

SPENCER FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES - FEBRUARY 19,2019- CONFERENCE A -SPENCER
MEMORIAL TOWN HALL

Submitted by William Shemeth, Clerk Pro Tempore

Meeting was called to order by chairman Mary Braney at 7:01 PM

Members Present: Mary Braney, Chris Bowen, Chris Woodbury, Tom Parker, Bill Wall, Paul Bouvier, Nancy Tame, Edward Sproul, Dennis O'Leary, and Bill Shemeth (ex-officio).

Guest: Town Administrator Tom Gregory

Chairman Braney announced that there were no members attending the meeting remotely.

Motion by Chris Woodbury and Seconded by Tom Parker to accept the minutes of the November 18, 2018 meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Braney announced that Bill Shemeth agreed to take the minutes for the meeting and asked if any member wanted to assume the clerk role for future meetings. No other member volunteered. Bill Shemeth stated he was willing to continue to take the meeting minutes for future meetings.

Correspondence:

Chairman Braney distributed copies of the draft budget from the Bay Path Regional School District.

Chairman Braney also circulated the latest copy of the Beacon newsletter.

Chairman Braney noted that the committee had received a letter from the Bay Path Regional School district noting that Spencer's assessment for the current fiscal year was reduced by \$39,179.00 due to a reduction in the state required minimum contribution. Town Administrator Gregory noted that these funds would become available as part of next fiscal year's free cash.

Liaison Reports:

SEBRSD Regional Agreement Advisory Committee Final Report: Chairman Braney reported that the Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School Committee had voted to accept the draft regional school district revised agreement. Chairman Braney noted that most of the changes were technical in nature as it had been several years since the agreement had been updated. School district counsel had reviewed the document and the department of education had only one citation change needed. Town Administrator Gregory noted that town counsel had also reviewed the draft agreement. The agreement will be on the warrants for both Spencer and East Brookfield for approval at the annual town meetings.

SEBRSC- Paul Bouvier reported that he had attended 2 regular and one workshop school committee meetings. Paul reported that he was very impressed with the workshop meeting where the superintendent and his leadership team reviewed various district educational and financial needs. These needs included phonics, slipping math and science test scores, special education needs at Wire Village school to create a therapeutic classroom to bring student s back to district, and a need for increase in teacher pay. Paul noted that the district was looking at a 5 year technology replacement plan. Paul noted that the school district had received a 3 year literacy grant. There were 2,052 nursing visits this year so far. The high school is creating a career pathways program including such areas as criminal justice, horticulture, and environmental science. The district increased the rate of daily substitute

teacher pay from \$75 a day to \$85 a day. Knox Trail is looking to create its own innovation lab program. The boilers throughout the school district have either been replaced or will need to be replaced in the near future.

Building and Reuse Advisory Committee- Chris Bowen noted the committee had not met recently. Town Administrator Gregory noted that the town has received a draft sale agreement for the Sugden Block which is currently under review. The sale could take place within a matter of months. The sale will not include the outdoor patio as that will be a separate Phase II item due to it being more complicated in part due to utility corridors. Lake Street School is proceeding at a slower pace due to the complication involved in the interested party putting together the necessary financing.

Economic Development Committee- Chris Woodbury reported that the committee is looking at doing some summer events downtown, making more use of the Spencer Fair, opportunity zones in the downtown area, and the creation of downtown design guidelines.

CIPC- no recent meeting

Town Administrator Report- The Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Memo of Feb 11, 2019 the FY 2020 proposed fiscal year budget with Appendix A and Appendix B, and the revised FY 2020 Budget Calendar are incorporated by reference into the minutes of this meeting. Mr. Gregory reviewed these documents with the Finance Committee and answered questions from members. Highlights of the presentation included the town's inability to fund the school district requested as presented, the lower than last year amount of new growth, the provision for retaining the full time firefighters, the potential creation of a school resource police officer position, and the restoration of the additional half day on Thursdays at the Town Hall.

Chairman Braney noted the need to develop a 5 year financial operating budget plan. This plan will include predicting anticipated revenues, anticipating normal expenses increases, and planning to phase in the restoration and other needs of town departments. The committee hopes to have this process begin shortly after the annual town meeting.

Motion by Tom Parker and seconded by Chris Woodbury to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 8:35 PM