January 22nd, 2018 Minutes

219 Massapoag Avenue, Sharon, MA

**Present:** Patricia-Lee Achorn, Anja Bernier, William Brack, Ira Miller, Alexander Korin, Edward Phillips, Arnold Cohen, Gordon Gladstone, Charles Goodman, Daniel Lewenberg and Hanna Switlekowski.

1. **School Committee Program and Budget Plans – Dr. Greer and School Committee Members**

Dr. Greer, Superintendent of Sharon Schools, discussed the school’s budgeting plans.

* Input will be gathered from the community prior to building the budget.
* Discussions include priorities of FY19 and enrollment increases.
* Enrollment is increasing, between 100-125 in the elementary school alone.
* Questions she is asking include: how are they sustaining programs? What do we need as far as staffing? Are they able to sustain programs at the same level? What is the most efficient plan for us going forward?
* Every part of the budget is being looked at for effectiveness and efficiency.
* Their six standards of school effectiveness include leadership and governess, curriculum and instruction, human resources and professional development, student support and financial and asset management.
* Dr. Greer has come to the Priorities Committee with the budget forecast.
* 5.47% is needed to balance the school’s budget.
* Priorities Committee needs the budget down to 2.51%.
* There was a decrease in circuit breaker and special education funding through the state this year of approximately $600,000- $700,000.
* There will be a larger cut this year primarily due to their enrollment projections being substantial.
* Budget forum was held on January 17th, 2018.
* An open budget forum will be held on February 7th, 2018.
* The draft budget will be due on February 28th, 2018.

1. **FY 18 Second Quarter Financial Review – Krishan Gupta**

Krishan Gupta, Finance Director, reviewed FY18’s second quarter finances.

* There are no significant shortages.
* Next week Krishan Gupta and Fred Turkington will meet with OPEB.
* Krishan Gupta and Peter Cook are discussing the rate changes in FY19 currently.
* Peter Cook will retire in April.

1. **Final review and vote on board assignments to FinCom and BOS/Review Sector Budgets**

Patricia-Lee Achorn, discussed the changes in board assignments to both the Finance Committee and Board of Selectman.

* ZBA and Lake Management have no rejection to the change.
* Conservation has not reached out in either for or against the changes.
* The Board of Selectman voted in favor.
* Changes would include the Finance Committee gaining the library and the Board of Selectman gaining ZBA, Lake Management and Conservation Commission.

**MOTION:** by Hanna Switlekowski to move the library into the Finance Committee’s budget and move ZBA, Lake Management and Conservation Commission to the Board of Selectman’s budget **SECONDED:** by Alexander Korin **VOTED:** 9-1-1. Charles Goodman voted against this change. Arnold Cohen abstained.

1. **Update on Recreational Marijuana Planning Process – Anja Bernier (Fred Turkington will discuss legal issues with draft Articles)**

Anja Bernier, Finance Committee member, presented an update on the recreational marijuana planning process.

* By March 15th, 2018 the Cannabis Control Commission will issue its final regulations.
* The state’s position currently is that if a town already had, prior to July 1, 2017, permitted a medical dispensary then that town has no means to block the same company from converting to selling recreational marijuana.
* 4 Daughters Compassionate Care plans to expand to recreational.
* The permits going forward will have to follow the same zoning laws prior.
* Legal cannabis is currently the fastest growing industry currently in the United States.
* 2017 is the first time cannabis support has become a bipartisan issue among US voters. 64% of all Americans now support the legalization of marijuana (72% of Democrats, 67% of Independents, 51% of Republicans)
* Commissioner C. Harding estimates total marijuana tax income to the state of Massachusetts during the first year of recreational dispensaries being open to the public, at $44-82 million (at 17% of revenues; these numbers exclude tax and fee income to municipalities).
* From sales tax alone, there will be an estimated $40 million dollars for municipalities, once dispensaries have ramped up sales over the first 3-4 years. (Community Impact fees double that number).
* Total estimated revenues of recreational dispensaries (about 3-4 years after launch) within approximately 25 miles of Sharon is $595 million dollars.
* Suggested projects for Police and Fire financed by Community Impact fees include drug recognition training, a substance abuse officer, brochures/flyers, ID checker machine, police detail of the store for the first three months and a police canine.
* Suggested projects for the schools financed by Community Impact fees include cameras for all campuses, school resource officer, detection devices, two additional health teachers, additional school nurse, canine dog sweeps, YRBS, life skills student guides, nasal naloxone atomizers and supplies for lessons on drug and alcohol education.

Meetings held include the following:

* 2 meetings with members of the Police & Fire Departments (including both chiefs)
* 1 meeting with Dr. Greer, Superintendent of Schools
* 1 meeting with Dr. Greer, Superintendent of Schools and all her direct staff (including all school principles)
* 2 meetings and several calls and emails with 4 Daughters Compassionate Care
* 1 meeting with chair of Board of Health and Town Health Administrator
* 1 meeting with Kacy Maitland and Richard Murphy from SSPARC scheduled for January 30th, 2018
* 1 meeting with School Committee in the process of being scheduled (likely February 28th, 2018)
* 1 meeting and multiple emails with members of Sharon Cares

\*Refer to the Recreational Marijuana Planning Process PowerPoint located in the Finance Committee section on the Town of Sharon website for further information.

1. **Documents circulated since last meeting**

**- AFTC Finance Committee Handbook**

* A handout was provided with guidelines for the Finance Committee to review.

**- Mark Mazur email regarding home based business**

* 85- 90% of personal property that is taxable are utilities such as wires and poles.

**- Conflict of Interest & State Ethics Law**

* The Finance Committee members are mandated as municipal employees to take a conflict of interest/ethics test every two years and maintain their certificate. The Open Meeting Law document must be signed yearly as well.

**- Concerns and Questions re Recreational Marijuana – Connie Dai**

* Connie Dai is working with members of the community that are concerned with the new marijuana laws. Her questions are around what the estimated tax revenue will be.

**- Annual Town Meeting Schedule – Planning Board**

* Recommendations were provided in order to meet warrant deadlines.

**- ATM Warrant Open – closes January 23rd 4:30pm**

* The warrant closes on January 23rd, 2018 at 4:30 pm.

**- Section 3 of Chapter 94G of the Massachusetts General Laws**

* A document was provided containing information on blocking recreational marijuana.

**- Guidance for FinCom Email**

* Guidance regarding emailing with Open Meeting laws was provided.

**- Sharon Public Schools Budget Process & Priorities**

* Dr. Greer emailed the Finance Committee regarding her presentation for today’s meeting.

1. **Vote outstanding minutes: November 20th**

**MOTION:** by Gordon Gladstone to approve the November 20th, 2017 minutes **SECONDED:** by Alexander Korin **VOTED:** 11-0-0.

1. **Topics not reasonably anticipated by the chair in 48 hours**

Write ups are due by April 11th, 2018 and the Finance Committee needs to complete them the prior week.

The Finance Committee will meet after the tri-board meeting on January 29th, 2018.

1. **Adjournment**

**MOTION:** by Gordon Gladstone to adjourn **SECONDED:** by Hanna Switlekowski **VOTED:** 11-0-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:40 pm.