

**Finance Committee Minutes
Saturday, April 1, 2006
Municipal Center - Selectmen's Meeting Room**

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NORTON TOWN CLERK

Call To Order

Meeting was called to Order at 9:10 a.m.

Present: Chairman, Mike Thomas; Vice-Chair, Paul Helmreich; Tom DeLuca, Jackie Desrochers; Angel Doyle; Mike Fiore; Donna Summerfield; and Philip Zawasky. Lee Tarantino arrived at 9:30 a.m. Town Manager was also present.

1. Approval of Minutes

No Minutes were reviewed.

2. New Business

Mr. Purcell said House and Senate will keep lottery numbers uncapped. Ch70 was discussed and feels Ch70 is very fair.

Mr. Helmreich said Town is in such a deep hole he'd like to see an impact statement.

1. Reserve Fund Transfer Request - Town Manager

Insurance Expense (installment payments, deductible payments, etc.) \$6,000

Mr. Purcell said this was for uninsured losses.

MOTION was made by Mr. Helmreich to transfer \$6,000.00 from FinCom Reserve Account to account 1-940-570-5744 (Insurance). Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

2. Reserve Fund Transfer Request - Town Manager

Municipal Building Expense (Bay State Gas Company) \$7,000

MOTION was made by Mr. Helmreich to transfer \$7,000.00 from FinCom Reserve Account to account #1-192-570-5215 (Municipal Building Maintenance) to Bay State Gas for purpose to pay fuel bills. Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

3. Distribution of Draft Annual Town Meeting Warrant and Supporting Data

Mr. Purcell discussed various Articles.

Article 2: Mr. Purcell said this will change Highway Dept. from \$67,000 to \$70,000
MOTION was made by Mr. Helmreich to recommend Article 2. Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: All In Favor Except Ms. Summerfield who voted Opposed. MOTION CARRIES.

Article 3: Authorizing Board of Selectmen to accept and enter into contract for the expenditure of any funds allotted, etc. re: Ch90, Sect 34(2a).

MOTION was made by Mr. Helmreich to recommend Article 3, (sum of \$331,594.00). Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

Article 4: Mr. Knapp, Water Superintendent to be before FinCom on Wednesday.

Article 5: To see if Town will authorize establishment pursuant to G.L. Ch44, Sect 53E 1/2 of a revolving account for highway dept. to receive fees for recycled materials. Convention recycling program should be part of Highway Dept. to cut out middleman. Transfer balance by June 30th and delete hazardous materials from text (i.e., tires).

Mr. DeLuca asked how cash would be tracked?

MOTION was made by Mr. Helmreich to recommend Article 5. Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

Article 6: Revolving Fund. Mr. Purcell said Fire Dept. to be in before FinCom on Monday; they can discuss this in detail.

MOTION was made by Mr. Helmreich to recommend Article 6. Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

Article 7: School Superintendent could provide info.

Article 8: In past (the history), ComCast inadvertently sent a two-party check to Town and check was held; then brought Cable Access group in and asked audit be done of books and three members resigned. This was never filed as a 503(c) corporation. It is now 4% under present license. Approx. \$172,500 was last check Town received.

Mr. Purcell hired new auditor, Tom Scanlon, new auditor, and they got status and retroactive. Fines reduced (about \$72,000 to \$21,000; and then \$21,000 was forgiven). Revolving funds cannot exceed 1% of Towns' tax levy. Soon to come up on statutory limit. Memorandum of Agreement takes this off revolving fund provided some agreement in place and they would pay Town an annual fee. Wording of Article needs to reflect date change.

MOTION was made by Mr. Helmreich to delay consideration of this Article 8 until new wording received. Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

Article 9: Possible acquisition; property owned by Wendell Jackson and Suzanne Jackson. Town needs boat access. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Helmreich asked how soon do people in Grove area get relief? Mr. Purcell aid he would get that answer.

Mr. Tarantino asked if they had any ideas to use property for dredging? Mr. Purcell said no, have platform already.

Discussion ensued on possibly renting property and using as a boat ramp also.

MOTION was made by Mr. Helmreich to recommend Article 9 (total of \$500,000 to bond said amount; cost about \$25,000.00-FY07 is \$25,000.00). \$12,500 to cover first annual payment.

Discussion: Mr. Thomas had some reservations asking people for an override and Town planning to buy land.

Ms. Summerfield said she would like to see debt schedule; not prepared to make decision. Land value needed; layout.

Mr. Purcell referenced various funding scenarios.

Discussion ensued. Mr. Tarantino said a proposition 2 1/2 does not necessarily mean Town needs to be destitute; calls for money/needs for future. Town cannot keep cutting back.

Mr. Fiore said quality of life in Town needs to be looked at.

Mr. Thomas said he is not a huge proponent of Town buying land.

Discussion ensued on possibly using parking stickers.

Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

Article 10: Mr. Purcell said he and Town Counsel are not comfortable with Article 10. Dept. will appear before FinCom

Article 11: May 1, 2006 is open enrollment; asking for extended open enrollment plan to begin 7-10 days longer than normal; cannot start enrollment period on May 1.

Articles 12, & 13 were discussed.

Article 14: puts money into fund (capital improvements).

Article 15: is capital budget.

Article 16: is change in eligibility criteria.

MOTION was made by Mr. Helmreich to recommend Article 16. Second by Mr. Zawasky.

Discussion: Mr. Tarantino asked what is considered an asset.

Mr. DeLuca said assets are: cash, cd's, savings bonds, 401K accounts. Secondary residences considered assets also.

Mr. Purcell said Linda Libby of Assessor's Office could call or e-mail Mr. Tarantino if he'd like.

Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

Work programs for seniors discussed.

Article 17: \$10,000 is request; 2007 date.

Mr. Purcell said he believed \$8,000 was plenty.

MOTION was made by Mr. Helmreich to recommend Article 17, in the amount of \$8,000. Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

Article 18: Four ~~projects~~ totaling \$8M bonding. Includes desal line (\$3M)/water tank in center built in 1910 and needs replacing and West Main Street water main project.

Article 23: Board of Selectmen voted their "intent" to layout Commerce Way which is first step; last week Board of Selectmen voted "layout". Everything is completed.

MOTION was made by Mr. Helmreich to recommend Article 23. Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

It was noted Special Town Meeting is scheduled for May 1, 2006; Annual Town Meeting is May 8, 2006.

4. Distribution of Draft Special Town Meeting Warrant

Article 1: **MOTION was made by Mr. Helmreich to recommend Article 1, Free Cash, \$130.00. Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.**

Article 2 and 3: Both are contract Articles.

Mr. Purcell said contracts 4, 5 and 6 have been ratified by unions; 7 and 8 are near completion. Pension issue to Bristol County Retirement System and possibility in future that public employees to indicate their intention to retire three years prior; less expense for Town.

Mr. Zawasky said Feds are doing this 3-5 years prior, so Mr. Purcell should watch this.

NO ACTION TAKEN.

Article 4: Cash Transfer

\$8,400 balance; now ongoing regulation. Article limits use of funds to '05 limits (closing out one).

MOTION was made by Mr. Helmreich to recommend Article 4 (sum of \$8,400). Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

Article 5: For June 2, 2006-Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day.

MOTION was made by Mr. Helmreich to recommend Article 5, \$6,000 from free cash. Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

Article 6: Mr. Purcell said Board of Health to come before FinCom and explain this. Board of Health required mutual aid type agreement and he will get FinCom text of it. It covers liabilities. There is no net cost but State asking towns to cleanup their paperwork.

MOTION was made by Mr. Helmreich to recommend Article 6. Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

Article 7: To Waive Age Requirement for Call Firefighter.

It was decided to put on list to speak to Fire Chief about. Board of Selectmen have not taken an official position and one could argue it does not need Board of Selectmen vote but he believes Board of Selectmen should take a position.

Adjournment

MOTION was made by Mr. Zawasky to Adjourn at 12:00 p.m. Second by Mr. DeLuca. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.