

North Brookfield Finance Committee
Minutes of Meeting
November 8 , 2023
NB Senior Center

Meeting Opened at 6:02

Present: Joe Trentacosta, Chairman; Kathy Crevier; Bob Locatelli, Chet Lubelczyk;
Vaughn Schlegel

Absent: Karen Hubacz, Alternate

Also Present: Shiela LeBlanc, Town Accountant; Tara Hayes, Town Clerk

November 2nd Minutes approved as presented: Motion to accept by Chet, 2nd by
Vaughn

Fire Chief's vehicle is running better than ever, and he will not be requesting money
from FinCom, as he has funds

Liaison appointments:

School - Bob, Joe

Fire, Highway - Chet

Police - Vaughn, Karen

Library, Assessors, Collector, Treasurer Kathy

Town Clerk, Accountant, Sewer, COA - Joe

Water- Vaughn

Board of Health- Bob

Brief discuss on School Regionalization:

School Committee is taking the lead in this endeavor

Comments we are hearing are that West Brookfield does not want us.

BOS wants to see the benefits of us going to Quaboag

Shiela provided info regarding student enrollment in the North Brookfield School System

PK - 12408 K - 12380

This is not sustainable

Shiela reported that a memo will be sent to all departments stating that next year's
budget must be Level Funded, except for contractual raises.

Joe reported on his recent meeting of the Mass. Finance Committee

How to get taxpayers involved?

Only 15% of taxpayers attend Town Meetings

Up to FinCom to generate interest to attend.....

Joe provided a Discussion Memo regarding the 2025 Budget Consideration which we
spent considerable time reviewing and were able to provide recommendations:

Downsize town services; Where?

Reduce operating hours of the Library and Senior Center

Regionalize Services:
Fire/Police/Highway
(discussion on Fire response to every call received, including to Police...)
2025 Budget Consideration - con'd

Sale of Town Properties
Not just land

School
Joe and Bob to meet with Tim McCormick, School Superintendent, to discuss budget

Overall percentage reduction
All departments downsize

25% Tax - VOLUNTARILY - on Non-Profits
Examples:
Churches
Camp Atwater
Valley View School
We need listing of exempt properties

Employee Benefits Review
Employee Handbook needs to be reviewed/revise
Health Insurance -Teacher percentage of premium- 25%
Town percentage of premium - 75%

All other Town Employees - 30%
Town percentage - 70%

Also discussed the need for department heads to show accountability for absence from work - Sick Time, Personal Time, Vacation employees'

Real Estate Transfer Tax on the sale of all property
3% Local Option Tax
Difficult to collect
Impossible to audit

Grants - Grant Coordinator/Town Administrator
There are MANY grants available; we need person who is capable of seeking out and applying for these grants
Would this be in addition to Town Administrator or part of Administrator's responsibilities
Meet next Tuesday, November 14th, with BOS.

Voted to adjourn @ 7:45. Motion made by Bob and 2nd by Kathy.

Kathleen E. Crevier,
Secretary

