



Freetown Finance Committee

February 10, 2016 @ 7:00 PM

Meeting was called to order 7:06 PM

Members Present: Brad Paiva, Joel Pacheco, Paul Denault, Kent Wilkins, Bob Alderson

Request for transfer of funds from the Reserve Fund in the amount of \$2989.13 for work done by K.R.Rezendes, Inc. on Alexandra Drive for broken water line, and work done by J.R.D. for repairs on Chipaway Road. BOS signed off on request, Brad is excluding himself from vote due to conflict.

Motion to approve was made by Bob, seconded by Kent. Unanimous

Highway Department is looking for a transfer of funds from the Reserve Fund pursuant to MA General Laws Chapter 44, Section 31D in the amount of \$100,000.00 for snow removal. Their budget is nearly depleted and they need the extended funds. BOS signed off on request.

Discussion: Bob stated that in the 17 years he has been on FinCom they have never done this and wanted to know why it was being done this year. Brad said that it was done last year and now there is a MA appropriation that towns pay for snow removal. Last year snow removal cost \$270,000.00 and they have a budget of \$100,000.00. Chuck has the ability to switch funds between accounts but it was voted by the FinCom last year that they be notified when changes/transfers were being done and just the chair would be able to sign off on it. Brad stated that he wanted to include the whole committee in the vote. The FinCom is being informed and included in town decisions whereas in the past they were not. Paul asked who decides the snow removal budget and was told the Town Accountant does but works within a budget she/he is given.

Bob gave an example of an issue: Somerset lost their insurance carrier about 5 years ago and the BOS was not informed of the loss which was due to non-payment. That year they had a record number of accidents and because there was no insurance the town was held liable.

Bob questioned what would happen if they did not approve – stop plowing would be result.

Motion to approve was made by Kent, seconded by Paul. Unanimous

Kent spoke a little about what has been happening with the Regional School Committee. He said he was the only one in attendance besides the Principal, IT, Town Engineer, and Superintendent. Lisa usually attends the meetings with him, but was unavailable this time. He did receive some hand-outs that he would share. Looks like they are looking to add 1 new teacher to Assawampset, 2 teachers at East Freetown Elementary, none at Austin, 1 special ed at the Middle, and 1 at Apponequet, this is in addition to the 14 they have already hired. The 5.4% increase they are looking for has been changed to a 7.36% increase. The next meeting is February 17, and a Regional meeting scheduled for February 18. Current staff increases are an additional 35 people, 28 of which are para-professionals (the 14 new included in this number). Question is – are they special needs.

Approved 2/25/16
B.E. Paiva



Freetown Finance Committee

Bob suggested the FinCom get together with Lakeville to get some answers and come up with some reasonable numbers. They are requesting \$2.5 million over last year and it is getting out of control. Brad says that he has called to get together to meet, but they have been unresponsive. He will request again.

Bob thought if the FinCom could get together for a meeting beforehand they could make a list of questions that they would like to put forth. Such as: where is the bond interest of \$260,000 coming from, what is the principal. We need more definite numbers and the BOS needs to be informed. A 1% increase is reasonable, anything higher is insane. We need to talk to Lakeville.

Discussion: Where is the \$200,000.00 from a debt that had been paid? Brad said that it was earmarked, but not sure for what (thought he was told for insurance), and the meeting with the BOS said that it was already allocated. FinCom would like to be seated at these meetings so that they can be informed of where monies are going. Brad said that he would ask again where the money went to.

Discussion: Brad said that if the board had further questions or wanted to stay in session after joint meetings with BOS they would be able to as there is no reason they have to adjourn at the same time.

Discussion: Police have gone to arbitration as they did not meet an agreement on their contract due to the BOS not approving benefits or dollars. Fire Department settled. FinCom was not informed of any figures. Executive session has been scheduled to negotiate contracts.

Motion to accept the minutes was made by Paul, seconded by Kent – unanimous.

Motion to adjourn was made by Kent, seconded by Joel – unanimous.

Meeting adjourned 7:55 PM.

Submitted by:

Lois Amaral, Clerk, Finance Committee
