

TOWN OF NORTON
FINANCE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting
March 15, 2003

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NORTON TOWN CLERK

CALL TO ORDER: 7:35pm by Chair, Jackie Desrochers

Present: Jackie Desrochers, Tom Deluca, Paul Helmreich, Bill Gouveia, Angel Doyle, Mike Fiore,
Mike Thomas, John Luti, Donna Summerfield, Philip Zawasky

Absent:

NEW BUSINESS

Reserve Fund Transfer

Fiore made a motion seconded by Helmreich to transfer \$1,806.95 from FinCom Reserve to Unemployment Comp Account.

Vote: 9 in favor; 1 abstention (Doyle)

TOWN MANAGER PRESENTATION

- **Stabilization Fund**
Balance as of 2/4/04 is \$1,605,695.32
- **Estimated Revenue & Expenditures**
 - Betterment payments are coming in to the Water Dept. Collections have more than doubled estimations for this year.
 - General government requests are in excess of level funding.
 - Town Manager would like to increase personnel at the Town Hall, however it is not fiscally feasible at this point in time. Other departments are asking for additional personnel.
 - No contracts are up until the year 2006.
 - Town Manager feels most of the Town's new growth will come from residential properties, i.e. over 55 housing.
 - Projected \$500,000 coming from Stabilization Fund will go into general operations. Mr. Purcell does not see any way around not using the Stabilization Fund.
 - Some FinCom Members expressed concern about how the \$500,000 will be replenished in the overall budget next year. After using the \$500,000, we will still have less positions. Other Members do not feel the use of Stabilization will jeopardize the Town's future.
 - Use of Stabilization Fund requires a 2/3 vote.
 - Free Cash is dangerously low, but at least we have some this year.
 - Town Manager feels we are going to be OK. We have a rainy day fund that will carry us for a few years. Mr. Purcell stated that he will not look for an override until all resources are depleted.

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- In twenty-three years, Norton voted on an override only one time and it did not pass.
 - Some FinCom Members feel the Town officials should stop talking about an override as a negative issue. One Town official was quoted as saying, "...Talking about overrides does not make good political sense...."
 - Town Manager thinks the Town's bond rating will go down due to previous years figures.
 - Regarding the bond rating, failure to pass an override is not a negative factor; however passing one would be a plus.
 - Some FinCom members feel the Town is not at the point where we need to look at an override at this time, however they feel an override will be inevitable within the next few years.
- School Funding
 - School Department is expected to receive 60% of the \$715,716 Surplus. Some Fin Com members expressed concern about the need to take more than the \$500,000 from Stabilization.
 - Norton's School Budget has gone up every year.
 - Regional School Budget is being voted on 3/16/04.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 9:00pm.

NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, March 17, 2004 @ 7:30pm

Respectfully submitted by:



Christine McSweeney
Secretary, Finance Committee