

MEETING MINUTES
Town of Heath
Finance Committee
April 20, 2021

Called to order at 5:35 by Chair Ned Wolf with Will Emmet, Ken Gilbert and Jan Carr present.

Ned made reference to last paragraph of 4/6/21 minutes, "all deliberations and votes in this meeting should be null and void." He noted that his oversight was unfair to Alice in that she could not gain entrance to the meeting but he noted that we did have a quorum.

Alice Wozniak was admitted at 5:43.

Reviewed 4/20/21 version of Article 3

Line 42 - Tech Support final amount may differ if Town switches over to a Municipal Network depending upon any new work by NEIT. The internet is presently taken out of individual building's maintenance accounts. There would need to be one line for new Town network

Line 49 - \$31,382.50 (Will) + \$10,000 (Hilma) + \$7,000 (to augment actual insurance cost of \$12,000) – remaining balance of \$10-12,000. Keep money in revolving fund for any repairs.

*Ken made a motion for the fincom to recommend \$45,000 to fund line 49, Alice seconded. Unanimously approved.

Upgrade to Cat 6 cabling from Cat 5 ethernet at Jacobs Rd - Would make the building more attractive to any potential renters. Unfortunately, the Tech School has a backlog. Will stated this is not a priority, that wireless could be used and Cat 5 is adequate for most applications. Alice suggested using the \$10,000 from free cash (reduced loader funding), \$3,500 from JR revolving fund and balance from additional free cash.

*Alice made a motion for the fincom to recommend funding the Cat 6 upgrade by using \$10,000 free cash from reduced loader funding, \$3,500 from JR revolving fund and balance from additional free cash, Ken seconded. Unanimously approved.

Line 53, MLB Stipends (*Using guidelines created by Kathy Inman of fincom*) - members- \$500 and Chair -\$750 for a total of \$3,250. A suggestion was made to hold off until profitability. Ned's main concern was that stipends in town be treated equally across the board. Will suggested thinking of the MLB as a start-up.

*Ken made a motion for the fincom to recommend \$0 funding for line 53, Will seconded. Ned, Will, Alice and Ken voted yes, Jan voted no. Approved.

Reviewed Open Meeting Law Complaint

Ned went over the complaint and asked the committee if this was a sufficient review. Yes, the committee agreed the review of the complaint was clear. Ned then went over the process: He will draft a response and share it with the committee next week. Alice queried what correct corrective action will be taken, stating that when you have to be let in, it is not an open meeting. Will suggested eliminating the waiting room. Ken suggested contacting Hilma to see how the SB sets up their Zoom meetings. Ned erroneously thought he had eliminated the waiting room and will seek Hilma's advice. Alice complained about the differing Zoom meeting numbers. Will suggested setting up a recurring meeting.

Alice calculated a \$40,000 (changing it to a \$70,000) tax increase from last year. Ned calculated about \$50,000. The average increase for the past five years is \$55,000. We are not breaking the trend.

Recommendations on Warrant

Article 4 - \$45,000 decrease vs. \$110,000 increase last year. Alice is leery of process -lack of transparency.

*Jan made a motion for the fincom to recommend, Ken seconded. Unanimously approved.

Article 5

*Alice made a motion for the fincom to recommend, Will seconded. Unanimously approved.

Article 6

*Jan made a motion for the fincom to recommend, Alice seconded. Unanimously approved.

Article 7

*Ken made a motion for the fincom to recommend, Alice seconded. Unanimously approved.

Article 8

*Alice made a motion for the fincom to recommend, Jan seconded. Unanimously approved.

Article 9

*Alice made a motion for the fincom to amend to \$40,000, Will seconded. Unanimously approved.

*Alice made a motion for the fincom to recommend, Will seconded. Unanimously approved.

Article 10

*Alice made a motion for the fincom to approve, Ken seconded. Unanimously approved.

Articles 11 & 12 *not in fincom's purview*

Article 13 *need more information such a terms of borrowing – 5 years, 10 years?*

Article 14

*Jan made a motion for the fincom to recommend, Ken seconded. Unanimously approved.

Article 15

*Alice made a motion for the fincom to recommend, Ken seconded. Unanimously approved.

Article 16

*Jan made a motion for the fincom to recommend, Ken seconded. Unanimously approved.

Article 17

*Alice made a motion for the fincom to recommend, Ken seconded. Unanimously approved.

New articles to be discussed are the sale of the Bray Road property and the purchase/construction of a salt shed.

*Jan made a motion to adjourn when meeting with SB is over, Ken seconded. Unanimously approved.

JOINED THE SB OVER ZOOM AT 7:30

Article 3

Line 42 - Tech Support – still ongoing

Line 49 - Jacobs Rd account – \$45,000

Ned explained rationale for upgrading to Cat 6. Brian said not worth the extra money when there is no need on the table –qualifies as a special project. SB recommendation is to add it as a warrant article. Need estimate from Tech School

Discussed MLB stipends. SB voted to recommend.

Line 31 - Reduce Town Clerk's hourly rate to \$21.00.

Line 58 - Increase Police Officers' hourly rate by \$1.50 and the Chief to \$25.50.

Line 72 - Fire Chief and Line 129/141 Library Assistant were increased last week – Article 3 to be corrected.

Line 165 - Landfill and Line 164 -Preschool to remain the same.

Warrant

Article 13 not enough information.

Fincom recommended all articles with an amendment to Article 9 reducing it to \$40,000.

If we want to transfer \$50,000 from Free Cash into Stabilization, it must be on Warrant. Have \$122,000 in Free Cash, using \$76,523 (including loader) leaving about \$46,000.

Article 9 - Change Free Cash to General Stabilization. Can use remainder in Winter accounts towards loader.

Salt Shed - Need more information, estimates, range of prices - \$300,000. Tight space, maybe it could be relocated behind transfer station.

Bray Road - Brian believes we have to look toward the future, sold other Bray parcel, will be paid off in FY26. Robyn said this should be included in future discussions concerning all town properties.

Special Projects - We must first establish the budget. "Town of Heath Critical Repair List" adds up to \$21,000+. SB agreed to a placeholder of \$15,000. Will look at bottom line next week.

Fincom meeting adjourned at 9:25.

Respectfully submitted, Jan Carr