

Topsfield Finance Committee
Minutes to the Meetings
November 8, 2010

- I. **Call to Order:** Mark Lyons, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm, with Heidi Bond, Paul Dierze, Karen Dow, Kathy Hartmann, Stephen Lais and Holger Luther present. Town Administrator Virginia Wilder and Masconomet School Committee member Kenneth Vogel were also present. Selectman Laura Powers was present from 7:00-7:25 pm. Chairman of the Board of Selectmen Richard Gandt joined the meeting briefly from 7:20-7:25 pm.
- II. **Minutes:** A motion was made by Holger Luther to accept the 10/18/10 minutes as written, seconded by Heidi Bond, voted in favor 7-0.
- III. **Information:** Chairman Lyons distributed information on the Open Meeting Law along with the signoff sheet for each member. Chairman Lyons shared the 11/8/10 Boston Globe article on municipalities increasing the amount in their “rainy day” funds, even while laying off employees, to cope with the current economic uncertainty.
- IV. **Town Administrator Personnel and Capital Items Recommendation:** Personnel guidelines will not be available until next week, as Ms. Wilder still needs to discuss them with the selectmen. MIIA has advised the town to budget for a 13% increase in health insurance costs for FY 2012. The capital item requests total \$1,516,924, and a prioritized list is being developed. The selectmen have voted to create a Facilities Study Committee, but there are no volunteers as of yet.
- V. **FY 2012 Finance Committee Budget Guidelines:** The Committee reviewed the 10/18 discussion on the guidelines. It was decided to wait until the FY12 personnel guideline is available to finalize the budget guidelines. This will be done at the 11/15 meeting. The library will be treated as other departments, with the expectation that the amount needed to meet MAR (approximately \$7,000 according to Karen Dow) will appear on an attached Schedule if the MAR amount exceeds guidelines. The Committee discussed delaying a decision on the Masconomet guideline in an effort to achieve a three-town guideline. The Boxford and Middleton budget processes are several weeks behind Topsfield. When set, the Masconomet guideline will be published in the same manner as the other guidelines. Chairman Lyons will draft the cover letter so the guidelines can go to the department heads 11/16, on schedule.
- VI. **Upcoming Meeting Schedule:** The next meeting of the Committee will occur on November 15, 2010 at 7:00 pm in the Proctor School Teachers’ Lounge. The following Finance Committee meeting will occur on January 10, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. in the Proctor School Teachers’ Lounge.
- VII. **Adjourn:** A motion was made by Holger Luther to adjourn at 7:53 pm, seconded by Steve Lais, voted in favor 7-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Dow

Attachments:

- a. Open Meeting Law Guide
- b. 940 CMR
- c. Open Meeting Law MGL c.30A
- d. Open Meeting FAQ's
- e. Open Meeting Law signoff sheet
- f. Boston Globe article "Despite Fiscal Ills, Towns Are Saving Up" 11/8/10
- g. FY 2011 Guidelines as a basis for discussion and modification for FY 2012 Guidelines