

WASHINGTON FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES

16 October 2017

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

Meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Finance committee meeting minutes from 18 September were approved.

NEW BUSINESS

1. 1st Quarter Report

A few line-items that are exceeding appropriated budget were discussed. Overall, spending is at 22% of FY 18's allocation.

a. Clerk Board Registrar. \$251.00 entry should have been entered under town clerk expenses.

b. Tax Collector Expenses are overrunning due to multiple causes. These include training of new tax collector, "house cleaning", and perhaps some backlog. But some discrepancies need to be examined. Kent thinks it will be at 100%, rather than 136%. It was noted that our deputy collector charged town for not sending him warrants in a timely manner. Gina is in the process of changing to a new Deputy Collector.

c. Assessors Expenses presently at 107% but we will look to see if there is an expense that needs to be backed out of it, and should be on track.

d. Highway expenditures are a little **below** appropriated levels. Good! Kent noted our town highway superintendent was able to negotiate better deals through purchasing both new vehicles through the state. Trade-in of our 550 is also included! Delivery of new vehicles is expected in January.

- 550-replacement: estimated and approved \$107,000. Purchased a Dodge for \$89,382, including trade-in for our 550 for \$6,300.

- Pick-up Truck: estimated and approved \$36,000 for Toyota Tundra. Purchased Tundra for \$34,500. Great work Tom!

2. Virginia Lake Update

Dick said after considering another lawyer, Dick Grillon and he met with our town counsel, agreeing that we will stay with town counsel's office after all.

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Dick said they are still looking at the two parcels discussed previously, although in the end they will look at best option. He said our counsel will need to sort out the 'roads' situation, among other things.

3. Stumpage Fees

a. *Cross Road Land*

Dick discussed the town land (43.4 acres) behind the transfer station and town park. Dick, Ed Neumuth, and DCR Service Forester, Peter Grima, walked the area, and Peter produced an environmental summary of the area. A possible recreational area could be available to the town, although access seems to be the issue, without getting permission from an abutter. Dick said there is grant money available for more study and assessment of the area. It was noted that even if we wanted, there's not much chance that we could sell this land, given there's no access.

b. *Pittsfield Watershed Cutting*

Sean discussed Pittsfield's two cutting plans for last year, for which we received only one payment, presumably for only one cutting. We need to close the loop between Pittsfield, our Conservation Comm, and the Finance Comm. The city of Pittsfield is now cutting again. The city's contact does not return our calls. Frustrating! We need to be able to reconcile what we should be paid with what Pittsfield pays. Kent will see if our state representatives can help shed light on the rules and processes. We may decide to contact town counsel.

4. Last Mile Fiber

The committee joined the Selectboard Meeting, already in process, to discuss this issue. See Selectboard's minutes for this discussion.

Following this discussion,

The Finance Committee adjourned at 8:43pm.

Respectfully,

David Weissbrod, Clerk