

MEETING MINUTES OF ASHFIELD FINANCE COMMITTEE

Tuesday, April 29th, 2014 at Town Hall

Members Present: Ted Murray (Chair), Ricki Carroll, David Newell, Janet Rogers, Tom Schreiber, Paullette Leukhardt was present as a guest.

Ted called the meeting to order at approximately 7:02 PM and announced there were 2 recorders at the meeting.

1. Minutes: Ted moved to approve the minutes of April 14th as amended, Janet seconded, vote 4-0-1 (David came in after they were gone over).

2. *See Documents 1, 2, 3

A discussion was held on the warrant for the Annual Town Meeting as to the Recommendations the Finance Committee will be making. Ted handed out a spread sheet on the long term capital budgeting as of 4/29/14. David also had a handout on Populations & School Facilities in other towns to see how Ashfield compared with the number of schools we have in the Mohawk district.

Committee Recommendations are as follows:

Articles 1, 2, 11, 13, and 36: NO RECOMMENDATIONS because they are not financial (Article 36 is expected to be deferred to a Special Town Meeting)

Articles 3-10, 12, 15-34: Recommend FOR unanimously (5-0-0)

Article 6: David will speak about long-term issues for school financing

Article 8: David will explain increased in Voc Ed expenses

Article 14: Recommend AGAINST (1-2-2) as written; Instead, Ted to offer amendment that states: "To see if the town will authorize the Select Board to discharge the lien on the Ashfield House, LLC for a cash settlement." Recommend FOR this (4-1-0).

Article 35: Recommend AGAINST this unanimously (0-5-0) because of concern about inadequacy of funding and anticipated open-ended (and therefore unknown) amount of funding for snow removal. We will ask for more information. If the \$5,000 amount is deleted, NO RECOMMENDATION by Finance Committee.

2. *See Document 4

Finance Committee Manual: Ricki will incorporate a few changes into the Manual, Ted moved to accept as amended and Janet Seconded. The vote passed 5-0-0. It will be given to the Select Board as soon as the corrections have been completed.

3. *See Document 5

Letter from Deb Nicholson: A discussion took place in regards to how the Finance committee might be able to help Ms. Nicholson. It was agreed we do not have power as a Finance Committee to do anything however Ted will draft a letter in reply letting Ms. Nicholson know she is welcome at any of our meetings and we will listen to what she has to say.

4. *See Document 6

Letter to Mr. Shuzdak of the USDA: Ted drafted a letter from the Select Board to Mr. Shuzdak of the USDA to ask to waive the complete audit for FY2013 and do another combined audit in 2014. David moved the motion for the letter and Ricki seconded it. The vote passed 5-0-0

5. Vocational Education: David gave an update on the buying of gas and the interest or lack thereof from the other towns involved. Hawley and Ashfield have approved it, Charlemont still has questions, David will meet with their Select Board and he is waiting on a final answer from Plainfield. David reported it may be a good idea to try it out for a year and see how it goes. He also had a meeting with Ross Kubris from Franklin Tech who said they are very willing to help with transportation issues, may be able to provide a bus and a driver and they will waive the tuition for Ashfield for one student who just came to town and is attending school there now.

6. Minutes Postings: Ted and Dave discussed a bit of a misunderstanding about posting meetings and they agreed the postings would be looked at more closely in the future.

7. Next Meeting: May 3rd at 9:30am prior to the Annual Town Meeting to go over any minutes or last minute details.

8. There being no other business before the committee, a motion to adjourn was made, seconded, and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 10:07pm

Submitted by,

Ricki Carroll

DOCUMENT LIST

1-Long Term Capital Budgeting

2-Populations & School Facilities

3-Town Warrant

4-Policy & objectives Manual

5-Ashfield House Evacuation Letter from Deb Nicholson

6-Draft letter to Mr. Shuzdak