

# TOWN OF NORTON FINANCE COMMITTEE

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Minutes of the Meeting  
April 3, 1996

NORTON TOWN CLERK

**CALL TO ORDER:** 7:35 p.m. by Chair, Michael Fiore.

**Roll Call:** Michael Fiore, Chair; Michael Thomas, Vice-Chair; Thomas Deluca, Jackie Desrochers (8:10 p.m.), Paul Helmreich, Cornelius Linehan, Christine Meyer, Jonathan Rowe, and Donna Summerfield (8:05 p.m.). **Absent:** James Barrett and Jack Nicolas.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **8:00 p.m. Special Town Meeting Article 2 - Petitioners**

Janet-Marie O'Keefe, 58 Cobb St., started the petition and is now aware that the article as written is not legal and would most likely set the town up for litigation if it is passed at town meeting. O'Keefe is planning to move the article in order to allow citizens to stand up and discuss the intent of the article, which is to stop building long enough to allow the town to plan for future growth, and possibly have the article amended on town meeting floor. She feels the town is adding to their problems by building so many houses every year. O'Keefe feels that a moratorium for 2 years will give the town time to discuss sewerage and come up with an overall game plan.

**Library (610):** Mitchell Perlow, Head Librarian, reviewed the expanded programs and hours implemented in FY '96 and made a presentation of the proposed FY '97 budget. The library currently has 9,000 active patrons. During FY '96 they expanded their programs by 40%; they are open 50 hours/week, they have doubled their Saturday operations, and they are open all day on Monday's. In FY'96 they had to increase their services by 25% with a budget increase of 20%. They have not increased the staff for many years.

Perlow is suggesting the part-time library assistant become the assistant children's librarian and be given an increase to go along with that. She is currently paid \$6.50/hour. Her increase will amount to a \$3,000 (\$9.50/hour) increase in the library budget. He would also like to hire 2 part-time people at a total budget cost of \$14,040. Perlow has budgeted for merit and step increases for the other staff in the library. The town manager recommends a 7.28% increase, which is the average increase of the town.

ABLE dues has gone up for next year because of new services that are available on the system. There is an increase in repairs because as the computers get older they are in need of repair more often (our computers date back to 1987-1988).

Fire Department (220): Chief George Burgess was in attendance and he presented his budget to the committee. The chief is proposing to add 4 full-time firefighters to begin in January (half-year), these men would man the Chartley Fire Station. The four new positions will cost \$54,000. He also recommends opening the Chartley Fire Station. The chief proposes adding another 4 full-time firefighters next fiscal year so that there will be eight men to man the Chartley Station 95% of the time.

Chief Burgess informed the FinCom about the possibility of a reduced ISO rating and the impact that it will have on residents and commercial property. There was some debate as to whether it impacts residents at all.

The chief also had charts showing response times to different areas in Norton and what that means in regards to treatment and fatality rates.

The town manager is not recommending the funding of the four Chartley 1/2 year full-time positions. Lindberg does not recommend the 4 new men because the municipal building architect recommends adding a bay onto our original station instead of opening a new station.

Adding paramedics instead of firefighters was also discussed but would be very expensive. We are currently able to staff 2 ambulances out of our fire station, it would be better if we could staff 3, according to the chief. Our union requires 3 firefighters and 1 officer for each of the 4 shifts.

### OLD BUSINESS

Deluca moved to approve Article 2 of the 8:00 p.m. Special Town Meeting Warrant; seconded by Thomas. Vote: 8 opposed and 0 in favor.

### ADJOURNMENT

Linehan made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Deluca. Vote: unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 10:17 p.m.

*Patricia C. Mello*

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Recording Secretary