**Oakham, MA. Finance Committee (FinCom) Meeting**

**1/7/2021 of Meeting Minutes**

The meeting was opened by FC chairman Paul Rochette at 7:07pm. FC members Clare Hendra, Alan Flagg are in attendance along with BOS member Lucy Tesnau, and Samantha Bodine, Library Director.

FinCom Chair Paul Rochette provides an update on the status of the towns Police Cruisers. The new cruiser approved at the STM will arrive in about a week. Unfortunately, the newer of the two existing cruisers, (which was leased) was totaled in a recent accident. After careful review and vehicle inspection the decision was made to move the drive line (26,000 miles) from the newer totaled cruiser into the older silver cruiser. This will result in the town continuing to have two cruisers once the new one arrives.

FinCom Chair asks if any member has received new correspondence or inquiries directed to the FinCom. Members had no new materials to add to the agenda.

Clare Hendra presents an analysis of the FY2021 budget vs FY2021 YTD spending. This is reviewed and discussed. From this reconciliation it appears some department budgets may have had funds rolled forward from the prior year. A question is raised on how the town approves budget funds being rolled forward. BOS Lucy Tesnau comments it can be a challenging process to roll funds from one year to the next as a departments unspent budget normally goes back into the town funds. She was not aware of any BOS approvals to roll funds forward. As an action item Clare Hendra will review with Town Accountant and report back at the next meeting. Clare H advised that where she found a discrepancy, she made note and asks the other members to make an action item to review the complete analysis.

FinCom Chair thanks Samantha Bodine, Library Director for attending the meeting. In presenting the Library budget Samantha starts by speaking to the role the Library has in the town of Oakham. She has spent some time comparing services offered by the Oakham Library to those of the surrounding towns for March 2020 – Dec 2020. The Oakham Library service levels significantly exceed those of the surrounding towns. She makes the point that this level of service, supported by the budget being requested is all in direct response to specific needs expressed by the community. The town’s residents determine what happens at the Library. There is a strong emphasis on free internet in the library along with printing copying and faxing for many town residents. This type service is key for those that do not have it available at home. The afterschool program, story time, homebound delivery and other programs demonstrate the Library is trying to be the solution for many town folks’ needs. Point is made that this level of service is the justification for the requested budget increase. Samantha explains the FY2022 $82,898.00 budget request for the Library keeps day to day operations going, covering wages, the building, technology, and lending materials. Various grants they work to secure help fund the additional services offered by the Library. These grants include funds from the GWCF (Greater Worcester Community Fund), The Crombie Trust, Friends of the Library, and others.

FinCom agrees the library operation under Samantha has been excellent and we proceed to discuss line items in the budget including wages, building maintenance, lending material budgets, and electricity. FinCom supports the effort to always have 2 staff on duty and we want to work to assist the library to achieve this goal. Samantha updates the FinCom on the approx. $3,000 the Library gets in state aid and a discussion is held on how this is handled on the town books. We also discuss the significant benefit of having a certified Library in the town and to be part of the lending program.

After completion of the Library review the FinCom notes we do not yet have budget submissions from all departments**.** Action itemto follow up with the Town Accountant on the status. Chairmen adds we had a resignation from Parks & Rec so we should level fund at this time as a budget will likely not be submitted. Clare Hendra asks if there should be a budget from the Planning Board as she has not seen one. She will research this item.

Lucy Tesnau advised the town has received a $50,000 Software Grant that will be used to upgrade all accounting, treasury and assessor software, as well as provide training on the new software.

Motion made to approve the FinCom meeting minutes from Nov 6, 13, and 17 as we did not meet in Dec. Minutes approved.

Meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm.