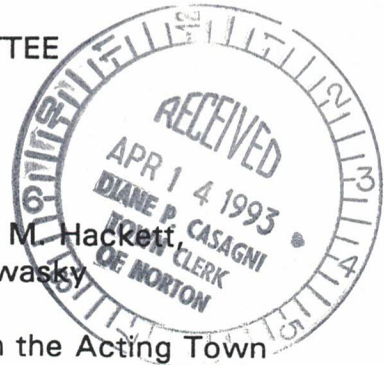


MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE
PUBLIC HEARING
MARCH 29, 1993



Present: T. DeLuca, J. Desrochers, M. Fiore, W. Gouveia, M. Hackett,
P. Helmreich, J. Nicolas, T. Phelan, D. Summerfield, P. Zawasky

Chair Gouveia welcomed everyone to the public hearing on the Acting Town Manager's Fiscal Year 1994 Town Budget. Chair Gouveia gave a brief explanation of the Town's financial position as it relates to the Town budget for next year. Acting Town Manager Benton Keene gave a brief overview of his recommended budget cuts in the police and fire department budgets.

Next, Chair Gouveia called on the audience for questions and concerns.

The following questions were asked of the members of the Finance Committee:

- Are we anticipating a shortfall in the current fiscal budget?
- Is the town reimbursed if there is a shortfall in the snow removal budget?
- Are there any other revenue sources besides local aid?
- Is sewer and water included in local receipts?
- Question as to whether or not teachers' pay deferral was voted on at last year's Annual Town Meeting.
- Question of the accuracy of the \$17,133,558 FY 1993 budget figure voted on at last year's Annual Town Meeting; cherry sheet shows figure of \$17,963,782.54.
- How was new growth figure of \$250,000 determined?
- Is the recommended reduction of \$16,000 in the Recreation Department budget accurate?
- How much money is left in the old Stabilization Account?
- Are there any other outstanding accounts that could be drawn on like the Stabilization Account?
- Was any additional money put aside for additional increases in health insurance costs?
- Is there a possibility that insurance costs may be higher than \$260,000?
- How does the Education Reform Bill impact the Town?
- Are there any other municipal government departments that will be impacted by cuts making them ineligible for grant monies?
- Is there any way the Finance Committee can give comparisons of what the services will be after cuts?
- Can the Finance Committee inform the citizens of reductions in services before the Annual Town Meeting in June?
- Is it accurate that municipal government departments will lose 1-3 people each, or a 1/3 reduction in labor?

Does the Finance Committee have any plans to create accounts to earmark funds for people to contribute to their operation?

Are there any other innovations the Finance Committee is looking at?

Chair Gouveia called upon Dr. Splaine to discuss the School Department budget. Mrs. Meyers, speaking for the School Committee, said that the school budget is a maintenance of level services. She said there is no increase in staff while class size continues to grow. She said that the Town will be looking at a decrease in services if the Education Reform Bill is not passed. She also said that she does not know the impact on the school year if the bill is passed.

Chair Gouveia again opened the floor for questions.

The following questions were asked:

Does increase in salaries include step raises?

Has there been any discussion on regionalization?

Is the Finance Committee considering overrides?

Are salaries going to be reduced across the Board?

The following concerns were expressed by members of the audience:

The impact of the Education Reform Bill and how long the Finance Committee will hold off until the legislation is passed.

Will the State provide alternatives to bail out the Town.

Would the Finance Committee support a reduction in the health insurance budget?

Would it be possible to have a breakdown of the fire, police, and school department budgets at the Annual Town Meeting.

Would the Finance Committee provide a narrative explaining the budget reductions rather than a line-by-line reduction. For example, a narrative on how reductions would impact the services in the fire and police department budgets.

The Finance Committee Public Hearing adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

