



## CARVER FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 7, 2022 MEETING

Present: Chairman Alan Germain, Ron Clarke, Bill Cullum, Walter Cole, Tony Macrina, Patrick Meagher, and Elizabeth Sulger.

Absent: Sue Moquin, Bob Fennessy, and Recording Secretary Ashley Swart (minutes taken from Area 58 recording)

Pledge of Allegiance,

Meeting will be recorded by Area 58

Public comment – heard none.

### **Reorganization of the board due to vacancy**

Mr. Germain explained that there was a need for a new Vice-Chair and would step down as Chair if another recommendation was made. Mr. Meagher made a comment that there is no reason for a new chair as the sitting chair has been voted by the committee. Mr. Meagher made a nomination of Beth Sulger as Vice- Chair. This motion was seconded. No other comments were made regarding the Chair or Vice Chair positions. Ms. Sulger accepted the nomination. Nomination of Ms. Sulger approved 6-0-1 with Ms. Sulger Abstaining.

### **Town Administrator, Finance Director update: Current budget status.**

Sue and Bob were not present for the meeting. They spoke with Mr. Germain stating that the budget is still a work in progress now. They do not have concrete enough numbers to give to the Finance Committee just yet. They were concerned with giving numbers prematurely and having the Finance Committee “fine tune them”. They agreed to review the numbers in an upcoming meeting. They will also plan on putting together a budget calendar for departments. Mr. Meagher added that the technology director for the town should be present at the meeting this year. Mr. Macrina asked if they were behind at all in department meetings. Mr. Germain assured him that these don’t usually happen until December. They discussed the calendar of department meetings, timing, and what they needed to make the most of these meetings. Mr. Germain followed that departments including Legal, Finance, Veteran, and Grants needed to be increased (based on current spending trends).

### **Grant Applications**

Health Imperatives – Elizabeth Torrent – there are sites all-over South-Eastern MA. Their closest location is in Plymouth. There are multiple programs that improve the health and well-being of low-income individuals and families. They choose programs that help serve the under-served communities. They have served more clients and added more services over the last year.



Including substance treatments, cancer and hepatitis testing and treatment. Their contracts last from 7-10 years (without increases for cost of living) so they come to the towns requesting grants. They have requested a grant of \$5,000 for staffing and supplies. 172 residents of Carver fall into the categories of these services. Mr. Clarke said he appreciated the explanation of how the money is being used and how their services benefit residents of Carver. There was a discussion about the cost-of-living increases and the impact it has on everyone, noting the difficult decision some families may be faced with if they are having financial difficulties. Motion to close the hearing made by Mr. Clarke, seconded by Mr. Meagher, approved unanimously 7-0-0. Motion to approve the grant application made by Mr. Clarke, seconded by Ms. Sulger, approved unanimously 7-0-0. Mr. Germain asked Elizabeth to send him an invoice so he could sign off and send a check.

South Shore Community Action – Nikki Galavoice – grant request with the food resource program. Their mission is to improve the quality of life for low-income people. They run from Hull to Provincetown and the Islands. They provide early-education service, transportation for elderly, and other programs. They requested support from Carver in prior years and are finding their costs are increasing. They don't have a lot of state or federal funds and rely on town grants. Most of the food they send out is collected by the community. They collect food and supply it to schools, food pantries, councils on aging, and more. They collect and distribute about a half a million pounds of food per year. They have brought on a part-time employee to compensate for the number of volunteers who have not returned after the pandemic. They distribute perishable and non-perishable items to the Carver COA. This year a water and sewage assistance program will be launching to assist those in need with those resources. Ms. Sulger noted that what they do is "great", and Mr. Germain added that it was "a necessity". Ms. Sulger made a motion to approve the grant, seconded by Mr. Clarke, approved unanimously 7-0-0. Mr. Germain asked Nikki to send him an invoice.

United Parish – requesting \$3,850. Last year they were granted \$5,000, Mr. Germain discussed that if the funds go to things that are not "church specific" – like pews – they can be granted money. This grant request is to upgrade their water treatment system. Mr. Germain reiterated that because this church is used for the public and activities that are not related to religion. These groups include AA, NA, yoga classes, thrift shop, Girl Scout Troops, etc. Mr. Clarke said this could be a concern for other churches in town, but this instance helps residents of the town, not specifically for the church. Mr. Germain said he double checked with Counsel. Ms. Sulger made a motion to approve the grant, seconded by Mr. Clarke, approved unanimously 7-0-0.

**Discussion: Single Saturday joint meeting with Select Board, Capital Outlay, and all departments for approval of budget in the warrant to Town Meeting.**

**Discussion: FinCom by-law proposed changes.**

Mr. Clarke and Mr. Meagher created a sub-committee to review the by-laws. There is a placeholder on the warrant for these changes. Mr. Germain said the current by-law is a "Catch 22". The "revised" version has corrected language. They updated the language of who can be eligible to serve on the Finance Committee. They used examples from Lakeville, Kingston, Plymouth, Middleboro, Wareham, Duxbury, Plympton and Halifax. They used these as guides for the updated by-law. They all have exceptions of who can serve on the Finance Committee –

except for Kingston. Mr. Clarke and Mr. Meagher wanted input on what to submit for the article for the Town Warrant. They discussed how to fine-tune this by-law, creating limitations on who can serve on the committee. They further discussed that town employees, members of the Select Board and anyone with a financial interest should be excluded from being a member of the Finance Committee. Mr. Germain said he wanted to see this somewhere “in the middle” – opening this to Carver voters but creating some restrictions. He continued by explaining that Finance Committee is an advisory board and only makes recommendations to the Select Board and cannot make decisions for them or over-rule them. Mr. Macrina said creating a restriction for Finance Committee members creates an impartial appearance. Mr. Clarke agreed that some restrictions helped maintain credibility. There was discussion about what constituted as a “financial interest” and “conflict of interests”. The members agreed that there was a need to include language about recusing yourself from items that could appear as a conflict of interest. Ms. Sulger added that they don’t want to try and scare away anyone who may be interested in volunteering on one of these boards. They further discussed that a recusal vote would only require a majority vote. Mr. Macrina added that the re-writing of the by-law needed to occur to eliminate confusion for anyone reading it. It was agreed, no town employees, no member of the select board and defining “financial interest” needed to be included.

**Read and approve minutes of meeting: June 27, 2022**

Ms. Sulger approved the minutes as written, seconded by Mr. Clarke, approved 6-0-1.

Next meeting date: December 5, 2022

Committee member comments.

Mr. Clarke made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Sulger, approved unanimously 7-0-0.

Adjourned 7:17 PM

Minutes submitted by Ashley Swartz.