

Town of Hubbardston

Finance Committee – Meeting Minutes April 4, 2019

Meeting called to order: 6:34 PM in the Slade Building

Members present: Dave Conaghan, Shannon Erb, Joshua Lerner, Susan Rayne, and Chuck Reed

By invitation: Ryan McLane, Town Administrator, and Debra Chamberlain, David Correia, and Mark Wigler, all members of the Quabbin Regional School District School Committee

Other guests: Dr. Sheila A. Muir, Superintendent, Quabbin Regional School District, Cheryl Duval, Director of Administrative Services, Quabbin Regional School District

The Chair noted that, in light of the attendance of the invited and other guests and for their convenience, the meeting would address the previously presented agenda items out of order.

- 1) *Review of Draft Budget and Status of QRSD Assessment.* Mr. McLane summarized for the Committee and those in attendance the bottom line of the Town's now revised draft FY20 budget, which reflects the proposed increase of 8.28% to the Town's assessment for the Quabbin Regional School District and results in a projected FY20 budget deficit of approximately \$190,000, and discussed the Town's five year budget projections which show that deficit increasing annually. Dr. Muir and Ms. Duval answered Committee members' questions as to the calculations that produce the Town's assessment, which on its face is disproportionate to the overall 2.8% proposed increase in the District's FY20 budget, by reviewing the formula used to arrive at the assessments for all member Towns. Dr. Muir and Ms. Duval stated their hope that the Commonwealth's FY20 budget, not yet finalized, would result in a lowered assessment, although they acknowledged that this hope was speculative and that in any event the Town's finalized assessment would probably not be available before the April 23 public hearing or the Board of Selectmen's April 29 meeting to approve the Town's FY20 budget. At the meeting, Dr. Muir and Ms. Duval were unwilling to commit to any budget reductions; Mr. Wigler noted that the \$800,000 budget reduction needed to eliminate the Town's projected FY20 budget deficit was 'unworkable'. The Committee thanked Dr. Muir, Ms. Duval, Ms. Chamberlain, and Messrs. Correia and Wigler, who left the meeting at 8:10 p.m., for attending the meeting and agreed to keep talking towards a mutually agreeable result.
- 2) *Review of Town Administrator Report.*
 - a) Mr. McLane highlighted changes to the last draft of the Town's FY20 budget, indicating that the FY20 budget line item for the Town's participation in the Rutland Regional Emergency Communication Center appeared excessive; after discussion, the Chair will

invite the Director of Communications to the next Committee meeting to explain the basis for and discuss the proposed assessment.

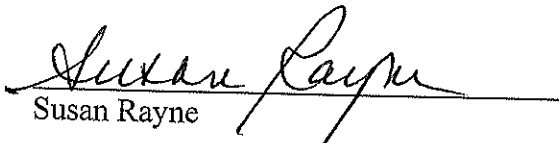
- b) Mr. McLane presented a preliminary draft of the warrant articles for the June Annual Town Meeting; after discussion, the Chair will invite the Chair of the Agricultural Commission and the Chair of the Community Preservation Committee to the next Committee meeting to explain the purposes of and discuss the warrant articles proposed by each of them.
 - c) Mr. McLane and the Committee discussed potential strategies for mitigating the deleterious effects of the District's FY20 budget as it currently stands. Mr. McLane agreed to send to Committee members both the draft warrant articles for the June Annual and Special Town Meetings and the draft FY20 budget in editable forms for their further review.
- 3) *Approval of Minutes.* On motion made by Mr. Cognahan and seconded by Ms. Erb, the Committee unanimously voted to approve as submitted the minutes of the meeting of the Committee dated March 11, 2019.
- 4) *New Business.* None.
- 5) *Adjournment.* The Chair reminded the Committee of the next scheduled Committee meetings, notice of which will be given as required by applicable law:
- a) April 16, 2019
 - b) April 25, 2019
 - c) May 13 (Joint with Planning Board and Board of Selectmen)

There being no further business, on motion duly made by Mr. Lerner and seconded by Ms. Erb, the Committee unanimously voted to adjourn.

Adjourned at 8:50 P.M.

Minutes submitted by: Susan Rayne, Clerk *Pro Tem*

Minutes approved by: Susan Rayne, Chair


Susan Rayne

Date: 4/16/19