Town of Washington

**Board of Finance**

***March 20, 2017***

Present: Members: Michael Jackson Jack Boyer, Barbara Brown, Liddy Adams,

Alternates: Keith Templeton, Phyllis Allen

Selectmen: David Werkhoven

Treasurer: Linda McGarr

Chairman Michael Jackson called the meeting to order at 4:58 p.m.

**Minutes:** Minutes unanimously approved

**Tax Collector Report:** Question by Michael Jackson if the percentage of collection is about the same at this time last year. Per Tax Collector it is a little better this year at this time.

**Treasurer Report:** No Comments

**Selectman:** Per selectman Dave Werkhoven a few things

* Winter Maintenance - salt line item will be over
* Selectmen have been working on the budget and would like to set date for presentation of budget – April 3, 2017 At 5:00 in Selectmen’s Office
* Part of the budget request this year from the Fire Department is to set aside $100,000 a year for a new ladder truck in 2030 for 1.3 million. The selectman proposed the question to the Board of Finance if saving each year or bonding in the year 2030 would be best. The finance board would prefer not to bond. Something to think about. The Fire Department has been requested to come to the Special Meeting on April 3rd at 5:30.

**Financial Reports**: No Comments Financial look good.

**Education: Valerie Anderson presented the proposed Superintendent’s budget.**

* 0 percent increase in school budget
* Budget is 21,361,446 which is down 2 dollars from the 2016 -2017 budget
* Town of Washington’s portion goes from 48.54% down to 46.73%
* Washington’s budget distribution is $9,866.884 which is down from 2016-2017 by $328,007
* WPS will have 105 children – one section per grade
* Booth will have 79 children – one section per grade
* Bridgewater will have 39 children – K-2nd will be a one class, 3rd-4th will be a class, 5th will be one class
* Shepaug Middle High will have 416 for next year
* There will be teacher cuts
* Most of the budget is staff and busses.
* 130,000 to transport students to private schools
* If the towns ever wanted to dissolve the region all towns would have to agree.
* The Capital expenditures will be coming out of the 1% fund that was set up not the operational budget.
* There is only Professional services in the budget for the Ag-Stem Program

**Ag-Stem**

* Still waiting on the state. Everything is done on the “right sizing” per the request of Department of Administrative Services in Hartford. They are in a holding pattern until approximately March 27th
* If it goes out with the recommendation from the state committee then we move forward. If it does not leave committee then we are done.
* The debt request will be 6 million less
* The Ag stem program will not change the proposed budget. It will have its own budget that was already approved through the referendum that approved the Ag Stem project. It will be a building committee process with Bob Giesen. He will issue bond anticipated notes and go to the market for bond as there is progress on the project.
* The Finance Board is still concerned about the “Claw Back”
* 139 student will be at start up
* It is about $10,000 per student that the region will receive.
* The project has been downsized and is using parts of facility they already have.
* Per Liddy Adams – She has heard concerns that the public is not sure about all the expenditures. Is it possible to let the public know what and why the funds are being spent? They seem like they are not getting the whole budget.
* The Board of Education’s Finance Committee will let everyone know what they have, where it’s going, and what they will be doing.
* The question on another referendum came up. The legal opinion is; if there is another referendum it will have no impact on the original borrowing referendum. Legally the original referendum stands. The referendum voted in November is binding because it was not an advisory referendum.

Michael Jackson spoke to Jim Hirschfield about the Board of Finance drafting a letter stating that they are not taking a position on the Ag Stem but has a responsibility to let the taxpayers know the extent of the obligation undertaking and what would happen in the event of a “Claw Back’. If the school fails the towns will be liable to have to pay back the prorated funds to the state. Will make a decision after the March 27th to send the letter.

**Old Business:** None

**New Business:** The Date for Special Meeting April 3, 2017 at 5:00 for Presentation of the Selectmen’s Budget to the Board of Finance

**A motion to adjourn at 5:53 by Phyllis Allen and seconded by Liddy Adams unanimously approved.**

**Next Meeting: April 17, 2017**

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Kennedy Gomez Financial Administrator