

**Town of Ashfield**  
**Select Board and Finance Committee budget meeting**  
**March 22, 2016**

The Select Board and Finance Committee had a joint meeting for the purpose of a 2017 budget discussion. The meeting was held at the Ashfield Town Hall on March 22, 2016 at 7:00 PM. There was one audio recorder at the meeting.

**Select Board:** Chair -Tom Carter. Vice Chair- Ron Coler, Todd Olanyk

**Finance Committee:** Ted Murray-Chair, Tom Schreiber, Lindy Gougeon, David Newell, Carol Lebold

**Town Administrator:** Kayce Warren

**Asst. Municipal Clerk/Scribe:** Lynn Taylor

The purpose of the meeting tonight was a discussion session regarding the progress on the FY 17 budget.

**Minutes:**

**Minutes of 03/14/2016 Joint SB and Fin Comm. meeting:** Murray has a few minor grammar changes. **MOTION:** Murray makes a motion to approve the minutes of 03/14/2016 with the few minor edits, seconded by Coler.

**VOTE: SB 3-0-0 Fin Comm. 4-0-0 (document 2)**

**Minutes of 03/21/2016: MOTION:** Coler makes a motion to approve the minutes of 03/21/2016 as amended, seconded by Olanyk. **VOTE: 3-0-0 (document 3)**

Murray gives a quick overview to his Board of the recent breakfast with Steve Kulik some of the issues they discussed included broadband, MBI, Schools, Regional Transportation, Etc.

**Vocational Education Advisory Committee Update:** David Newell gives an update and overview on the VEAC committee. He starts by thanking the SB for appointing Kayce Warren and Lynn Taylor to the Committee. Newell gives a quick overview of the recent VEAC meeting that was held in Plainfield. They discussed VOKE transportation reimbursement, subject of whether Towns should continue to allow students to choose VOKE schools. The Committee has a target date of May 2017 for drafting policies in relationship with Mohawk and VOKE schools. As of

this meeting Ashfield only has three new applications for the Vocational Schools, with two seniors graduating in 2016. However the application process is still open and Newell will not have an accurate count until first week in April. As soon as he has numbers for the FY17 budget he will get it to Warren. Carter questions Newell for a number if there is only three new students enrolling and two students graduating. Newell would like to keep the place holder of \$514 K in for now but advises that could possibly drop by +/- \$80K. As soon as he has the budget figured out the Boards will get the figures. He expresses to the Board that it in the past it was cheaper for kids to enroll at the Voke Schools versus the Regional School now the tuition is about the same.

**Mohawks “Best” (formally strategic Planning) Update:** Newell distributes an information package (**document 4**) Newell gives the definition of BEST; Building Education Sustainability & Trust. Newell is looking for guidance from the SB on the subject of moving the 6<sup>th</sup> grade students from Sanderson to Buckland Shelburne School. The Boards discuss different options and opinions. They agree that they will be behind David in exploring the option of moving the students. They express how fantastic it would be to actually have something get done by this Committee as this issue has been looked at and studied for many years with nothing ever happening.

**General FY17 Budget Discussion:** Murray explains that last week Tom Carter, Kayce Warren, and he met in the Committee room and worked through the budget making a few cuts in order to bring the shortfall down a little. At the end of the discussion/meeting they had reduced the deficit down to \$52,655.00, however this number does not include quite a few items that have been asked for including but not limited to Transfer Station \$100,000.00 for estimated construction costs, Highway pickup, Fire Truck, Salary Study, Broadband, funds for new office space or the pipeline contribution to Montague. Murray starts going over the budget work sheet from the back page forward (**document 5**) explaining each change highlighted in yellow.

Murray advises he has been in contact with the auditors, Roselli & Clark, regarding the every-year audits for the bond issue. The town's financial advisor, Clark Rowell, recommends State House notes for which every other year audits would be sufficient.

Carter suggest a separate article for Town meeting to appropriate a sum of money from the grant program income account.

The SB and the Finance Committee will be asking the citizens for a 2 ½ override in the amount of \$120,000.00, if this is to pass the average home value of \$300,000.00 will see an increase in taxes of about \$150.00 per year.

The board schedules a budget hearing/discussion for Monday April 25 at 7Pm.

Murray suggests developing a Broadband development Stabilization Account in the amount of \$60,000.00, and a Capital Equipment Stabilization Account in the amount of \$30,000.00. after a discussion **MOTION:** Coler makes a motion to establish a Special Purpose Stabilization fund for Broadband for the sum of \$60,000.00, seconded by Olanyk. **VOTE 3-0-0**

Coler makes a motion to adjourn SB at 10:30 PM, seconded by Olanyk.

Schreiber makes a motion to adjourn Fin Comm. at 10:30 PM, seconded by Carol Lebold.

Both meetings adjourned @10:30 Pm

### **Document List**

1. Agenda for 03/22/2016
2. Minutes of 03/14/2016 Joint SB and Fin Comm. meeting
3. Minutes of 03/21/2016 SB Meeting
4. Mohawks “Best” (formally strategic Planning) information packet
5. FY17 Budget worksheet