

**Holliston Finance Committee
Minutes
March 4, 2014**

The Finance Committee met in the Selectmen's Meeting Room in Holliston Town Hall.

Finance Committee Members Present: Daniel Alfred, William Dowd, Beth Liberty, Brendan Shea, Ken Szajda and Michelle Zeamer.

Finance Committee Members Absent: Charlie Kaslow

Dr. Szajda, chairman, called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm.

There was no administrative business. No minutes were discussed or acted upon.

The agenda originally included discussion of four budgets. Three of the budgets, Youth and Family Services, Police Auxiliary and Board of Health were discussed. There was a scheduling/logistical conflict and the fourth budget, Keefe Tech, will be rescheduled.

Youth and Family Services FY15 Budget

Margaret Fitzpatrick, Director, attended the meeting and made the budget presentation to the Committee.

Last Year (FY13) there were 45 Court Diversion participants. This year (FY14) there have been 8 to date. Fluctuations such as that are normal. The court diversion program, in FY14, has saved the Town of Holliston \$1,280. That includes 20 hours of community services provided to the town and the savings realized by not having police officers go to court for these cases.

Youth and Family Services administer the Holliston Business Association's (HBA) Community Action Fund. The HBA does fund raising for this program. Most of the funds are used for Heating Oil and Rent Assistance. The purpose of the program is to full short-term needs. It was a cold winter, but there was enough to help people.

Ms. Fitzpatrick said that FY14 was the first year that the budget was adequately funded and she did not have to use a "gift fund" or find other ways to meet needs. She hopes to be able to find a psychologist for clinical service needs.

Ms. Fitzpatrick then discussed her department's FY15 budget. The FY15 budget she presented met all guidelines. *[NOTE: The email from Paul on 3/3, re Youth and Family Services budget will be attached to these minutes.]* The Finance Committee members then asked questions of Ms. Fitzpatrick. Ms. Liberty asked Ms. Fitzpatrick what service levels the department would have if there were more resources. Ms. Fitzpatrick explained that the current budget provides for two people at a total of 70

hours. They could fill more hours with more funds. Now they have to refer out. They would also like to be in the schools more. Ms. Zeamer asked about the FY14 funds that had been budgeted for Court Diversion and which weren't necessary because of the decline in the number of participants. Ms. Fitzpatrick said that the money was used to provide more clinical hours. Dr. Szajda inquired about the communication line item. Ms. Fitzpatrick said that because the phone bill was only \$17 the money could be moved to professional services. Dr. Szajda then asked about the reason for the drop in Court Diversion participants. Ms. Fitzpatrick felt that it was because they certain classes just get into more trouble than other classes. Also, there is a team approach, especially at the High School, and the adults know the kids. They are able to identify the kids at risk earlier and are able to do intervention.

Miscellaneous

Dr. Szajda explained to new members how Holliston's share of the Keefe Tech budget is determined. It is based on Holliston's enrollment as of October 1 of the previous year (FY 15 budget is based on October 1, 2013 enrollment). Holliston (and Hopkinton's) enrollment is relatively small compared to Framingham, Natick and Ashland, so a small change in our enrollment can lead to a big fluctuation in our apportionment. Ms. Zeamer asked about Keefe Tech's roof and Dr. Szajda said that he thought that Keefe had received some sort of state funding for that project. More details will be given next week.

Ms. Liberty asked if the FinCom could discuss formalizing financial policies. For example, defining what constitutes a capital request or what the debt service to operating budget ratio should be. Ms. Liberty has reviewed policies of surrounding communities and found that they are guidelines, not laws. Dr. Szajda said that having financial targets is appropriate and could be a financial blueprint. A brief discussion followed. Dr. Szajda reminded the members that they are not operating in a corporate environment and the FinCom does not have total control of the budget. Ms. Liberty said she would put something together and asked about email this among the members. Dr. Szajda explained that, according to the Attorney General's office, only administrative items (agendas, schedules, etc) should be emailed. Before the discussion ended, Ms. Zeamer remarked that she thought that the FinCom should use the term "guidelines" rather than "policies" because she wanted to consider everything before on the merits of what was before, and not be bound by a policy.

Auxiliary Police FY15 Budget

Sgt. Craig Denman appeared before the committee to discuss the Auxiliary Police FY15 budget. *[NOTE: email from Paul from 1/30/14 with Aux Pol budget will be attached to these minutes.]* Sgt. Denman said that he had three points he would like to make to the FinCom. (1) The Auxiliary Police currently have a 2001 Ford Crown Victoria that has had costly repairs. The repairs are under the (regular) Police

Budget and future repairs could negatively affect that budget. Police Chief Moore is planning on transferring a 2011 cruiser from the Police to the Auxiliary Police to remedy this. (2) The Auxiliary Police are currently in the selection process for more auxiliary officers. The personnel selection process consists of an informational interview, oral interview, physical exam and psychological exam. Two of the candidates are already Academy trained which would save the town money. The cost of the Academy has increased from \$900 to \$1,600. The hours required have increased from 240 to 315. (3) Sgt. Denman felt that meeting the 1.5% guideline increase will not be a problem. The Professional Development line item can cover initial training, pepper spray and firearms. The Supplies line item can cover uniforms, etc .

Ms. Liberty asked Sgt. Denman about the Police's anticipated overtime needs. She wanted to know if the Auxiliary Police could handle any of the details rather than the Police. Sgt. Denman explained that the Auxiliary Police was established before the Police became subject to collective bargaining. Therefore, the Auxiliary Police can only do non-bargaining work.. The Police Department's overtime is due to contractual obligations. The Auxiliary Police to assist the Police Department in a number of matters though. To date this fiscal year the Auxiliary Police have worked 2,612 hours which has saved the Town of Holliston \$115,084. Dr. Szajda remarked that when you compare the savings to the \$12,000 Auxiliary Police budget you realize what a good investment the Auxiliary Police are. Speaking for the FinCom members, Dr. Szajda said that the Auxiliary Police efforts are appreciated.

Board of Health FY15 Budget

Ann McCobb, Board of Health Director, presented the Board of Health Budget to the Committee. *[NOTE: Does anyone have a clean copy of the Board of Health handout? It differs from the one that was emailed to us.]* Ms. McCobb started the discussion by explaining the minor differences between the information emailed to the Committee members and the one presented prior to the meeting. For example, the copier that the Board of Health and Building Department had paid to lease would no longer be under the budget of those two departments.

Ms. Liberty asked how the Board of Health seeks out grants. Ms. McCobb explained that the tobacco grant money is from a few years ago. Past grant money had been received from Region 4A. However, due to last year's Marathon Bombing, the regions are being modified and Ms. McCobb was not sure of what this would mean for Holliston. In the past money had been used for a cell phone and a trailer to store equipment (cost shared with the Fire Department). The 4A funds had also been used to purchase five AEDs (defibrillators), which are kept around the town. Dr. Szajda asked Ms. McCobb about coordination between the Board of Health and the Fire Department and Ms. McCobb confirmed the coordination of Region 4A funds. Ms. McCobb also said that there were Metrowest Community Healthcare Grants available but that they were usually did not fit Holliston's needs and they need to be for things that are sustainable in the future without the grant money.

Ms. Zeamer asked about the “Sharps Program.” Ms. McCobb said that she had received a call from Holliston Family Pharmacy, the pharmacy that was the drop-off for the sharps. The pharmacy is leaving Holliston so Ms. McCobb had to pick up the supplies. She is in contact with the other pharmacy in town and is confident that the program, which had been successful, will continue.

There was then a discussion of flu clinic scheduling. Ms. Liberty asked how many inoculations were given. There were 638 in FY12, 412 in FY13 and under 400 in FY14. Ms. McCobb attributed this to the wide availability of flu vaccinations.

Dr. Szajda asked about the increase in the Water (Beach) Testing and Title 5 line items. Ms. McCobb supplied two reasons for the beach testing increase. The first is that if a beach fails it needs to be retested. The second is that the beaches are open from Father’s Day to August 15. However, there are sometimes school events that are outside of that time frame so the beaches need to be tested outside of what was already budgeted. The Title 5 increase is because in prior years when Ms. McCobb has been on vacation there wasn’t a problem. However, in FY14 there were 18 inspections during her vacation. These increase the budget needs.

Ms. McCobb made the Committee aware of a Warrant Article for May Town Meeting concerning the Board of Health’s revolving account. Dr. Szajda said that that would be discussed at a future meeting.

Ms. McCobb also asked how she should handle any budget increases resulting from changes in the Consolidated Personnel Bylaws. Dr. Szajda explained that the FinCom, working with the Board of Selectmen would deal with any financial implications. The departmental budget will be supplemented.

Reserve Fund Transfer Request – Board of Health

[NOTE: Does anyone have a copy of the request?]

Board of Health has ongoing litigation issues which require the use of Town Counsel. Dr. Szajda inquired about the worst-case scenario. Ms. McCobb said that the best-case scenario was that the case would be resolved after the next court appearance. She could not say what the worst-case scenario would be.

Ms. Zeamer made a motion to grant the request for a transfer from the Reserve Fund to the Board of Health (Organization 52190), Professional Services Line Item in the amount of \$1,638. Mr. Alfred seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Snow and Ice

Paul LeBeau brought it to the Committee's attention that the Snow and Ice Budget is over-budget. Mr. LeBeau did not have the figures yet for how much the overage was. Dr. Szajda explained that unlike other recent winters, this past winter had a number of small snowfalls without out anything large enough to be considered a "State of Emergency." Therefore, without any States of Emergency, there would be no state reimbursement.

Motion to Adjourn

Mr. Alfred made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Ms. Zeamer. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:38 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Michelle Zeamer

Minutes approved 6/17/14