Rowe Finance Committee
November 29, 2017
6:30 P.M.
Rowe Town Hall

Finance Committee: Chair Wayne Zavotka, Loretta Dionne, Paul McLatchy III
Audience of Citizens: None

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Chair Zavotka at 6:35 P.M., a quorum of the committee present.

Agenda: The agenda was reviewed and adopted without any changes.

Minutes: The minutes of November 15th were approved as submitted.

Additional Members: The individual Chair Zavotka was talking to has had to decline. Another individual also declined. Jenna Crowningshield may be interested and will let the committee know if she is able to commit.

Eligibility: Mr. McLatchy presented an updated spreadsheet with five additional towns' eligibility requirements for their finance committees. He passed out a proposal (attached) with a recommendation for a change to the town's bylaw. The proposal eliminates the restriction on all offices and positions except for the Board of Selectmen and School Committee. It also add a provision that any person holding another office or position must recuse themselves on any matters pertaining to that position/office. Chair Zavotka made a motion to recommend to the Bylaw Review Committee and the Board of Selectmen that the proposal be placed on the annual town meeting warrant. Ms. Dionne seconded the motion, and the vote was 3-0 in favor.

Budgets: Ms. Dionne wanted to get a clarification that the Finance Committee is requesting budgets be prepared based on dollars spent, not based on previous allotments. The members agreed that this is what is being requested.

Library: The library is seeking an overall 1.3% increase over last year. The library is unique in that it requires minimum levels of funding in order to stay certified with CWMARS, an inter-library program with the state. A question was raised about the staffing requirements- they are requesting 38 hours a week while only being open 24 hours. Ms. Dionne will seek clarification on why there is such a large difference.

Board of Health: The Board of Health is requesting a 10.5% increase in the nurse's salary line, well above the 2% COLA that has been approved. There is also a 3.17% increase in the transfer station attendants line. Mr. McLatchy will speak with the board's clerk to ask for why there are increases.

Tax Collector: There is a 15% overall increase in the Tax Collector's budget. It appears that most of the increase if from a new line for envelopes and postage.

Council on Aging: The Council on Aging is requesting a $100 increase over last year's budget. There was some discussion about Council policies on mileage reimbursements and whether they were necessary.

School: The budget number received from the school is **very** preliminary, and should be taken with a large grain of salt. It is estimated that the school will be requesting a 6.1% increase in their budget. The tuition rate for Mohawk students will rise by approximately $1,000 per student, and there is a staff member retiring this year, requiring a buyout of leave. The proposed budget does not reflect any school choice

moneys yet, though. There is also a question of insurance affecting the school budget, since it hasn't been included in that line in years past.

Assessors: There is a large increase in the Assessors' office, which is primarily due to an increase in software fees.

Goals: The Committee would like to spend some quality time trying to line out our goals in the coming years.

Letter: A letter was approved in response to Sharon Hudson's letter to the Finance Committee.

Next Meeting: The Finance Committee will meet on December 13th at 6:30 P.M.

Adjourn: A motion was made by Ms. Dionne and seconded by Mr. McLatchy to adjourn. The vote was unanimous in favor, and the meeting was closed at 8:23 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,
Paul McLatchy III, Secretary

Approved on: 12/13/17

Wayne A Zavotka
Wayne Zavotka, Chairman

Paul McLatchy III, Secretary

Loretta Dionne, Member

Attachments:

1. Agenda
2. Updated Spreadsheet on Finance Committee Eligibilities
3. Proposal to Change Finance Committee Bylaw
4. School Budget Email
5. School Contract Regarding Retirement Benefits
6. Two Draft Letters to Sharon Hudson

Rowe Finance Committee
Agenda for November 29, 2017; 6:30 pm
Rowe Town Hall

1. Call to Order
2. Additions/Corrections to Agenda
3. Secretary's Minutes
4. Old Business
    - Discussion and action regarding additional finance committee member(s)
    - Discussion of Eligibility Requirements
5. New Business
    - Review of Budget submissions and any process corrections
    - Committee Goal Discussion

6. Audience of Citizens
7. Call for Adjournment

*The listing of matters are those reasonably anticipated by the Chair which **may** be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed **may** in fact be discussed, and other items not listed **may** also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.*

Town	County	Population	Number of Members	Elected or Appointed	Any restrictions on serving in another role that is... Appointed	Elected	Employee	Notes
Bernardston	**Franklin**	**2,129**	**5**	**Appointed**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**"No officers or employees of the Town shall be eligible to serve on said committee"**
Chesterfield	**Hampshire**	**1,222**	**7**	**Appointed**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No restrictions.**
Hinsdale	**Berkshire**	**2,032**	**9**	**Elected**	**No**	**No**	**Yes**	**Members who serve on another board/committee must recuse themselves on matters pertaining to that committee.**
Plainfield	**Hampshire**	**648**	**Varies**	**Appointed**	**Some?**	**Some?**	**Some?**	**Members cannot serve on another board unless they are non-voting members of that board, or that board expends less than 1% of the annual budget. Town Meeting can override this. (Wording is a bit confusing)**
Windsor	**Berkshire**	**899**	**5**	**Elected**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**Bylaws have no restrictions.**

Restrictions?	Appointed	Elected	Employee
Yes	4	9	8
No	25	20	22
Some	5	5	4

Towns with no restrictions <u>at all</u>- 19

Towns with restrictions on <u>all</u> other offices- 3

Original:

In accordance with Section 16 of Chapter 39 of the General Laws there shall be a Finance Committee consisting of five members which shall consider all municipal questions relating to appropriations and may consider any municipal question for the purpose of making reports and recommendations to the Town. This committee shall submit its recommendations and report to each town meeting, annual or special. Two members of said committee shall be elected on each of two consecutive years and one on the third year by ballot at each annual town election. No person holding any other elective town office and no employee of the Town earning more than $2,500 per year shall be eligible to serve on said committee. The Finance Committee shall have the powers and duties delegated to it by said Section 16 and other applicable laws including the duty of submitting a budget for the Omnibus article at the annual Town Meeting and such recommendations shall be printed on the annual Town Meeting warrant.

Proposed:

In accordance with Section 16 of Chapter 39 of the General Laws there shall be a Finance Committee consisting of five members which shall consider all municipal questions relating to appropriations and may consider any municipal question for the purpose of making reports and recommendations to the Town. This committee shall submit its recommendations and report to each town meeting, annual or special. Two members of said committee shall be elected on each of two consecutive years and one on the third year by ballot at each annual town election. **No member of the Board of Selectmen or the School Committee shall be eligible to serve on said committee. Members of the Finance Committee holding other town offices or positions must recuse themselves on all matters pertaining to that department.** The Finance Committee shall have the powers and duties delegated to it by said Section 16 and other applicable laws including the duty of submitting a budget for the Omnibus article at the annual Town Meeting and such recommendations shall be printed on the annual Town Meeting warrant.

Re: Budget

This is a very first draft and should not be considered a reasonable expectation. Many variables yet to come. - Wayne

Jon Lev <jlev@nbsunion.com>

Fri 11/17/2017 11:55 AM

To:Wayne Zavotka <wzavotka@hotmail.com>;

Hi Wayne-

Carrie and I met with Bill yesterday. We got a preliminary budget put together this morning. $1,740,767 is the figure we have. FY18 is $1,640,064 so the differnce is $100,703 or 5.7% increase. We used a 9% insurance increase in the figures. Mohawk tuition looks to go up about $1,000 per student or +38,373 from this year with 5 7th graders going over next year. Also we have a teacher retiring this year and it will cost about $16,000 in severance pay. It looks like we will have a teacher retiring each of the next 3 years. The good news is that this budget has not used any choice money at this point.
So there you have the first numbers from the school. Let me know any questions etc. that anyone has and whatever else you may need from me.

A very happy Thanksgiving to you and your family------Jon

On Wed, Nov 15, 2017 at 7:48 PM, Wayne Zavotka <wzavotka@hotmail.com> wrote:

Hi Jon,

First, let me say, we do not have a % to offer as to where we would like the school budget to comply. We did recommend a 2% increase for Rowe town employees.

The BOS and FinCom are working with a different paradigm this year (how's that for sophistication). We are asking Boards/Committees to provide a budget that best reflects their reality of need, rather than comply with our recommendation. Obviously, if expected town income is significantly different from forecasted expenses, that will need to be addressed.

I discussed your email tonight with FinCom and the chair of BOS. We would like to say this, we do not want to force an inappropriate budget ffor the sake of early submission. However, a best guess figure with what you know now will help us have a sense of the total picture. (For example, agreed upon staff contracts?) Also, if you know of major changes coming in your budget, that would be helpful.

Let me be very clear: FinCom considers this a process. What you would submit now is not considered your final budget. Changes will be expected as the school gains clarity - I'm guessing after the first of the year.

I hope this helps. Let me know.

Wayne

From: Jon Lev <jlev@nbsunion.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 15, 2017 12:15:24 PM
To: Wayne Zavotka
Subject: Budget

Hi Wayne-

Hope all is well with you and family. Carrie and I are meeting with Bill tomorrow to look at FY19 budget. This of course means looking at FY17 and FY18 so far also. I wanted to check with you to see how much detail at this time of year you and the finance committee are looking for from the school. Do you have any idea of where you are thinking you all would like the school budget to come in? It really can save some time and energy to have a ball park to be shooting for.
Anyways any help or idea of what you are looking for at this time would help, but if you want something different from us right now, just let me know.

thanks and I am not trying to be difficult in any way. It is just a little early to be in full FY19 budget mode. Jon

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Jon Lev, Superintendent
North Berkshire School Union
98 Church St.
North Adams, MA. 01247
413-664-9292

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98 Church St.
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413-664-9292

C. Head Teacher The School Committee will annually appoint one of the teachers to serve as the Head Teacher. The teacher so appointed as Head Teacher will assume the duties and responsibilities of the Principal whenever the Principal is absent. The Head Teacher will be paid an annual stipend as listed in Appendix A.

D. Retirement Benefit A Teacher, who retires from the service of the Committee, after twenty (20) or more years of service to the Committee in the Rowe Elementary School shall be paid a retirement bonus in addition to his/her salary for the last year of service to the Committee.

The retirement bonus shall be in an amount equal to the product of the retiring teacher's per-diem rate of pay multiplied by a factor. For purposes of this section, "per-diem rate of pay" means the teacher's annual salary divided by 184 work days (whether or not the employee actually works 184 days). The factor shall be the product obtained by multiplying the total number of "years of service" (computed in conformity with the provisions of this article) by the value of one and one-half (1.5). One half (1/2) of the retirement bonus shall be paid to the retired teacher not later than two (2) months following the date of retirement. The other one half (1/2) of the retirement bonus shall be paid to the retired teacher not later than twelve (12) months after the first payment.

For the purpose of this article, "retirement" shall mean resignation from the service of the Committee and eligibility for retirement benefits from the Massachusetts Teacher Retirement Board.

The provisions of this article define the calculation and payment of a retirement bonus to be paid and reported separately from regular salary payments and statements. The retirement bonus is not to be construed as affecting the retirement benefits paid by the Massachusetts Teachers Retirement Board.

ARTICLE 7
GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

A. Definition

1. A "grievance" is a claim based upon an event or condition which involves the interpretation, meaning, or application of any of the provisions of this agreement.

2. An "aggrieved teacher" is the person or persons making the claim.

3. A "party in interest" is the person or persons making the claim and any person who might be required to take action or against whom might be taken in order to resolve the claim.

B. Purpose

1. The purpose of this procedure is to secure, at the lowest possible administrative level, equitable solutions to the problem which may from time to time arise affecting the welfare or working conditions of teachers. Both parties agree that these proceedings will be kept as informal and confidential as may be appropriate at

from reporting for work and performing his/her duties. The administration may require a teacher to provide a physician's certificate after the teacher has used three (3) consecutive days of sick leave, if there is a pattern of sick leave use, if abuse of sick leave is suspected, or in accordance with the F.M.L.A. of 1993. In the event of a pattern of sick leave use and/or if abuse of sick leave is suspected, the administrator shall give prior notice to the teacher that a physician's certificate would be required upon any further use of sick leave.

D. Full time and part time teachers who are employed for a work year of less than one hundred eighty four (184) work days shall be entitled to and granted sick leave in proportion to the time they are employed and compensated.

E. Sick Leave shall be paid at the rate of the teacher's per diem rate of pay under his/her personal employment contract, irrespective of the full-time or part-time employment status of the teacher. Accumulations of sick leave of teachers who change from full-time to part-time status (or vice versa) or who otherwise change in the pro-rated basis of part-time status shall not be increased or decreased as a result of such changes.

F. Notwithstanding the limitations set forth in Section C of this Article (above), the Committee authorizes teachers to use up to twenty-five (25) of their sick leave days per school year (see Section A above) in instances of family emergency, but only with prior approval of the Principal or his/her designee. Family emergency shall mean an illness or injury to a member of the teacher's immediate family, as defined in the F.M.L.A. of 1993, which requires the absence of the teacher from school in order to provide necessary care to the afflicted family member.

G. A teacher who retires, is laid off, including the closing of School after ten (10) years of service, defined in Article 6, Section D., including approved leaves of absence, shall receive fifteen percent (15%) on all accumulated sick leave at the Teacher's then current rate of pay. A teacher who terminates his/her employment by choice after ten (10) years of service, including approved leaves of absence, shall receive ten percent (10%) on all accumulated sick leave at the Teacher's then current rate of pay. A teacher who is terminated for cause or is hired on or after August 15, 2014 shall not be entitled to the above accumulated sick leave payment.

ARTICLE 19
SICK LEAVE DONATION

Sick leave may be transferred from one teacher to another teacher provided:

(a) To qualify for extended sick leave the recipient must have completed three (3) full years of employment by the Rowe Elementary School.
(b) The recipient must have exhausted his/her own sick leave.
(c) The recipient must have been absent due to personal illness for at least ten (10) consecutive workdays.
(d) The recipient can only receive one week, five (5) days of transferred sick leave per completed years of service not to exceed one full year of paid extended leave for each illness.

*Insert Town Letterhead Here

Sharon Hudson
15 Newell Cross Road
Rowe, MA 01367

November 15, 2017

Dear Mrs. Hudson,

We are writing to you to acknowledge that we have received your letter regarding town finances. We appreciate the energy and research you put into composing this letter, and it is encouraging to see that our townspeople continue to scrutinize and review the finances of our community. In your letter, you raise a number of interesting and discussion-worthy points.

Due to the scope of your concerns, the Finance Committee is unable to give a detailed and responsible answer at this time. During our budget season, we will continue to review and discuss the matters you raised in your letter. The annual budget is an enormous project that requires many individuals with many viewpoints.

We hope to send you a more detailed response in the coming months after these matters have been discussed with the appropriate departments and elected officials. In the meantime, our minutes are available for your review to keep you updated on the workings of our committee, and we encourage you to continue asking questions during our budgeting process.

Sincerely,

The Rowe Finance Committee

_____
Wayne Zavotka, Chairman

_____
Paul McLatchy III, Secretary

_____
Loretta Dionne, Member

*Insert Town Letterhead Here

Sharon Hudson
15 Newell Cross Road
Rowe, MA 01367

November 15, 2017

Dear Mrs. Hudson,

We are writing to you to acknowledge that we have received your letter regarding town finances, and will take it under consideration during the upcoming budget season.

Sincerely,

The Rowe Finance Committee

_____
Wayne Zavotka, Chairman

_____
Paul McLatchy III, Secretary

_____
Loretta Dionne, Member