



## Annual Report of the Finance Committee

March 26, 2019

To the residents of Carver:

As chairman of the Town of Carver Finance Committee, it gives me pleasure to provide the residents of our community with this Annual Report.

At the start of my time as chairman, the Finance Committee began video recording our proceedings. With our partners at Area 58, we are bringing the important work done by our committee to the residents of our community via a multitude of media. It is important for our friends and neighbors to see and learn about the issues being discussed and the reasons for the actions taken by the Committee. We believe that transparency is the currency of our transactions. To further support our goal to remain visible to the community, we hired a recording secretary and have held more regular meetings than in recent history; meaningful meetings, including taking a leadership role in developing the 2020 Annual Town Budget.

FinCom, as the committee is colloquially known, receives its jurisdiction and composition from the town by-laws. Up to 11 members may be appointed to serve for 3 year terms. Presently, there are 6 sitting members on FinCom. We have room to grow. I encourage anyone with an acumen for finance who also wishes to become involved in the fiscal operation of the town to apply for an appointment.

As a committee are involved in the budget process. Providing an additional layer of transparency to the budgeting of your hard-earned money. Sometimes trying to balance between fiscal responsibility and the "right thing to do" for the residents and taxpayers of Carver, as well as the valued employees of the town. We participate in a total town budget of over \$41,000,000. We also recognize the importance of the dedication shown by our town department's staff and administrators. Each department walks a "tightrope" in preparing their respective budget trying to foresee the future and what expenses will be necessary to operate successfully for the coming year. To that end we the Finance Committee have high praise and respect for the departments in this town and thank you for all the time and effort that goes into preparation of the budgets presented to us.

In the year 2018-19 we are proud to have been involved in;

School Dept transfer request, a recommendation from Police dept to install safety buckets and door barricades in the classrooms \$21,289 for buckets and \$6,500 for barricades. Purpose, in the event of an extended lockdown or injury each bucket contains first aid items as well as toiletries. The barricades are designed to prevent entry to the classroom from the hall. This was debated for several meetings and was ultimately approved unanimously.

Approval of transfer requests for year-end deficits as presented by Meg LaMay our Finance Director.

Approval of a request from EMS of \$10,000 for AED's for the COA, Town Hall, Library, and DPW. These 4 will be the first public accessed devices. The school, Police, Fire and EMS already have these devices.

Joint meeting with Capital Outlay Committee on the Fire dept request of \$396,000 for personal protective equipment for each firefighter. The current gear is out of date and poses a threat to the safety and wellness of the firefighters. Capital Outlay voted unanimously to fund as did Finance Committee. We as a committee felt it was our responsibility to provide the firefighters with the safety and protection they so deserve when responding to an emergency call. The new PPE gear would offer just that. Note: due to the responsible management of the town's budget, this funding was in a reserve account so an approved transfer of money was all that was needed, resulting in no additional burden to the taxpayer or adjustment to the budget.

Multiple informal meetings with the various department heads for the FY 20 budget. Information as to where the money is going and a look to future expenses. This was a way to stay in touch with the various departments and be kept up to date on any adjustments that may be needed in the future with no surprises when budget season arrived.

We spent multiple meetings over a four-month period discussing the Stretch Code adoption for the town warrant. Presently there are 250+ communities in the state that have adopted this program. At issue were weighing increased building energy code requirements against grant money available in the amount of \$155,000 to \$170,000 to the town for energy savings in municipal buildings and town services. We tried to weight between more stringent codes and grant money. Ultimately it was voted to advance this to the selectmen for their consideration for inclusion in the warrant as the Finance Committee feels the more energy conscious code will eventually be adopted state wide and when that happens there will be no grant money available.

After seeing a rise in requests for money to charitable groups year over year with the total amount requested increasing, we have at the suggestion of the town administrator and BOS established the Town of Carver Grant Program (TOCGP) for non-profits. This program will require approval from town meeting. Each year Carver receives several money requests at town meeting from different non-profit organizations. In the past this has been approved by town meeting but in doing so runs against our state laws and the "anti-aid" amendment. This program if approved by town meeting would allow the finance committee to administer a grant program that would vet the applicant and oversee the implementation of the funds in that they are used for the benefit of residents. The fund would cap at \$25,000 and a maximum of \$5,000 per grant applied for. This information would then be brought to town meeting the following year with a report of all applicants (approved and denied), why they were approved, and how the funding benefited the residents. This would create a full transparency of the program.

The committee is involved with Old Colony R.V.T.H.S. in their assessment to the member town's for funding Carver's portion of the school's budget ultimately voting of behalf of Carver for its approval. We will also work with them in the future when the issue of expansion becomes a topic as they offer additional curriculum.

In the Town Administrators report it was requested the Finance Committee begin to explore long term options from a fiscal and sustainability standpoint to address our smaller school district with collaboration from other boards, committees and residents. We would do this as a subcommittee with membership from the BOS, School committee, and town residents. This is extremely important given that the school budget makes up over 70% of our total town budget.

I want to personally thank the members of the Finance Committee for their commitment and dedication to the residents of Carver. It has been and will continue to be an honor to serve this fine community.

Kate Bandzul

John Cotter

Bill Duggen

George Callahan

Beth Sulger

In addition, the entire Finance Committee wishes to express their gratitude to the Board of Selectmen, Michael Milanoski; Town Administrator, Elaine Weston; Asst Town Administrator, and Meg LaMay; Finance Director, and her entire Finance department for all their help and support in making our job easier.

Respectfully,

Alan Germain

Chairman

Carver Finance Committee