

Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

Monday May 15, 2019 held at 1st Floor Conference Room, Town Hall

Members Present: Dorsey (Chair), Fletcher, Sullivan, McNerney, Rosenberg, Hartmann, Hilario, Goldman

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Ronald Mendes (minutes taker & Asst Town Administrator); Sylvia Belkin (resident & town meeting member)

Called to order 7:00pm

Mr. Dorsey called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

Mr. Dorsey mentioned that the Committee will not address the Rail Trail minutes issue this evening as that issue can wait until after town meeting. He then asked in the committee is prepared to vote on any of the minutes. Motion by Rosenberg, 2nd by Hilario to approve the minutes for the meetings held on April 22nd; April 29th; May 6th; May 8th (public); and May 8th (executive session). The May 8th executive session minutes are approved, but not released at this time.

Mr. Dorsey indicated that the committee left off at the last meeting discussing Line Item #27 (Community Development-personnel) and discussion continued with respect to that line item. Ultimately, the committee members were concerned that the Senior Planner line was underfunded and motion was made and duly seconded and it was voted to recommend increasing the Community Development personnel line item by \$14,787 to reflect the current salary of the Senior Planner resulting in the new Personnel total for Line Item #27 being increased to \$226,586 For the record, it is noted the Ms. Fletcher is concerned about the increasing level of spending in the Community Development Department.

The committee noted several line items that were approved at prior meetings for purposed of recording these approvals in the minutes. Except for those line items specifically noted herein, other line items were voted to be recommended at the levels recommended by the Town Administrator.

There was then some discussion about the Essex North Shore Assessment because the recommendation from the Town Administrator is short by \$157,862 based on the most recent preliminary assessment received from the School District. At this point the committee is noting this discrepancy for possible action.

The committee then went back to consider the Public Safety line items. The major concern of the committee was the level of funding Overtime in the Police Department, and specifically how the minimum "manning" provisions in the Police contract cede much control on staffing levels in the Police Department from the discretion of the Chief to the contract language that results in added Overtime costs. There was an extensive discussion about justifying the reduction that the committee ultimately decides is appropriate on the floor of town meeting. The committee wants the reduction to be enough that it prompts the discussion about the factors in the contract that drive overtime, but not too large that the Police Department won't be able to function properly. Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was voted to recommend a reduction in the Police Overtime line item by \$75,000.

The Committee then went back to address the issue of the Essex North Shore assessment being short of the most recent preliminary assessment. Upon motion duly made and seconded it was voted to increase the appropriation for the Essex North Shore assessment by \$157,862, such that the assessment

for the Essex North Shore School District is increased to \$502,068 resulting in Line Item #65 being increased to \$30,122,470.

The committee then discussed having an additional meeting prior to town meeting. It was decided that the Committee will meet on Saturday May 18th at 10:00am in Town Hall.

Discussion then turned to assigning various articles to committee members to determine which committee member will make the motions on the several articles. Ms. Rosenberg will handle the consent Articles are #3, 12, 13, 18, 20, & 24. Mr. Dorsey will handle Articles 4 through 6, Ms. Hilario will speak on Articles 7 through 10 & 21. Ms. McNerney will speak on Articles 11 & 25. Ms. Sullivan will speak on #14 through 17 & 19, Ms. Fletcher will speak on Articles 22 & 23. Mr. Hartmann will speak on Article #32.

Meeting Adjourned 9:01 pm.

Minutes Approved June 19th