

Town of Sandisfield
Finance Committee Meeting
Date: December 16, 2017
Location: Old Town Hall

The meeting was called to order at 9:35 AM

Members Present: Roger Brown, Joe Gelin, Bogart Muller, Fred Ventresco (ex-Officio Committee Member)

Members Absent: David Hubbard, Kathy Jacobs

1. Approved minutes for meeting held on November 18, 2017.
2. Discussed and voted on the following budget items:
 - a. FINCOM statement of purpose and objectives, FY19 request for Salaries and Expenses. Approved 3-0.
 - b. Reserve Fund statement of purpose and objectives, FY19 appropriation request. Approved 3-0.
 - c. Stabilization Fund statement of purpose and objectives, FY19 appropriation request. Vote deferred until we can discuss further and incorporate capital improvement plan requests.
3. Discussed Highway Department Chapter 90 appropriations and equipment maintenance. Selectman Mark Newman will take the lead on this.
4. Discussed School Board budget process and FINCOM participation. Selectman John Scrip will take the lead on this.
5. Bogart presented research on Finance Committee's in other towns. We obtained some good ideas and confirmed that what we do is in line with other towns. The Town of Washington's Finance Committee Report may be used to guide our preparation of such a report.

6. Discuss the FISCAL Policy Manual prepared by the Division of Local Services. The consensus was to adapt and then adopt appropriate sections. We will proceed with the following revision priorities and responsibilities:
 - a. Joe and Fred: Capital Planning
 - b. Roger: Finance Committee Reserve Fund, Financial Reserves, Forecasting
 - c. Fred: Reconciliations, Revenue Turnover, Tax Enforcement
7. Discussed the DPW fire. Members present voiced their strongly-held opinion that there should be an immediate and thorough examination of the purpose and objectives of the Sandisfield Highway Department. The fire at the garage while terribly unfortunate provides an opportunity to rethink what the highway department can and should be. The highway budget for FY18 for the department approaches \$1m (operating budget \$500,000, Chapter 90 over \$300k, \$170 from stabilization for a truck, etc.). With that much of the town's resources being dedicated to the department the FINCOM believes that it is fiscally prudent to have that study now before any decisions are made on replacing equipment and buildings. If after such study we find ourselves with the same concept for the highway department, then we can be confident that we are doing our best to be good stewards of the taxpayer's money. We will discuss with the Select Board.
8. Discussed how the budget submission process is going.
9. Discussed possible funding sources for Spectacle Pond. This lead to a discussion of the role of the FINCOM in such appropriation requests (e.g., land purchase, funding for the Spectacle Pond Project). It was our clear consensus that the FINCOM should not be involved in the submission of such requests so that it can remain an independent arbiter of proposed appropriations and make objective recommendations to Town Meeting. We further agreed that any member of the FINCOM putting forward such appropriation requests must recuse themselves of FINCOM deliberations and voting.
10. We agreed that subject to the availability of other members FINCOM meetings will be held on Saturday mornings.
11. Adjournment: 11:30 AM

Respectfully submitted:

Joe Gelinas, Finance Committee Chair

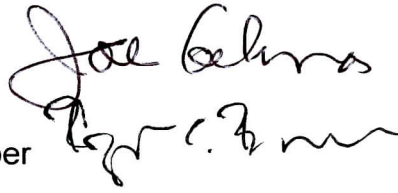
Roger Brown, Finance Committee Member

David Hubbard, Finance Committee Member

Kathy Jacobs, Finance Committee Member

Bogart Muller, Finance Committee Member

Fred Ventresco, Ex-Officio Finance Committee Member

Handwritten signatures of Joe Gelinas and Roger Brown. Joe Gelinas' signature is written above Roger Brown's signature.Handwritten signature of Bogart Muller.