

Minutes  
Lincoln Finance Committee  
January 13, 2016  
7:30pm

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**Present:** Jeff Birchby, Eric Harris, Gina Halsted, Jim Hutchinson, Chris Kasper, Peyton Marshall (Chair) and Laura Sander.

**Absent:** None

Also in attendance were Tim Higgins and Colleen Wilkins representing the Town of Lincoln and Becky McFall, Buck Creel and Jennifer Glass representing the Lincoln Schools, and Peter Braun, Town Selectman.

The meeting was called to order at 7:32 pm in the Second Floor meeting room at the Town Offices.

Mr. Marshall began the meeting by welcoming everyone and reviewing the expectations for the meeting.

Tim Higgins, Town Administrator presented an update to the Town's Base Budget and the preferred budget item requests. The Base Budget complies with the Committee's 2.5% guideline. The increase under the guideline was sufficient to maintain current service levels without having to make program or staff reductions and to cover the town's collective bargaining obligations.

Mr. Higgins indicated that the Selectmen are recommending a reduction in the DPW Operating Budget from \$50K to \$25K to reflect reduced costs of winter sand and salt debris disposal and that the reduction be used to fund the promotion of a Sargent.. The Committee discussed the variables and risks for reducing this expense and agreed to the recommendation with the understanding that the Reserve Fund will be available to cover any shortfall in the sand/salt disposal line item.

A second possible preferred item, \$22K for overtime in Communications will be deferred to FY18.

The final preferred budget item is a request for \$48K to allow the new Director of the Planning Board (Ms. Jennifer Burney) the opportunity to assess her staffing needs and to increase the Planning Board Assistant position from part-time to full-time if she and the Board feel it is required. The Committee discussed the possibility, suggesting that, with extra spending, the Planning Board consider for the Town's benefit a way to articulate and quantify its objectives and deliverables.

The discussion moved to the Minuteman School items for the Operating budget. The Committee discussed enrollment trends and the range of the preliminary assessment increase over last year, which could be on the order of \$150k with a number of variables. The possibility that the

increase in future years relative to FY '16 could be up to \$400k was raised by Mr. Higgins, indicating that it would depend of the outcome of the Minuteman building discussion, governance and Lincoln's decision to stay or exit the district. Discussions of Minuteman governance, any decision by Lincoln to stay in the district and the Minuteman building project were deferred for a subsequent meeting. The possibility of funding a building project through debt exclusion was raised.

The Committee then discussed the School's budget, including variables relating to the Hanscom School budget. Becky McFall, Superintendent and Buckner Creel, Administrator of Business and Finance indicated that the budget for the Town for FY '17 remains within guidelines. They reviewed cost trends, estimates and challenges for the Hanscom Schools. Ms. McFall and Mr. Creel advised the Committee on the timing of the next Department of Defense Contract for the Hanscom Schools.

The Committee discussed the Finance Committee Report and drafting process. Each member of the Committee is responsible for the report of the department/organization(s) for which they are the liaison. The deadline for submitting reports to Mr. Marshall is 2/11/16. Colleen Wilkins, Town Finance Director, will send Table 1 to the Committee.

Mr. Hutchinson provided an update on the Water Board approval of the OPEB Contribution.

Ms. Sander gave an update on the Minuteman School project and the Committee discussed and agreed on its role and responsibility in the decision process.

The Committee discussed its schedule for the next few weeks and scheduled a meeting to discuss Minuteman High on Monday, January 25, time TBD (probably 7:00pm or 7:30pm).

After a motion duly made and seconded, the Committee reviewed and approved the minutes of the meeting held on December 9, 2015.

The meeting adjourned at 10:09pm

Submitted by: Gina Halsted