

**Finance Committee Meeting**  
**April 16, 2008**  
**7:30 PM**  
**Municipal Center -- Selectman's Conference Room**

**Present:** Chairman, Lee Tarantino; Vice-Chair, Michael Thomas; Secretary Pro Tem, Pasquale Barletta; Robert Bouchard; Thomas DeLuca; Jackie Desrochers (late arrival); Wayne Graf; Paul Helmreich; Philip Zawasky; Town Manager, James Purcell.

**Call to Order**

Meeting was called to Order at 7:36 PM

**I. Old Business**

**II. New Business - Budgets from Town Clerk Department and Water Dept.**

**Town Clerk Dept.**

Town Clerk, Diane Casagni, addressed the proposed cut of 4 hours from the part-time staff in the Town Clerk Department noting that there is a seniority issue in the clerical union as 8 of the 11 members have less seniority than the member affected in the department. Also it would effectively cut the total hours in the department to less than 2 full time people; less than surrounding towns like Mansfield, Foxboro, and Rehoboth. At the same time the work load increases each year with increase in population.

Diane went on to elaborate on the multiple duties of the Town Clerk Department and all the Postings of Hearings and Minutes of all the various Town Committees and Rules and Regulations of the same. Also listing of accepted streets, Site Plans, Subdivisions and all the various Permits and Zoning Laws and By Laws. Also the various vital records for Births, Deaths, Marriage Licenses, Marriages, Deaths, and Burials and certified copies of all those as requested. Also, Dog and Hunting and Fishing Licenses and all Business Certificates.

Not to mention all the work involving Elections, voter registrations, voting lists, nomination papers, absentee ballots, election tallies and reports and Town Census.

Mr DeLuca commented about the seniority issue. Mr Helmreich commented that the less than two full time total hours represented nevertheless that we were providing health insurance for three people not two.

**Going forward**

Mr Tarantino mentioned that salaries discussed the previous Monday night, were all contractual issues and not new salary issues.

**Water Dept.**

The next presentation was from Mr Duane Knapp, Water Superintendent. Although the Water Department is funded by a Water Surplus Account and is not a part of the Town Operating Budget subject to Prop. 2-1/2, it is subject to Finance Committee approval. He discussed that the proposed salary increases were contractual. Other increases and expenditures were due to increased cost in fuel and materials cost increase. However he pointed out savings that were realized by having work done in house. He also

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mentioned that additional water filtering was possible but could not be utilized since our wells are mostly in wetland areas and the backwash flushing process to clean the filters could not be done effectively. He also discussed the fact that he anticipated a 20% increase in the water rate mostly due to increased cost of fuel.

### Going forward

Mr Tarantino said he had received more letters opposing the drastic reduction of the Library Budget.

Mr Barletta questioned whether there were any possible savings for health insurance by combining part time positions into full time positions and having them perform duties from more than one department. Mr Purcell mentioned that this was already in the process.

Mr. Zawasky brought up the question again about uniforms for Communications Dept. Mr. Purcell again brought up that it is contractual and also helps to establish the members of that department as Public Safety Professionals.

Mr Helmreich moved account 135 Town Accountant line 510 Personal Services. Seconded and voted unanimously. He also moved line 510 Annual Audit. Seconded and approved unanimously. He then moved line 570 Other Charges and Expenses. Seconded and unanimously voted.

Next under discussion was 147 Treasure/Collector regarding Dues, and Seminars and these were felt to be necessary and useful to better fulfill the position. Mr Helmreich moved the section, seconded and voted with one negative vote.

Mr Thomas moved to reconsider dept. 162 Elections because line 5275 Data Processing Costs needed to be increased to meet new compliance regulations. All in favor.

Motion made to reopen dept 195 Town Report since new quotes in and it could be adjusted down \$500. It was revoted and approved.

Discussion on dept 199 Postage that despite upcoming rate change, cost can be held because purchase of new machine will be offset by lowering line 5241 Repair and Maintenance and line 5272 Rental. Mr Thomas moved dept 199 with lower figures. Seconded, voted all in favor.

Mr Thomas moved dept 306 Southeaston Regional Tech. Seconded, vote all in favor with one abstention.

Mr Thomas moved dept 308 Regional Agricultural. Seconded, voted approved.

And then we opened Dept 210 Police Dept. Mr Helmreich was questioning the vacant position. and some discussion arose about the increase in the police chief's salary was done to offset the reduction of benefits. Major discussion abounded about the fact of a vacant position and whether that could be removed. Was it a position that we have been living without and need not be filled at this time. It was decided to table the budget item for the Police Dept. at this time.



Mr Thomas moved dept 423 Snow Removal.

At this point the attendance at the meeting was enhanced by the sudden arrival of Chief Brian Clark who had been watching the telecast of the proceedings and rushed to the meeting to clarify the questions that been raised. The vacant position was actual the total of vacancies created by attrition over the year and not an actual position. He was restructuring the department and redeploying his men to give us better coverage with less overtime. On the question of dues etc they were required for various certifications and about the only one that he would remove would be one for a membership that he would pay out of pocket.

Mr Thomas moved Dept 210 line 510 Personal Service, which was seconded and unanimously approved.

Mr Thomas moved line 570 Other Charges and Expenditures with the reduction of line 5731 by \$100. It was seconded and passed unanimously.


#### Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for April 23, 2008 at 7:30pm

#### Adjournment

Motion was made by Mr Zawasky to adjourn. Seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Pasquale Barletta', is written over a horizontal line.

Pasquale Barletta, Acting Recording Secretary Pro-Tem