

**Town of Sandisfield  
Finance Committee Minutes  
Thursday, March 14th, 2024**

Members present: Dominic Konstam, Mike Lutynski, Mitchell Birkett

1. **Called meeting to order** at 6:30 pm ET.
2. **Reorganized Committee.** The Committee welcomed new member Dominic Konstam after the departure of the previous Chairperson. Michael suggested Dominic be Chairperson. Mitchell said he was too busy right now to do it. The Committee selected a new Chairperson by majority vote: 2 in favor, 1 abstained (Dominic). Dominic Konstam accepted Chairperson position.
3. **Reviewed reserve fund transfer requests.**
  - a. The Committee agreed to approve the funds transfer for the Council on Aging for the full amount of **\$1678.20**. The Committee recognized the RFT had been outstanding 4 weeks. The vote passed with all 3 members in favor.
  - b. The Committee discussed two additional RFTs for Legal Services for the Town and Administrative expenses of the Highway Department. Acknowledging these requests totaled nearly **\$27,000.00**, about **85%** of the remaining funds available, the Committee tabled the vote and agreed to discuss the RFTs with the Town Manager or Selectboard before voting at next meeting. Dominic asked for insight into the Highway Department funds request. Mitchell suggested that possibly with the departure of the Superintendent, there were additional hours worked by other members. Dominic posed that if the department wasn't paying the Superintendent, they would be able to use those saved funds to pay for the increases elsewhere. Additionally, the Committee agreed they need more context on how the Reserve Funds would be replenished for future needs being that there are 3 months remaining in the Fiscal Year.
4. **Discussed FY25 Budget.** The Committee members stated they needed more time to go through the budget in detail and at a future meeting would like to review the budget with the Town Manager and Selectboard if they haven't missed their window. The members agreed the budget looked good overall; however, they stated their reluctance to accept general expense increases on account of inflation and want to stress test a few items that had notable increases or were new expense items altogether. Dominic noted that budgets hardly ever go down, so it's important to keep increases to a minimum especially during periods of increased costs due to inflation. Michael agreed and expressed that budgets shouldn't just increase year to year without absolute requirement.
5. **Other items discussed.**
  - a. Dominic suggested it would be fun and interesting for the Finance Committee members to each focus on one of the three main budgetary items throughout the year; education, roads, and general government. He mentioned that by focusing on a specific category and bringing findings to the group, each member could be more effective and engaged. The members discussed their interests. Dominic said he would be interested in roads, Mitchell mentioned his past work and studies in municipal employment and offered to focus on employment spending, and Michael said he would like to focus on general government expenses. The members agreed that they would focus on learning more about each category,

seek ways for the town to receive any grant money, add new revenue, and look for extraneous expenses.

- b. Dominic mentioned that he has invited a few members of the town to join future Finance Committee meetings to share thoughts and expertise with the relatively new Finance Committee. He said he will invite a few folks one at a time to share best practices, concerns, and other productive lessons or opinions with the Finance Committee throughout the upcoming months. He posed this as an open invite for all members of the town to attend Finance Committee meetings and encouraged productive participation.

**6. Meeting adjourned** at 7:20 pm ET.

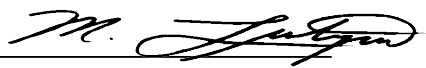
Signed and Approved:

**Dominic Konstam, Chair**

By:  \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 03/21/24

**Mike Lutynski**

By:  \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 03/21/24

**Mitchell Birkett**

By:  \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 03/21/24