

Minutes of the Meeting of the Heath Finance Committee
December 10, 2013

Time: 7:03 pm

Place: Senior Center, Community Hall

Present: Don Freeman, Gloria Fisher, Ned Wolf, and after 8:15 Kara Leistyna, Sheila Litchfield,
Brian DeVriese, Bill Lattrell, Tracey Baronas, and David Howland

Copies of the following documents were available:

- Agenda (Don)
- Minutes of the October 7th meeting (Jeff)
- Minutes of the November 5th meeting (Ned)
- Minutes of the December 3rd meeting (Ned)
- Summary of Recommendations as Listed in Management Letter (Kara)

Members read the minutes of the October 7th meeting. Gloria moved that they be approved as amended. The motion passed with Ned, who was absent, abstaining. Members read the minutes of the November 5th meeting. Gloria moved to accept the minutes as presented. Ned seconded. The motion passed with Don, who was absent, abstaining. The minutes of the December 3rd meeting were read. Don moved and Gloria seconded that they be approved as amended. The motion passed unanimously.

Members discussed stipends. There was a consensus that in comparisons with other towns Heath's stipends are not far off and that there is no formula for determining stipends. Members considered recommending no changes to the Selectboard.

The discussion turned to the 'Summary of Recommendations as Listed in Management' resulting from the audit. Members examined 2 – 18. At 8:15 Gloria moved that the committee go upstairs to join the Selectboard meeting in progress and adjourn when our review of the audit recommendations is done. Don seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Regarding Recommendation #1 to develop a written Fraud Policy, the committees agreed that it had been done. The committees agreed to establish a Limited Internal Audit Process (#2) subject to consultation with Tracey. Kara will e-mail a copy of the policy. The committees agreed that the Treasurer should establish a Townwide cash handling policy (#3) subject to consultation with Kris. The committees agreed that given the FDIC and DIF the development of an investment and deposit policy (#4) is a nonissue. The committees agreed that "Treasurer should secure support for cash balances and review interest rates for each bank account" (#5) is a nonissue. The committees agreed that "Treasurer should review and update authorized signers on bank accounts" (#6) is a good idea. The committees noted that researching parcels with unknown ownership on outstanding tax listing (#7) is a process in which Kris has been engaged. Members may talk with Kris about relevant state laws. The committees agreed that investigating stale checks and determining appropriate actions (#8) is a good idea.

The committees agreed that “Treasurer and Collector should become more active in state professional association” (#9) should be left to them. The committees agreed that “Collector’s process for tax bills could be modernized” (#10) should be left to Betty’s discretion. Tracey said that by state law the Town cannot send tax bills electronically but can receive payments electronically. The committees agreed that the Collector should have a “strong safe” for cash security (#11). Steps have been taken to make that happen. The committees noted that “Town should consider establishing backup personnel for Treasurer and Collector positions” (#12) has been done. The assistant collector lives in Ware, MA. Betty and Kris serve as backup for each other. The committees noted that “Town should consider adopting a Revolving Fund for Transfer Station costs” (#13) has already been done. The committees agreed that “Town should consider improving building security” (#14) is something that should be considered. The committees agreed that creating a Financial Management Team with regular meetings (#15) has been done. The committees agreed that “Town should inventory fixed assets and develop policies to manage them” (#16) needs attention. A list of fixed assets is part of the insurance policy. Existing policy may need to be written down. For example, “Don’t take anything home that doesn’t belong to you”. Members discussed “Town should establish policies to manage procurements that fall outside the purview of FRCOG procurement process” (#17). In an emergency there are limited sources of help in this part of the state. Towns want to be the first. Tracey has provided a procurement form that can be forwarded to the Finance Committee through Kara. The committees noted that “Finance Committee should determine a prudent reserve ratio and accompanying guidelines to maintain the ratio” (#19) has been done. The aim is to maintain a Stabilization Fund that is 10% of the budget. The committees agreed that “Town should determine and implement any necessary financial management policies utilizing recommended DOR financial management practices” (#20) is a matter to investigate. Finally, the committees agreed that “Town should establish a means that ensures proper processes are followed with regard to emergency procurements” (#21) is part of (#17) discussed above.

Before the Finance Committee adjourned Dave Howland presented the Selectboard with a proposal to establish the Heath Veterans’ Memorial Fund. The Selectboard voted unanimously to establish the fund.

The Finance Committee adjourned at 8:42 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Ned Wolf, Secretary