

Accepted: 11/19/2014

Voted: 5-0-0

MEETING MINUTES OF ASHFIELD FINANCE COMMITTEE

September 15th, 2014

Members Present: Ted Murray (Chair), Ricki Carroll, David Newell, Tom Schreiber

Members Absent: Janet Rogers

Ted called the meeting to order at approximately 7:05 PM

1. *See document 2

Ted read a September 15 email from Deb Nicholson, who said she was advised not to come to the meeting. Ricki suggested writing a letter of apology letting her know we were sorry if there was any misunderstanding of intent, and said it was sometimes difficult to get the meaning of things when not present. This was discussed as well as the option of having one of the committee approach her directly to talk about her concerns. Finally it was agreed that rather than talk her into reconsidering attending a future meeting, we should await her next communication and respond at that time. (In her 9/15 email she had written, "...I will forward my thoughts concerning the Open Meeting Law violation and the content of the discussion that took place on April 29, 2014, at a later date.")

2. Minutes: The minutes of June 18th were read, a motion was made, seconded and passed unanimously to accept them as amended.

3. *See document 3

A discussion was held on the warrant for the Special Town Meeting, the recommendations were as follow:

Article 1 – To see if the Town will vote to transfer up to \$449.08 from Vocational School Expenses to Fire Department Expenses, or act relative thereto.

We recommend this article unanimously (4-0-0).

Article 2 – To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to approve Hilltown Networks' proposal to provide a high-speed broadband wireless internet service to Ashfield using Town Hall Steeple and the fiber optic connection to Town Hall, and authorize the Select Board to negotiate any and all contracts relative to the proposal.

No recommendation at this time, vote was unanimous (4-0-0). (this article was not related to money)

Article 3 – To see if the Town will vote to transfer a sum of money from Vocational School Expenses to an account to be established for removal of invasive species from Ashfield Lake

Passed by a majority: [2 (Ted & David) – 1(Ricki) – 1(Tom)]

(The amount of money asked for in this article was not specific at this time, but the motion was to ask for \$4,500.)

Article 4 – To see if the Town will vote to transfer up to \$2,500 from Vocational School Expenses to an account to be established to pay for Mediation Services.

We recommended this article unanimously (4-0-0).

Article 5 – To see if the Town will vote to transfer up to \$5,000 from Vocational School Expenses to an account to be established to hire an Information Officer

We recommended against this article: [1(Ted) – 2 (Ricki & Tom) – 0 (David)]

2. Pre School: A discussion was had on a request from the preschool for the Town to help with their funding. David will write a letter to the Select Board with his thoughts about this issue and let them know the Finance Committee will work with them if they are interested.

3. Town Audit: This is not needed, however is still wanted due to the size of the Town Budget. We could go to Scanlon, or as discussed at a previous meeting we might be ready for a new firm and could look for one now. A motion was made, seconded and passed unanimously (4-0-0) for the chair to solicit 3 written or oral quotes for qualified auditing firms to conduct town audits for up to 3 cycles of 2 years each: i.e., FY14/16/18. Thereafter, the next round of 3 2-year cycles would be re-bid.

4. Mail Received: *See documents 4 & 5

Two letters, one to Michael Buoniconti and one from Robert Aeschback

David offered to draft a letter for Ted to send to Robert Aeshback in regards to FY14/15.

5. Vocational Education: The Vocational Advisory Committee in meeting in a week and a half. They will start their meeting in Plainfield and reconvene the next

night in Charlemont, working on vocational school transportation issues. The buses are not yet using Town gas; they are waiting until October 1 to switch over to town-provided gas..

6. Future Meeting: September 22 is the Special Town Meeting, hopefully afterwards the Financial Handbook will be discussed.

There being no other business before the board, a motion to adjourn was made, seconded passed unanimously (4-0-0). The meeting was adjourned at 9:11pm

Submitted by,

Ricki Carroll

DOCUMENT LIST

1-Agenda for September 15

2-Email from Deb Nichols

3-September 22 Special Town Meeting Warrant

4-Letter to Michael Buoniconti

5-Letter from Robert Aeschback