

Approved: 4-0-0
Date: 10/12/16

ASHFIELD FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Date: 9/14/2016

Meeting called to order: 7:02 pm

Meeting adjourned: 9:26 pm

Members present: Mary Fitz-Gibbon, Melinda Gougeon, Carol Lebold,
T. Murray, Carl Satterfield

Others present: Kayce Warren-Interim Town Administrator, David Newell,
Ashfield Vocational Education Coordinator (AVEC)

Motions were made and seconded to accept the minutes for the 6/13/2016 and the 7/15/2016 meetings. Chairman Murray noted that appropriate documents referenced at the meetings would be attached to the final copies of the minutes in the near future. No corrections were made. Both motions passed 4-0-0.

Old Business

1. Mr. Newell gave a report describing vocational education in general (see attached notes) and discussed placing limits on the selection of vocational schools by students and their families in particular. He stressed the importance of school selection on transportation costs. He indicated that 17 students have elected to attend Smith Vocational School and Franklin County Technical School at an approximate transportation cost of \$102000 and a total cost of approximately \$460000. He further informed the Committee that the Ashfield Selectboard has voted to designate Smith Vocational School and Franklin County Technical School as "preferred" school for vocational education. Several questions were posed by Committee members about the significance and legality of such a designation. The following motion was then made and seconded.

Motion: That the Ashfield Finance Committee approve the policy accepted by the Ashfield Selectboard that Smith Vocational School and Franklin County Technical School be designated as preferred schools for technical vocational education and that other schools may be selected (by students and their parents) if the transportation costs are paid by the parents.

The motion passed 5-0-0.

2. The Committee reviewed “Town of Ashfield Financial Policies” section by section. It was noted that, based on a suggestion by town auditors, that “revenues” be changed to “expenditures” in several sections. A number of minor word changes were also made throughout the document. A question was raised concerning the appropriateness of requiring the approval of the Town Administrator for a reserve fund transfer to be presented to the Finance Committee (page 9 “Finance Committee Reserve Policy”). Town Administrator Warren addressed the issue. The following items were deleted from the policy (page 16 “Other Post-Employment Benefits Policy”)
 3. To appropriate in the Town General Fund budget and in any Enterprise Fund budget an amount each year into the OPEB Liability trust fund; and
 4. To work toward the development of contribution schedule that projects full OPEB funding by a year certain.

A motion was made and seconded to approved the policy statement.

Motion: Moved to accept the revised version of “Town of Ashfield Financial Policies”.

The motion passed 5-0-0.

New Business

None

Reports and Announcements

1. Chairman Murray reported that the broadband initiative is moving quickly. Ashfield is first in line to complete the MBI survey process. In addition, a target date has been set for MBI and the Town of Ashfield to establish a finance plan for broadband and indicated that several individuals have expressed interest in investing in the form of personal loans in the project. He also reminded everyone of the future-scheduled meeting dates.
2. Administrator Warren reported the treasurer is planning retire shortly

and, therefore, the audit will be postponed until the time of the retirement.

3. M. Gougeon reported that some Ashfield trust funds are generating little income and, as a result, it may be advantageous to look into “breaking” those trusts and consolidating those small funds.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed 5-0-0.

Respectfully submitted
Carl Satterfield

Documents

1. Agenda for 9/14/16
2. Rcommended FY17 Vocational Budget
3. Duties of the Voc Ed Coordinator
4. Town of Ashfield Financial Policies