

**Committee on Appropriations  
Minutes for May 5, 2015**

*Meeting called to order at 7 pm*

Present: Geoff Grove, Chair; Peter Dennehy; Melissa Horne; Peter Clifford. Chad Mollica arrived at 7:20.

Minutes Approved:

March 24: Peter D. moved / Melissa seconded / All in Favor  
March 31: Peter D. moved / Melissa seconded / All in Favor  
April 7: Melissa moved / Peter D. seconded / All in Favor  
April 14: Peter D. moved / Geoff seconded / All in Favor (Peter C. Abstained)  
April 16: Peter D. moved / Geoff seconded / All in Favor (Peter C. Abstained)  
April 21: Peter C. moved / Peter D. seconded / All in Favor

The group first reviewed the budget presentation and edited to incorporate suggestions and corrections from Finance Director Kathy Raposa. Geoff will confirm whether, on Page 8, the descriptor for unexpended funds should be *operating* or *capital*. He will also obtain the numbers and details to update slide five.

The group then moved on to incorporate changes suggested by COA members:

Chad made suggestions for changes to the introductions. Peter C. suggested that one of the first talking points should be the fact that tax burden will not be shared equally by property owners. Chad encouraged that a statement be included that better explained how the budget increase is driven by labor costs. Peter C. agreed but was concerned that the school and municipal budget “slice” labor costs differently. Geoff pointed out that slide five illustrated this. An explanatory statement was inserted. Peter D. urged that language be consistent throughout the document – e.g. “FY 2016 Budget” so it is as clear as possible for taxpayers.

Slide 5 – No changes

Slide 6 – Regarding “cost per student,” Peter C. said that the two most important points were that cost per student is lower but increasing at an alarming rate. Melissa commented that that’s because student population is decreasing. Geoff lamented the amount of State Aid Barrington receives. He said that the increases in school aid are coming to an end and the decreasing enrollment will further reduce state aid.

Slide 7 – Peter D. questioned the term “personnel Charges” Peter C. explained that this means “benefits” but he wanted to use the same terminology as received from the town.

Slide 8 - Melissa urged a further explanation of the statement “ While the budgeted operating expenses are representative of the actual funds spent, the budgeted capital expense are not.” A discussion ensued about how to better explain so that taxpayers understand the differences between the operating and capital budget.

Slide 9 – Melissa suggested that this slide be made into two. Peter C. agreed and Chad said that data should be included to support the statements.

Geoff will make changes in preparation for next week’s budget hearing.

Veteran COA members gave Peter D. and Melissa an overview of the operational aspects of the Budget Hearing.

A short discussion ensued about the upcoming FTM including which items might be a particular interest to townspeople.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:07

Respectfully submitted,

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Geoff Grove