

## MINUTES

Plainfield Finance Committee Meeting  
Wednesday, September 16, 2020, 7 p.m.  
Remote Meeting

The meeting was called to order remotely at 7:08. Present were Robert Baker, Lew Robbins, David Kramer, and Tee O'Sullivan. Bob Silberberg was absent. The minutes of the July 15, 2020, meeting were accepted.

The regular meeting time of the Finance Committee was changed from the third Wednesday of the month to the first Tuesday, at 7 p.m. The next meeting of the Finance Committee will be on October 6.

David reported that at their August 11 meeting, the Board of Selectmen accepted the Finance Committee's recommendation that the Select Board be more active in supervising the budgets of the departments under their jurisdiction, in particular with regard to compensation. He also reported on the Fire Department's request at the August 25 meeting of the Board of Selectmen that the members of that department receive a stipend, something on the order of \$1,000 per year. Chief Alvord said that he would submit a proposal to the Select Board.

In its ensuing discussion, the Finance Committee expressed the desire to form a committee comprising members of the community from various constituencies to discuss the question of organization of and compensation for police, fire, animal control, and emergency management. The committee decided to defer action until after the national elections in November.

David reported that with the budget season ~~at our throats~~ about to begin, he would present a draft proposal for soliciting departmental budgets at the next meeting of the committee.

The committee having expressed an interest in the local receipts line item on the town budget, David offered to solicit that information from the town accountant.<sup>1</sup>

The idea of a two-tier tax rate was raised. In an earlier email, Bob Silberberg had noted that among our surrounding towns, only Adams, Florida, Lenox, North Adams, and Pittsfield have a two-tier system. Given that Plainfield has a very small commercial base, the opinion was expressed that a two-tier system in Plainfield might not be worthwhile. Further discussion was put off to a possible later date. Businesses that might be taxed at a higher rate include the Swift River facility, the cannabis farm, and the solar installation (which currently has a PILOT).

---

<sup>1</sup> He sent an email to the accountant on September 19 and awaits a reply.

Lew Robbins offered to revise his list of capital items valued at over \$5,000 for presentation at the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15.

Submitted by David Kramer, chair and secretary