

Town of Harvard
Finance Committee

Meeting Minutes Mar 14, 2018

Members present: John Seeley (acting-chair), Mark Buell, Steve Colwell, Bruce Nickerson, Jennifer Finch, Peter du Bois, Richard Fellows

Not present: Don Ludwig (chair), Charles Oliver

Others: Tim Bragan - Town Administrator, Marie Sobalvarro - Assistant Town Administrator/HR Director

Location: Town Hall Meeting Room - 2nd floor - 13 Ayer Rd, Harvard, MA

John Seeley (acting-chair) called the meeting to order at 7:03pm

Minutes:

Oct 18, 2017 minutes (Peter) - to be reviewed next meeting

March 8, 2018 minutes (Jennifer) - error needed correcting, to be reviewed next meeting

Jan 24, 2018 minutes (Peter) - approved as amended

Feb 21, 2018 minutes (Jennifer) - approved as amended

Public Commentary: None

Town Administrator's report: Tim Bragan presented a draft of the Annual Town Meeting book. Noted that there are out of date numbers for the school costs on page 9 - the Finance Committee spotlight. The Town's Comparison Chart in the book has had the Maynard residential tax rate corrected. The proposed charter that will be voted on at town ballot on May 8th will be printed in the book at the end, with a FAQ after it. As a cost saving measure to the town, the charter will be included in the book rather than doing two mailings. David Nalchajian has been in contact with the bond counsel with regards to our options for the proposed school BAN and bond. Harvard's AAA rating will allow us to receive more favorable interest rates on the bond market.

What happens if the proposed HES project is voted no at ATM and yes at the ballot?: The ballot is temporarily binding, and a Special Town Meeting could be called within a certain time frame (not stated) to try to pass it again.

What happens if the proposed HES project is voted yes at ATM and no at the ballot?: The town (SBC) has 10 days to report to the MSBA their explanation for the vote failure. There is a 120 days from the Apr 10th MSBA board meeting for the town to vote, via a ballot proposal, on a new HES proposal with "minor" changes.

Tim suggested that the School Committee, Finance Committee, Board of Selectmen, and Capital Planning and Investment Committee have a joint meeting to discuss and select a preferred funding method for the proposed HES project.

The committee agreed to this quad board meeting proposal on a Bruce/Mark motion.

Finance Director's report: David Nalchajian was not present.

Liaison Reports: John Seeley - CPIC liaison: At the CPIC meeting on Mon Mar 12, 2018, they discussed options for borrowing for the proposed Hildreth Elementary School building. The town is not able to borrow without a BAN due to arbitrage laws, even though this is the least expensive option. A 25 year bond is less over the lifetime of the loan than a 27 or 29 year loan. The School Committee has discussed contributing \$250,000 in each of 4 years from the Devens fund to help with debt smoothing for taxpayers. CPIC is suggesting a 1 year BAN, with a 25 year bond.

Other business:

Apr 4 meeting agenda item - Book Assignments

Motion to adjourn made, and approved. Meeting adjourned at 8:19pm

Upcoming meetings:

Apr 4, 2018 - Upper Town Hall Meeting Room, 13 Ayer Rd, Harvard, MA.

Supporting documents: Minutes of Oct 18, 2017, Jan 24, Feb 21, Mar 8, 2018. Draft of Annual Town Meeting book.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Finch
Associate member, FinCom