

MONTAGUE FINANCE COMMITTEE
Final Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, December 8, 2021

This meeting is being held remotely as well as recorded: <https://vimeo.com/654768663>

PRESENT: Jen Audley, Chair; Greg Garrison, Vice-Chair; Fred Bowman, Jennifer Waryas, John Hanold, Francia Wisnewski and Chris Menegoni, members; Carolyn Olsen, Town Accountant; Jeff Singleton, town member and BettyLou Mallet, Scribe.

1. The meeting was called to order by the Chair, Jen Audley at 6:00 p.m. The meeting is recorded by MCTV as well as Carolyn Olsen, Town Accountant. All members present.
2. The minutes of November 17, 2021 were received and reviewed by all members. **On a motion by JH and seconded by FB, the Committee had no discussion and therefore voted to approve. FB aye; GG, aye; JH, aye; JW, aye; CM, aye; FW, aye; JA, aye. Approved unanimously.**
3. Overview of the educational-related topics:
 - Preliminary FY23 Affordable Assessment calculations for the GMRSD – CO presented the FY23 Affordable Assessment Calculation on the screen for all members to review. Calculations show a 2.65% increase at this point for FY23; State aid is most vulnerable to change. This agreement has been quite helpful and for the time being, there is a clear agreement and understanding where the school has been building their budget with the 2.65% increase.
 - GMRSD and FCTS FY23 budget development timeline (handout) - The Gill-Montague and Tech School budget timelines are earlier than the town's timeline, in that they are due by the end of March rather than in May. G-M's budget hearing is scheduled for February 8 and FCTS's budget hearing is February 9, 2021. The School Committees' meet in March (3/8 and 3/9) to discuss the budgets and vote. JA asked the FinCom their thoughts on meeting dates with the schools and the process of discussing the FY23 budgets. One thought is to have both committees scheduled for the same day or have two different meetings. The Tech budget meeting needs to be scheduled soon as they have 19 different town meetings. The members shared their mixed thoughts on having one or two meetings. JA also suggested that the FinCom meet at each GMRSD budget hearing which will possibly bring more participation and if additional questions arise after the hearing, there would be ample time to schedule a separate meeting. JA will explore the options and discussion will continue at next meeting.
 - Chapter 70 State Aid funding – Jeff Singleton spoke with the FinCom on Chapter 70 aid and how he feels it should be integrated into the budget process. He has met with Joanne Blier and reviewed the formula several times. His thought is to coordinate with Joanne Blier and to discuss again with the FinCom when the Governor has released his budget. The FinCom encourages a future discussion.
4. Discussion of FY23 budget requests from the FinCom – (handouts)

The FinCom has two budget requests to make for FY23. Dept. 132 – Reserve Fund was discussed. The Total Reserve Fund is \$60,000. This fund is overseen for emergencies and is a level-funded budget. The Committee stated there is no reason to increase or decrease the final figure for the account. It is used for unforeseen and unanticipated needs.

Dept. 131 – Finance Committee Expenditure's final amount is \$2,000 for this level-serviced budget. The increase shown is for the cost of a scribe to produce the minutes calculated at 32 meetings @ \$15/hr for 3 hours each meeting. BettyLou Mallet, Scribe told the Committee that she felt it would average out to be approximately 3 hours each meeting and the budgeted amount of time is accurate. **The Committee voted to submit the budget requests as submitted. On a motion by JH and seconded by FB, FB, aye; JH, aye; GG, aye; CM, aye; FB, aye, JW, aye and JA, aye. Vote passed.**

5. Agenda requests and topics for upcoming meetings – The next meeting is December 15, 2021 where the committee should receive all budgets and can map out a calendar for the upcoming budget meetings. The committee also would like to continue working on the Reserve Policy A-5.

On a motion by GG and seconded by JH, the Committee agreed to adjourn as there was no further discussion. JW, aye; CM, aye; GG, aye; FW, aye; JH, aye; FB, aye; JA, aye. The meeting adjourned at 7:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

BettyLou Mallet
Scribe

Voted by FinCom: 12/15/2021