

Minutes of the Meeting of the Heath Finance Committee  
November 16, 2023 @ 6:30 pm  
The atrium, 18 Jacobs Road

Present: Tom Lively (Chair), Will Emmet, Bob McGahan, and Ned Wolf

Absent: Alice Wozniak

Tom called the meeting to order at 6:36.

Members read the minutes of the October 17<sup>th</sup> Finance Committee Meeting. Will moved that the minutes be accepted with corrections. Bob seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Proposed Changes to the MTRSD Regional Agreement

Members discussed whether there should be a meeting of the Finance Committee, the Select Board, and Ken Rocke. Such a meeting could be helpful in preparing to meet with representatives of the MTRSD. We thought ahead to the 2024 Annual Meeting asking, "What will we recommend that voters do regarding the proposed amendments to the Regional Agreement?" Tom said that there hasn't yet been any response from the MTRSD related to Ken's analysis.

We wondered whether changes will be made in the MTRSD proposed amendments to the regional agreement before the 2024 annual town meetings.

The FinCom acknowledged that Jason Cusimano, Chair of the MTRSD Budget Subcommittee, had attended the follow-up to Ken's presentation and had questioned whether Ken had taken the special education costs into consideration. Ken replied that special education costs can be significant and when the special education data becomes available he would be glad to determine what effect it might have on his analysis. Ned suggested that we follow up on that to encourage a dialogue between Ken and the MTRSD.

Tom pointed out that in Heath the percentage of students who are choice students or charter school students is greater than in any other MTRSD town and is likely to stay that way for at least the next few years.

Feasibility Study Regarding Salt Shed

The FinCom shared their views of the report from Walter Cudnohufsky Associates, Inc. on the feasibility of replacing the salt shed on the existing site. The committee received the report

from Hilma by email on November 16<sup>th</sup>. The FinCom will meet at 5:30 on November 21<sup>st</sup> to share written comments about the feasibility study.

#### November 20<sup>th</sup> Luncheon at High School Regarding State Aid for Rural Schools

Hilma has relayed to us a request from Martha Thurber that the Select Board and the Finance Committee each have a representative to join corresponding representatives from the other MTRSD towns for a working luncheon 11:45 am – 1:15 pm on November 20<sup>th</sup> at the high school about the challenges facing rural school districts and the towns that support them. State Representative Denise Garlick, House Chair of the Joint Education Committee, and our local State Representative Natalie Blais will be there. Ned will be the Finance Committee's representative. Tom will inform Hilma by Friday.

Hilma has said that she would like to be kept in the loop when we draft a letter to the department heads regarding the budget process.

Members discussed whether heat would be maintained in the Community Hall through the winter. It was stated that as much as \$4000 might be saved by draining the pipes and not heating the building. Concerns, however, were expressed about the possibilities of mold and the lifting of new floor tiles in the lower level if the heat were turned off. Ned said that the Heath Historical Society is planning a program in the Community Hall for the evening of January 13<sup>th</sup>. By that time it is hoped that there will have been mold remediation in the basement of the Community Hall and if necessary in the stairwell of Sawyer Hall.

#### Municipal Building Maintenance

Will mentioned a ceiling stain in the library as a reminder that in the not too distant future a new roof will be needed. There was a suggestion that there be a stabilization fund for the Municipal Building although it was also acknowledged that there is in place a Town Building Stabilization Fund. A steel roof, which would be the most durable, would cost around \$500,000. Perhaps having the Emergency Operations Center in the Municipal Building increases the chances that a state grant would be available for roof work. The roof work might be done in sections.

#### **Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday, November 21 at 5:30. at the Municipal Building.**

Ned moved that the meeting be adjourned at 7:48. Will seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted, Ned Wolf

