

**Finance Committee Meeting**  
**March 4, 2009**  
**7:30 PM**  
**Municipal Center – Selectmen's Conference Room**

RECEIVED  
MAR 13 2009  
NORTON TOWN CLERK

**Present:** Pasquale Barletta; Thomas DeLuca; Jackie Desrochers; Paul Helmreich; Cheryl McFaun; Lynn Regan; Lee Tarantino; Philip Zawasky; Town Manager, James Purcell.

**Absent:** Michael Thomas; Wayne Graf; Robert Bouchard.

**Call to Order**

Meeting was called to Order at 7:35 pm.

**I. Approval of Minutes**

**Motion** was made by Mr. Helmreich to approve the January 26, 2009 Finance Committee minutes as written. Second by Mr. Barletta. Vote: All in favor, with Mr. DeLuca, Ms. McFaun, Mr. Zawasky and Ms. Desrochers abstaining. **Motion carries.**

**Motion** was made by Mr. DeLuca to approve the February 9, 2009 Finance Committee minutes as amended. Second by Mr. Helmreich. Vote: All in favor, with Ms. McFaun and Ms. Regan abstaining. **Motion carries.**

**Motion** was made by Ms. Desrochers to approve the February 18, 2009 Finance Committee minutes as written. Second by Mr. DeLuca. Vote: All in favor, with Ms. McFaun and Ms. Regan abstaining. **Motion carries.**

**II. New Business**

**A. Superintendent Lopes** addressed the FinCom regarding the FY2010 budget.

Supt. Lopes outlined numerous cuts being made for the FY10 budget, including 5 vacant positions not being replaced, a wage freeze, and a 4-day workweek in the summer, as well as a cut in supplies and a 40% cut in the area of facilities and maintenance.

He has proposed, to the school committee, the cutting of 25 bus runs. Southeastern Vocational Technical School will absorb the cuts and there would be no transportation expense for Norton.

Supt. Lopes explained the assessment amount for Norton. There is an increase in enrollment, therefore there is an increase in the assessment for the town for FY10. He explained that the capital cost is set from the percentage of Norton's enrollment.

Supt. Lopes also stated that Norton will be receiving \$32K as Assessment Aid, and that employees' health benefits are at 70/30, with retirees at 50/50.

Mr. DeLuca asked Supt. Lopes about the upcoming trip that 2 of the school committee members are planned to take next month. He expressed his disapproval and asked for further explanation.

Supt. Lopes said that there is \$5K budgeted for training for the school committee, and that the trip will cost approx. \$2K. He said that the school committee voted (8-2) in favor of the trip.

Mr. DeLuca said that the school's history of trips gives a poor perception of the school. Mr. Helmreich agreed.

Supt. Lopes also stated that Norton will be receiving \$32K as Assessment Aid.

**B. Town Manager's Approach to the Fiscal Year 2010 Budget Proposal** – Mr. Purcell provided the FinCom with a handout explaining this 6-step process as follows:

**Step 1 – Estimate Revenues.** 53% of total estimated operating revenue is the estimated Property Tax Levy. The current figure is \$25,306,643.00. 33% comes from Local Aid, which is at \$13,540,970.00. 9% comes from Local Receipts, estimating a total of \$4,360,243.00. These three parts make up 95% of the Estimated Revenue. The town also receives \$1,278,923.00 from the Massachusetts School Building Authority to subsidize the town's debt associated with the construction of the Norton Middle School. In addition, the town also receives income from various trust and special purpose receiving funds totaling more than \$770,000.00.

**Step 2 – Costs Not Subject to Appropriation** – the FY10's estimate for the Overlay Reserve is \$200,000.00. All other costs in this category are offsets and assessments imposed by the Commonwealth. They are paid from the State Treasury to various agencies for services to Norton residents. The total for FY10 is almost \$2,300,000.00.

**Step 3 – Calculation of Fixed and Shared Expenses** – include debt, employee benefits, unemployment, fuel, and property and casualty expenses. The estimated amount for FY10 is 11,859,149.00, an overall drop of about \$100K. There has been a decrease in Health Insurance costs due to changes in employer/employee contribution rates.

**Step 4 – Determine Agricultural and Regional-Vocational Expenses** – Superintendent Lopes addressed the FinCom tonight regarding the Southeastern Vocational Technical School budget. The Bristol Agricultural School has been level-funded.

**Step 5 – Division of Remaining Assets** – The net of revenues minus expenses is divided 70/30 for Schools and General Government, respectively. Mr. Purcell has level-funded both amounts for FY10. The total deficit is \$300,000.00. Mr. Purcell would like to cover this with Free Cash.

Mr. Purcell went on to give an explanation of Free Cash.

He said that only in tough times would he use Free Cash to supplement a recurring expense.

Mr. Helmreich expressed his concern with the public perception of the term "level-funded", saying he feels that the public may think that there will not be any cuts.

**Step 6 – Departmental Budgets** – Mr. Purcell said that he has planned for level- funding for the general government budget. He that level- funding is a starting point.

Mr. Purcell provided the FinCom with a handout showing Local Receipts, including the estimate for FY10.

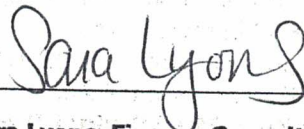
#### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 9, 2009 at 7:30pm.

#### **Adjournment**

**Motion** was made by Mr. Zawasky to adjourn at 9:20 pm. Second by Mr. Barletta. Vote: Unanimous. **Motion carries.**

Respectfully Submitted by:



Sara Lyons, Finance Committee Secretary