

HOLLISTON FINANCE COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
April 22, 2014

The Committee convened in Room 105 at the Town Hall at 6:30 PM. Present from the Committee were Chairman Ken Szajda, Vice Chairperson Michelle Zeamer, Dan Alfred, Bill Dowd and Brendan Shea. Beth Liberty and Charlie Kaslow were absent.

1. Public Comment – Fire Chief Michael Cassidy spoke about his concerns following statements made by a member of the Finance Committee on April 1, 2014 that no “Town” department had provided evidence of being a superior value. Chief Cassidy presented a worksheet showing the per capita fire suppression costs for the towns in District 14, a collection of towns in MetroWest that share mutual aid. (Attachment I) According to the chart, Holliston’s per capita cost is the lowest of all the towns on the list at \$53.53. He expressed his concern that the notion that other departments aren’t providing superior service to the Town is just wrong. He mentioned performance data he had supplied the FinCom during budget review, and then listed a number of recent emergencies that, in his opinion, demonstrated the value being provided by the Fire Department.
2. Reserve Fund Transfer Request – Board of Assessors – Kathryn Peirce, Principal Assessor appeared to support the request of the Board of Assessors for a Reserve Fund Transfer Request in the amount of \$4,925 to cover the cost of bringing in an Administrative Assessor prior to the retirement of the current incumbent so that the new employee could be oriented and trained by the retiring one. Ken Szajda inquired as to the timing of the notice to the Board that the employee was retiring and Kathryn said that while it had been talked about, the actual notice was only received recently, so that it was unforeseen. Bill Dowd inquired about what would happen if an employee just gave two weeks notice and resigned. Kathryn said that would be a big problem for the department. Bill Dowd suggested that the Selectmen and other hiring authorities get together and discuss the approach to this situation so that handling it is not always a one off proposition. Kathryn thought it would be good to have some guidelines. Bill Dowd also pointed out that the position into which the individual would be hired did not exist on the current classification table. No one could explain how a full time position could have been filled and paid without By-Law authorization. Bill suggested taking a harder look at this during next budget review to ensure that all positions to be funded were properly authorized by the Consolidated Personnel By-Law. Moved by Dan Alfred, seconded by Brendan Shea to approve a Reserve Fund Transfer to the Assessor’s budget, Organization 137, Object 50037 in the amount of \$4,925. Five in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, the motion carried.
3. Budget and Article votes – Due to concerns about Beth Liberty’s husband’s employment as a substitute teacher in the Schools, there was a need for a curative vote on the School budget. With Beth Liberty absent, it was simply a matter of re-voting the initial Schools budget amount. Moved by Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Dan Alfred to reconsider the Schools budget. Five in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, the motion carried. Moved by Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Dan Alfred that the Finance Committee recommend a Schools budget in the amount of \$29,999,742. Five in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, the motion carried.

Articles 17 and 18 – The current draft of the Finance Committee report shows Alfred, Shea and Kaslow absent for the votes on Articles 17, 18 and 19. Since the Finance Committee had taken up these matters on April 17, 2014 with Dan and Brendan absent, Dan Alfred wished to have the vote recorded with him present. Moved by Dan Alfred, seconded by Brendan Shea to reconsider Articles

17 and 18. Five in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, the motion carried. Moved by Dan Alfred, seconded by Michelle Zeamer that the Finance Committee recommend that action under Article 17 be indefinitely postponed. Five in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, the motion carried. Moved by Dan Alfred, seconded by Michelle Zeamer that the Finance Committee recommend that the Town raise and appropriate \$625,000 for the Capital Expenditure Fund in Article 18. Five in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, the motion carried.

Article 19. Moved by Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Dan Alfred to reconsider Article 19. Five in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, the motion carried. Moved by Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Dan Alfred that in connection with Article 19, the Town appropriate \$3,295,479 from the Stabilization Fund, raise and appropriate \$1,444,013, appropriate \$43,011 from Water Surplus and appropriate \$27,497 from the Ambulance Fund. Four in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, the motion carried.

4. Other business – Bill Dowd suggested that the Committee meet next Tuesday April 29 for the purpose of concluding work on the May 5th Town Meeting Warrant. Ken Szajda indicated that was exactly his plan. Brendan Shea suggested that the town look into financing the balance of the fire pumper truck with the manufacturer. Ken Szajda reported that that issue needs additional study and can be discussed at a future meeting.
5. Adjournment - At 7:02 PM moved by Dan Alfred, seconded by Michelle Zeamer to adjourn the meeting. Five in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by Bill Dowd.

Approved____June 17, 2014_____