

Town of Lunenburg

Finance Committee:
Mark Erickson, Chairman
Brian Laffond, Vice-Chairman
Terri Burchfield, Secretary
Jason Smith
Steven Raboin
John Henshaw
Karin Menard



Mark Erickson
1/9/14

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Lunenburg Finance Committee Minutes 12/12/2013

Location: Town Hall
Present: M. Erickson, S. Raboin, T. Burchfield, J. Henshaw, B. Laffond, K. Menard
Absent: J. Smith

1. Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm.
ME reminded everyone that we will have a Public Hearing regarding the Special Town Meeting warrant on December 19th.
2. Presentation of the 5 Year Financial Forecast
K. Speidel presented the Town Manager's forecast beginning with a review of assumptions made which lead to the forecast. As the town did not see a drop off in local receipts, no bounce in receipts is anticipated. The outlook for state aid is also absent any significant change. The revenue outlook anticipates a 2% annual increase, while expenditures are seen at 2.8% annual increases, leaving deficits which will have to be addressed through the budget process, though more manageable deficits than have been seen in the recent past. The town continues to look for opportunities to realize savings through regionalizing services such as animal control and a regional lock up.
ME would have liked to have seen the assumptions showing debt service beginning in 2017 if the school project is authorized to see what impact that might have. The interest rates are fixed for current debt. The Town Manager also reviewed the improved bond rating for the Town, which will be helpful with obtaining favorable rates should the school project go forward.
During public comment, Dave Matthews wanted to make the point that it is normal to see deficits projected, but that by the time a budget is brought to the Town for approval, it will be balanced.
ME explained that we will have a balanced budget, and that the forecast is a tool to help guide budget decisions. He then closed public comment and thanked Ms. Speidel for the work on the forecast.
3. Minutes
KM motioned to approve the minutes of 9/26/13. SR seconded, BL abstained, motion approved.
BL motioned to approve the minutes of 11/14/13. KM seconded, motion approved.
4. Committee Reports:
SR reported that Capital Plan prioritization is complete for the year. The building reuse committee presented recommendations to the Board of Selectmen last week.
BL reported that the Library budget is 33% spent into the year. The Friends have paid for window cleaning inside and out, and the new automatic door which has been installed.
KM reported that the Agriculture Committee is looking at a Right to Farm bill. Monty Tech's new library is opening soon.
ME said that the School Committee has started their budget process with principals looking to restore personnel and supplies to the budget.
JH reported that there were possible grant opportunities for the DPW's signage project.
5. Town Manager Update
The Summer Street project is at 25% design and so will be going back to the state for review.
6. Fiscal Policies
JH discussed his draft of policies regarding capital expenditures, free cash and debt management. John will look at the pavement plan and current process to prioritize the 5 year Capital Plan. The question of when borrowing should occur for capital expenditures will be addressed.
7. Budget Opportunities
We will continue looking for any efficiencies that could result in savings over the long term.
8. Next meetings

December 19th will be the public hearing for the Special Town Meeting. The ST meeting will be January 7th, with the Special Election January 11th.

The next regular meeting will be January 9th.

BL motioned to adjourn. KM seconded, meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Terri Burchfield.
