

## Lenox Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: February 3, 2022

Members Present: Dave Carpenter (DC), Kristine Cass (KC), Michael Feder (MF), Mindi Morin (MM), David Neubert (DN), Blaise Gregory (BG)

Guests: Chris Ketchen (CK), Clarence Fanto (CF)

Absent:

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Meeting called to order at 6:02

KC kicked off the meeting with our goal being we review the budgets that Chris had sent and to also set up our individual meetings with our departments. Mention of MF's concern with the select board seeing the budgets and having a meeting before the finance committee

MF references the finance committee bylaws (sections 4 and 5) and the Monday, February 7<sup>th</sup> meeting at 3pm with the select board. He feels the process is moving forward without our input.

KC reviewed the historic process and that it is very much in line with past years and not outside of the bylaws. We review and deliver our recommendations to the select board with a letter to the taxpayers.

CK we are a bit behind on the preliminary and the final would not be finalized by Monday, that being the first day of the month and due at that time.

KC feels this is in line with the bylaws, outside of CK's mention of running behind

DN suggested two options with one being to attend the meeting on Monday as either a board member or as a resident seeing as this is an open meeting

KC and MM reviewed sections 3-5 of the bylaws and agree that we can utilize the time as outlined from now until April to address any concerns

BG pointed out that have we had the opportunity to speak with the select board as to what our role is and KC defined this from a conversation with select board member, Marybeth Mitts

MF feels very strongly given unchartered waters and the capital expenses in the foreseeable future, feels the select board should be anxious to hear from us

DC feels that it is our opportunity that we feel strongly about an opinion of the finances and the budget, that we should address this with the select board. We also have an opportunity to be vocal on our review to them.

CK reviewed the email that he had sent prior to the meeting of the major category items

CK Explained that the net variance multiple lines are made up of 18 items- \$264K and the remaining \$64K are items that go up and down. We would see this in detail when the budget is presented. Work continues with additional versions of the budget as he works with the department heads.

KC asked when we can review the budget so that we are seeing this before it becomes final. CK said this would be next Thursday

MF again expressed the importance of us being sure that we communicate to the taxpayers what their tax bills will be with the increase of expenditures

CK reviewed the Tax Levy Dashboard that was reviewed at our January 20, 2022, meeting

Discussed next steps MF mentioned that we can have Chris summarize the increases prior to us inviting departments to meet with us

KC outlined that we have 7-8 weeks to schedule meeting with the departments in addition to a summary from Chris

DN also suggested departments that will raise questions as the priority

KC proposed we review the full details Chris sends to us and we will review this with Chris once we review what he sends as a group. Once that is completed, we will meet with those people we want to see

MF asked CK what departments might need additional funding but may not have asked for it, this is potentially facilities although not a department and the possibility of an FT for personal versus a ½ FT and possibly others after further review but a quick answer

- Next Steps
  - high level breakout from CK to the team- 2/3 update this has been completed
  - MF will summarize property taxes- 2/3 update this has been circulated
  - Find new members- 2/3 update continue these efforts
  - Await the budget from Chris and meet with him 2/10 prior to setting up individual department meetings

Meeting adjourned at 7:07

Respectively Submitted,  
Mindi Morin, Secretary