about pension funding	Ken Szajda		Schedule post October town meeting per Ken Szajda recommendation during 3 September meeting.
30	13-Aug-13	June 27 minutes	Bill Dowd	Closed	Michelle Zeamer provided information to Bill Dowd to complete notes for future review of minutes
31	3-Sep-13	No record appears to exist that meeting minutes of April 18, 2013. Need to formally accept and post.	FinCom		
32	3-Sep-13	Disable link on town website to FinCom website which is no longer maintained	Ken Szajda		
33	3-Sep-13	Provide Town Clerk with full FinCom meeting schedule for posting to calendar	Ken Szajda		
34	3-Sep-13	Investigate college intern for Finance Committee projects	Bill Dowd		
35	3-Sep-13	Schedule Executive Session to discuss Police contract negotiations with Seeltdren after receipt of items 11 & 12.	FinCom		
36	3-Sep-13	Provide updated budget worksheet reconciled to Paul LeBeau's version and explaining variance from prior distribution	Ken Szajda		
37	3-Sep-13	Establish a trigger point in Revolving Account management to ensure advance notice of potential overspending.	Paul LeBeau & Accountant		
38	3-Sep-13	Interview candidate for recording secretary and either hire or return to posting	Ken Szajda		
39	3-Sep-13	Update Liaison Assignments to add Charlie Kaslow to Water in lieu of Michelle Johnson and add Michelle Johnson to Parks and Technology in lieu of Charlie Kaslow	Ken Szajda		