

FINCOM  
Meeting Minutes – January 28, 2017

Members Present: Don, Heidi, John, Steve, Bruce, Richard

Not Present: Charles

Others: Tim, School Committee/Department (Dr. Dwight, Mary Traphagen, Peter Rowe, Finance Director)

Location: Town Hall Meeting Room

Don called the meeting to order at 9:05AM.

The primary purpose of this Saturday morning session was to meet with and review the answers to our questions on the School budget. Dr. Dwight went through the answers and items of note during that discussion are captured below:

- The COLA agreed to in the new teachers' contract should be finalized by Town Meeting. Employee pay portion of health insurance is also part of the negotiation.
- The Math Tutor funding has been applied for as a Title 1 grant. The \$27,000 new math materials will cover a three year program and are partly contingent on securing the grant funding.
- Only one bidder surfaced for the bus contract. Part of the justification for the large percentage increase is the operation of the bus service at flat funding the prior three years.
- School has its own snow removal contract. Tim and Dr. Dwight want to include school snow removal in the new DPW responsibilities (Littleton currently has their DPW remove snow from school grounds/lots).
- The new computer lease amount of \$354,000 is larger than previous as this is for the greater number of 9-12 grade students. These leases are intended to be paid for with Devens funds.
- The Shaw trust currently has a balance of about \$113,000. It increases about \$50,000 each year from the income it generates.
- Students from Devens pay an annual tuition of \$16,000. There are currently 87 Devens students and this is projected to grow by an additional 60 in the future as new housing is completed.
- Sports user fees have not been increased and the number of students participating in sports has declined. However, the cost components have increased (bus fees, coaches, and referees) resulting in an operating deficit.

Our committee thanked Dr. Dwight and the School Committee for submitting a very detailed budget with clear explanation of the increases and providing answers to our questions.

**Town Administrator Report:** Tim provided an update and further explanation of the money warrants. Some committee members had requested more information on some of them so we had sufficient knowledge to rate them using our rating formulas. Don sent the revised ratings Excel spreadsheet to all members this week—one sheet for the money Warrants and a second sheet for the incremental funding requests. The committee members agreed to complete their individual ratings and send them to Tim prior to our next meeting.

As a follow up to our meeting with the Conservation Commission, Tim met with Lorraine and David. Two significant findings came out of that meeting: 1) future land lease revenue should go to their account and be used to offset their annual expenses; and 2) there did not appear to be any documented process for regularly collecting revenue on the four or five properties owned by the Town but "leased/used by" Town residents (Paul Willard's pumpkin field and Carlson Orchards were two mentioned).

**Liaison Reports:** None.

**Next Meeting:** Our next Committee meeting will be on Wednesday, February 1 at 7PM in the Town Hall Meeting Room.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:20AM.

Respectfully submitted,

John W. Seeley