

**MINUTES OF JOINT MEETING OF SPENCER FINANCE COMMITTEE AND SPENCER BOARD OF
SELECTMEN-TUESDAY MARCH 26,2019-MCOURT SOCIAL HALL-SPENCER MEMORIAL TOWN HALL
LOWER LEVEL-7PM**

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

Board of Selectmen Members Present-Gary Woodbury, Ralph Hicks, Warren Monette, and Wendy Berthiaume. Town Administrator Tom Gregory was also present.

Chairman Braney called the Finance Committee meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

Chairman Gary Woodbury called the Board of Selectmen meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

There was a moment of silence for Selectmen Pepe's father.

No members of either the Finance Committee or the Board of Selectmen were participating remotely.

Motion by Chris Woodbury and seconded by Paul McLaughlin to approve the minutes of the March 12th Finance Committee meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

On Behalf of the Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District, Superintendent of Schools Paul Haughey and Comptroller Gary Suter presented a slide presentation and documents on the proposed budget for next fiscal year. The only staffing reduction in next year's school budget is that kindergarten aides will be going from full time to half time. Superintendent Haughey noted that the key academic periods will still be covered and that if the district receives more funds than anticipated from the state that the reduction will be reconsidered. New positions include a half time administrative support position at Knox Trail, an early childhood education teacher at the high school, and a full time chorus teacher shared between DPHS and Knox Trail. Course offerings in criminal justice, marketing/business, early education, and environmental science/horticulture will be improved and established. The school district continues to put larger amounts of E and D funds into the budget each year. At some point this will not be able to continue. Selectman Hicks noted that the lack of sufficient charter school reimbursement funding is negatively impacting the school district funding.

On behalf of the Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School District, Superintendent of Schools John Lafleche and Business Manager Dean Iacobucci presented a slide presentation and documents on the proposed budget for next fiscal year. Due to favorable busing bids, the transportation assessment actually went down. The district was able to get competitive bids for busing to help achieve the savings. The district is buying new Math, Science, and Electrical textbooks. Various student computers and metal fab equipment is being purchased. One full time ISSN for network systems work is being added. Part-time inspection staff is also being added to facilitate more off campus opportunities for students.

Town Clerk Laura Torti presented the town clerk department budget. Town Clerk Torti thanked town officials for supporting her need for additional part time staffing. She noted that her office was still short 13 staff hours per week. If the town hall was open on a full day on Thursdays and one evening a week then she would only be down 3 hours per week. Responsibilities such as early voting and census have increased . In regards to records preservation work, older documents are being preserved. Eventually

more documents will be available on line and less money may be needed for records preservation in the future.

Linda Leblanc, Principal Assessor presented on behalf of the Assessors . The assessors have a generally consistent level of funding. If the town hall were open full days on Thursdays and one evening a week, no additional hours would be required. With the use of contracted help to do field inspections for revaluations, staff is free up to complete more tasks in the office.

Pam Woodbury, Council on Aging Director, presented the budget request for the council on aging. Selectman Gary Woodbury and Finance Committee member Chris Woodbury excused themselves from the discussion. Our senior population is increasing every year. A variety of activities are offered with increasing number of attendees (174 registered for classes alone) . The hours of the senior center director have been increased to 32 hours per week. Future needs include being open 3 more hours per week and potentially have a cook prepare meals on site to improve the quality of the food offered. \$29,000 a year is provided from the formula grant. Members of both boards requested copies and explanation of the formula grant, fees charged and what they are used for, and any future programmatic needs or plans going forward. The transportation initiative has not yet been implemented but it will be given another try next year.

Gary Woodbury and Chris Woodbury returned to the meeting.

Chairman Braney has obtained information that the MA Department of Revenue Division of Local Services may have a template for a 5 year financial forecast that could be helpful as a first step in the development of a five year financial plan.

Motion by Ralph Hicks and Seconded by Warren Monette to adjourn Selectboard meeting. Meeting adjourned at 9:22 PM.

Correspondence included a statement from the Spencer Rescue Squad, and scanned documents received from Parks and Recreation, Fire Department, Library, and Old Cemetery Commission.

No liaison report from SEBRSD. Capital improvement committee meets on April 3 and Economic development committee was meeting on Thursday March 28th.

In the town administrator report, Town Administrator Tom Gregory reviewed the proposed list of capital requests and the new budget update. The town hall hour increase is removed from the budget and the school resource officer will start in October to provide funds along with insurance savings to meet the request for additional; funding of \$75,000 from the spencer Rescue Squad. The administrator will consider starting the school resource officer at the beginning of the school year if funds become available. Discussion and potential vote on rescue squad override question to be held at next joint meeting of finance committee and Selectboard. Warrant discussion will be postponed to the next meeting.

Motion to adjourn by Chris Woodbury and seconded by Tom Parker. Meeting adjourned at 9:59 PM.