

**TOWN OF HAMILTON  
FINANCE & ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MARCH 7, 2015**

The Finance & Advisory Committee met at the Hamilton Public Safety Building at 7:38 a.m. on Saturday, March 7, 2015 with Rick Sprenkle, Charles Chivakos and Nick Tensen present. Finance Director Deborah Nippes-Mena and BOS Chair Scott Maddern also present.

**Call to order**

Rick Sprenkle called the meeting to order at 7:38 a.m.

**Approve minutes from prior meetings**

This was tabled until the following meeting.

**Review the fiscal 2016 Operating and Capital budgets**

Changes include \$50,000 added from Free Cash to pay for warrant article to update Zoning Board of Appeals and Planning by-laws and do a community based survey as part of updating and rewriting these by-laws. Cash reserves will be below 5% and will not be replaced from this fiscal year's close. Scott Maddern described how ZBA and Planning Board have asked for update and operational efficiencies could result from reviewing and improving Town's zoning/planning by-laws. A target completion date has not been determined for this project, and RFP process will be used.

Discussion: Douglas Kiernan – candidate for Town Moderator

Discussion ensued with candidate Douglas Kiernan about role of Town Moderator appointing many of the Finance and Advisory Committee members. Kiernan explained that he has been a trial attorney for 24 years, grew up on the North Shore, lived in Manchester and moved to Hamilton in August 2015. His work entails litigation and land use, and he works with a commercial real estate developer in Boston resulting in interaction with municipal boards.

Kiernan has not volunteered on any town boards or committees. He has been very busy with his five children. He expressed interested in getting involved in the Town as Moderator since he would be a neutral party with no opinion or agenda of his own. Kiernan referred to family connections in the area, his membership in paternal

organizations, parliamentary procedures in Town Meeting Time, and that he attended Town Meetings in Manchester.

FinCom returned to review of the fiscal 2016 Operating and Capital budgets including change in sources of funds such as most up-to-date cherry sheet number. An additional \$10,000 has been added to the Town Manager's overall expense line for consulting budget of \$25,000. In addition, under Town Accountant budget line item the record retention project with a three-year lease was added to offload paper at Town Hall to digitized records and integrate with Town website. The Town has two Town Counsels: general and labor (Larry Donahue) with funding added for labor attorney's retainer. Animal control has had hours reduced since support is now for two rather than three towns (i.e., Manchester and Hamilton with Wenham opting out) with expense and local receipts down.

The Town has already gone through snow removal deficit so another vote is likely. First deficit will be covered in the budget when appropriation transfers can be done in the last 15 weeks of the fiscal year beginning in April. The next \$75,000 deficit to be voted by BOS will be covered in recap in December. Hamilton is approximately \$150,000 over budget in baseline snow removal budget of \$210,000. If MEMA reimbursement is received before the year is closed a smaller deficit will be added to recap.

Health insurance has a 10.97% increase versus 7.9% expected. The HDC will receive \$65,000 for year mostly from Meals Tax revenue with \$5,000 added. HWRSD numbers are in budget as voted by HW School Committee. Essex Tech votes at end of March on budget (12 students for the Town with a minimum of 5) so this number for Hamilton will be revised on Town Meeting floor. The debt is going down for Essex Tech because it is an allocation.

### **Review three year forecast**

Discussion ensued about worst case scenario of tax rate of \$18.64 based on slight growth and property values with revenues below prediction, overall expenses are running below projection for HWRSD and Town. The variances are in Free Cash (\$650,000 will be voted to apply to the tax rate at Town Meeting). It was noted that with planned vehicle replacement, record retention, and rewrite of zoning by-laws, expenses are still below budget projection. The library salaries are in the budget based on the voting and wage and classification study results should be resolved by spring Town Meeting and include retroactive pay.

Review Town Warrant and vote recommendations

Section 2: Financial Actions

The FinCom reviewed the following articles in preparation for voting the Committee's recommendations:

*Article 2-1:* Appropriation Transfer from FY'12 Overlay Reserve to FY'10, Allowance for Abatements & Exemptions.

*Article 2-2:* Compensation/Classification Table. No raise is reflected for FY'16 Administrative Assistants union contract. The FinCom had previously voted to recommend favorable action on this article.

*Article 2-3:* General Town Departmental Appropriations.

*Article 2-4:* General Town Capital Appropriations. This is predominantly vehicles.

*Article 2-5:* Water Enterprise Budget.

*Article 2-6:* Waste Reduction Enterprise Budget.

*Article 2-7:* Annual Financial Actions.

*Article 2-8:* Community Preservation Budget.

*Article 2-9:* Annual Authorization of Revolving Funds.

*Article 2-10:* Hamilton Development Corporation.

*Article 2-11:* OPEB Trust Fund.

*Article 2-12:* Reconstruction of Patton Park Pool.

*Article 2-13:* Stabilization Fund for Patton Proceeds.

*Article 2-14:* Rewrite of Zoning By-law.

*Article 2-15:* Water Distribution System Replacement Program.

Sprenkle entertained a motion for the Finance and Advisory Committee to recommend favorable action on spring Town Meeting warrant articles: 2-1 through 2-15 excluding 2-2 that has already received favorable action. Charles Chivakos so moved. Nick Tensen seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Section 3: Planning/Zoning Actions

*Article 3-1:* Amendment to Senior Housing By-law

*Article 3-2:* Amendment to GPOD Map

*Article 3-3:* Site Plan Review to Planning Board

*Article 3-4:* Citizens' Petition Site Plan Review to Planning Board

*Article 3-5:* Amendment to Communication Towers (CT) and Telecommunication Antenna Facilities (TAF)

Chivakos moved that the Finance and Advisory Committee make a recommendation at Town Meeting on Articles 3-1, 3-3, and 3-4. Tensen seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Chivakos moved that the Finance and Advisory Committee make a favorable recommendation on Articles 3-2 and 3-5. Tensen seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Section 4: Town By-law Amendments

*Article 4-1:* Incorporate the Personnel By-law in the Town General By-law

*Article 4-2:* Plastic Bag Reduction and Prohibition of Expanded Polystyrene Food and Beverage Containers

*Article 4-3:* Water Runoff to Roadway Prohibited

*Article 4-4:* Term for Planning Board Members

*Article 4-5:* Certification of Town Clerk

*Article 4-6:* Certification of Treasurer/Collector

*Article 4-7: Certification of Assessor*

Chivakos moved that the Finance and Advisory Committee make a recommendation at Town Meeting on Articles 4-2 and 4-3. Tensen seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Chivakos moved that the Finance and Advisory Committee make a favorable recommendation on Articles 4-1, 4-4, 4-5, 4-6 and 4-7. Tensen seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Other Appropriations and Actions

*Article 5-1: Gift of Sidewalk Easement*

Chivakos moved that the Finance and Advisory Committee make a favorable recommendation on Article 5-1. Tensen seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Closing Financial Actions

*Article 6-1: Free Cash Application*

Tensen moved that the Finance and Advisory Committee make a favorable recommendation on Article 6-1. Chivakos seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

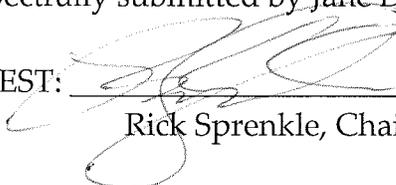
**Determine next meeting agenda items**

On March 31 there will be a joint meeting with Wenham FinCom at 6:30 p.m. to address library matrix, re-evaluate Town Meeting warrant article recommendations, resurrect FinCom annual report, a recommendation for fifth FinCom member, and keeping 3 and 5 year forecast up-to-date.

Charles Chivakos moved to adjourn at 9:30 a.m. Tensen seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted by Jane Dooley, Minutes Secretary

ATTEST:

  
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Rick Sprenkle, Chairman

