

*Town of Ashfield - Select Board*

*Meeting Minutes*

*March 12, 2013*

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The Select Board meeting was held on Tuesday March 12, 2013 at the Ashfield Town Hall. The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Tom Carter. There were 3 audio recorders in use and 1 video recorder in use. Approximately 12 audience members were in attendance. This was a joint meeting with the Finance Committee.

Select Board – Tom Carter – Chair, Paulette Leukhardt, Ron Coler

Executive Administrator – Mary Fitz-Gibbon

Finance Committee Members - Ted Murray, Chair, Janet Rogers, David Newell

***Special Town Meeting Warrant Discussion*** - Discussion ensued regarding Article One and Article Two including Town Counsel uses and invoices, current deficit amount of \$3400+ in legal expenses, Open Meeting Law Violations and Public Document Requests, Tree Warden Request, Police Department Request

*Finance Committee voted to Recommend Article One Unanimous*

*Finance Committee voted to Recommend Article Two in the amount of \$7000 to Legal Expense Unanimous*

***MOTION: A motion was made by Coler and seconded by Leukhardt to recommend Article 2 be in the amount of \$7000 to Legal Expenses as mirrored by Finance Committee VOTE: Unanimous***

*Finance Committee voted to Recommend Article Three Unanimous*

*Article Four will be Passed Over as funds are not needed and the Election Work volunteers will be thanked for their service.*

*Finance Committee voted to Recommend Article Five Unanimous*

*Finance Committee voted to Recommend Article Six Unanimous*

*Finance Committee voted to Recommend Article Seven VOTE: 2-0-1*

***MTRSD Discussion*** - Emily Robertson and Poppy Doyle from the School Committee were present to discuss the FY14 MTRSD budget. Emily noted that since last updating that the School Committee voted to add an additional \$80,000 to the school budget bring the assessed value for Ashfield from 5.2% to

6.13% for a total operating budget of \$1,896,906. Emily noted that at the upcoming March 13, 2013 a motion will be in front of the school committee to rescind the additional funds and vote on the original FY14 budget at the 5.2% increase to Ashfield. Emily approached the Business Administrator, Superintendent and Budget Subcommittee regarding the request from the finance committee to offset the cost with the revolving accounts- Emily noted that was not possible. Emily spoke regarding the budget process and her opinion noting that she did not vote for the additional \$80,000 to the budget and her vote at the next meeting would be to rescind the vote. Poppy gave her view that she voted for the increase to the budget however after seeing the impact to the towns would be voting to rescind the vote as well.

Discussion from Select Board and Finance Committee included concerns on where the money would come from, the capacity of the building and the demographic of students, per student costs, state formula concern, the accountability report (Document), letter from finance committee regarding increase to assessment(Document).

*A motion was made and seconded by the Finance Committee to have the letter be from only the Finance Committee with a less assertive tone. Vote from Finance Committee was unanimous.*

Four audience members, Tamara Sloan, Lauren Preston-Wells, Andy Wells and Eric Nelson spoke regarding their concerns and opinions on the current MTRSD budget situation.

**School Budget Discussion** - Finance Committee handout (Document) presented by Dave Newell regarding Vocational Transportation Costs. Discussion regarding potential route change savings, working with other towns to provide transportation (Charlemont, Plainfield, Hawley), joining vocational district, forming of a vocational transport or advisory committee, draft letter to other towns regarding advisory committee from the Select Board with David Newell as the designated contact.

**Ashfield House Report** (Document) Discussion included that this draft report was requested by the Select Board; Ted Murray worked with Town Counsel to produce documents and obtain advice.

**Discussion** on Town Vehicles and payments including the Highway Truck 2.5% note and Fire Truck 1 % note. Town Common Debt comes directly from levy 4.4% note \$15,000 principal. Discussion on the Highway need of a Grater and how to fund including debt exclusion and interest rate.

Coler brought forward that he filed a disclosure with the Town Clerk due to the fact that his wife is the chair person for the Park Commission which is on the agenda for 3/13/13.

**MOTION:** A motion was made by Coler and seconded by Leukhardt to adjourn the meeting at 10:57 p.m. - **VOTE: Unanimous**

Respectfully submitted,

Jenn Morse

## **Document List**

DSE Accountability Report

Finance Committee Letter regarding MTRSD higher assessment

Vocational Transportation Cost Document prepared by David Newell Finance Committee

Ashfield House Report prepared by Ted Murray Finance Committee