

# WASHINGTON FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES

## January 11, 2016

Meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

In Attendance: Kent Lew, Dick Spencer, Mike Burke, Sean Connors and David Weissbrod

### OLD BUSINESS

1. Finance committee meeting minutes from December 14, 2015, as amended, were approved.

### NEW BUSINESS

#### 1. Review of 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Expenditure Report

Overall, we are on budget. Noted that \$7,501 has been deducted from Reserve Account and transferred to Insurance Account, but the original Reserve Budget should remain unchanged. Noted that Voc Ed Transportation expenditures are already at 80% of total budget. We expect complete reimbursement.

Discussed the purchase of new equipment, in the most recent case by the highway dept, and its affect on Insurance Account. How is town's insurance structured and can different components comprising it be stripped or tracked from total? Need to inform and alert the Selectboard and Dave Fish, in particular, that each time a new piece of equipment is purchased, the town's insurance burden increases, creating a budget-overrun situation. Also discussed elimination of older and less-used equipment that we still pay insurance on. Dick will talk to Glenn about the structuring of the insurance policy.

Dick also mentioned that he would be sending out Requests for FY17 Budgets to all departments, requesting returns to chairperson by March 7, so we can review requests at our March 14 meeting.

#### 2. Possible Wage Increases for FY17

It's been at least a year or two since most town employees have received a wage increase. We discussed a COL increase for FY17. A 3% increase of salaries would increase total budget by about \$3,500. This 3% increase would also apply to highway crew rates. Need to look at rest of FY17 budgets before making final recommendation.

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## **January 11, 2016- Continued**

### 3. MGL Ch. 32B §9A -- Post-Employment Insurance Update

Dave read proposed Mass Law section to committee. Without a contact to explain proposed changes, he said it's difficult to know the laws effect as well as what the town's options would be. In general, the committee voiced its concern and sense that the proposed changes could be bad for the town. Namely, that people retiring from Washington who had accrued prior work experience with other Mass municipalities (and their eligible dependents) could create extreme burden on the town in the future. Dave said that without more information he did not have the details to answer the committee's questions. We will try to obtain a contact so we can re-visit this issue at next meeting and before reporting our findings to the Selectboard.

### 4. Any New Business

Dick said that the special CBRSD committee looking at Cummington's exit plan voted 5-2 in favor of supporting a settlement for Cummington's share of future OP Ed-Health support, with Dick being one of its two dissenters. The CBRSD committee's agreement does not, in his opinion, adequately reflect possible increases in future rates as part of Cummington's responsibility. He doesn't think the school committee will approve it, nor does he think it will receive the required approval of five of the seven towns in the district.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15. The committee then met with the Selectboard.

Respectfully,

David Weissbrod, Clerk