

Finance Committee

Meeting Minutes
January 14, 2020
7:30 PM
Town Hall – Room 204

Present: Christi Andersen, Roland Bourdon, Jason Cole, Mike Majors, Steve Noone, Christine Russell, Al Vlajinac (Associate)

Absent: Tom Farley, Sahana Purohit, Dave Wellinghoff

1. Opening

Chair Roland Bourdon opened the meeting at 7:30 pm.

This meeting was recorded by Acton TV.

2. Public Participation

There was no public participation.

3. Budget Wednesday Recap and Initial Budget Discussions

The Committee took turns giving their opinions on the recent Budget Wednesday Meeting that took place the week prior.

- Budget Data:
 - Questions submitted in advance were only answered hours prior to the meeting. Not enough time given for follow-up questions.
 - Response format was hard to read and organization made it hard to follow along with presentation.
 - ‘26 Liner’ of Department Budgets was not asked for this year and hence not given. Will be added to the FinCom calendar to ask for next year.
 - Having a headcount on budgets would be useful.
 - Selectman Jon Benson asked if it would be helpful to have each department describe daily operations. May be redundant and not timely in regards to budget presentation.
- Budget presentation:
 - Flow of presentation not conducive to conversation or learning about budget.
 - Having it on Saturday allowed more time and participants didn’t have to leave to attend other scheduled meetings.
 - Style of current Town Manager more concise than previous Town Manager.
 - Budget was organized alphabetically, but should have been organized by department for ease of use to those following along.
- Follow-up Questions/Concerns:
 - Were items added to make the 3% allotted budget raise or were items cut to cap the budget at 3%? Were capital overrides taken into consideration?

- What is our baseline?
 - A historical analysis of each department needed to help determine a baseline.
 - Would prevent a justified raise in budget one year from getting carried over to a new year unnoticed.
- Where do we compare to other similar towns?
 - Can we create a scorecard for cost analysis?
 - School Committee member Diane Baum spoke about how difficult it was for her when she did one for the school department.
 - FinCom member Steve Noone believes Acton completed one over 10 years ago.
 - Cleargov website may provide answers, but data questionable.

4. Finance Committee Business

A. Approval of meeting minutes

The revised meeting minutes January 5, 2019 which had reference documents added in, were reviewed and approved.

The meeting minutes of November 19, 2019 were reviewed and approved as amended.

The meeting minutes of December 3, 2019 were reviewed and approved.

The meeting minutes of December 10, 2019 were reviewed and approved.

B. Committee Liaison Reports

Committee Members who are liaisons to Committees that met during the interim between last FinCom meeting and this meeting gave reports as to what occurred at those meetings. School Committee Member Diane Baum also gave a recap of the last School Committee Meeting.

5. Adjournment

At 8:53 pm, it was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved.

Documents and Exhibits Used During this Meeting

January 5, 2019 revised meeting minutes
November 19, 2019 meeting minutes
December 3, 2019 meeting minutes
December 10, 2019 meeting minutes

Respectfully submitted,

Finance Committee