

Finance Committee Meeting
April 21, 2010
7:30 PM

NORTON TOWN CLERK

MAY 24 2010

Municipal Center – Selectmen's Conference Room **RECEIVED**

Present: Chairman, Wayne Graf; Vice-Chairman, Thomas DeLuca; Pasquale Barletta; Robert Bouchard; Michael Flaherty; Cheryl McFaun (late arrival); Michael Thomas; Lee Tarantino; Philip Zawasky; Town Manager, James Purcell.

Absent: Paul Helmreich; Jackie Desrochers.

Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm.

I. Approval of Minutes

Motion was made by Mr. Tarantino to approve the March 29, 2010 Finance Committee minutes as written. Seconded by Mr. DeLuca. Vote: All in favor, with Ms. McFaun and Mr. Zawasky abstaining. **Motion carries.**

Motion was made by Mr. Tarantino to approve the April 5, 2010 Finance Committee minutes as written. Seconded by Mr. DeLuca. Vote: All in favor, with Mr. Bouchard and Mr. Thomas abstaining. **Motion carries.**

II. New Business

A. Mr. Purcell updated the FinCom on some changes to the Town Meeting warrants as follows: The McGinn property article has been moved from the Annual Town Meeting warrant to the Special because of a Shpack related issue that has now been put on the Special.

The NHS Feasibility study article has been moved from the Annual warrant to the Special because of a time-sensitive issue. Mr. Purcell noted that the Special Town Meeting warrant now has 13 articles on it.

B. Special Town Meeting warrant Article 3 and 4 – Attorney Mark Reich addressed the FinCom regarding Articles 3 & 4 on the Special Town Meeting warrant as follows:

Article 3 – The McGinn property – Atty. Reich explained that the property abuts the Shpack property that the town currently owns. He said that it is currently a residential property that essentially would be gifted to the town. The town's intentions would be to change the restrictions and institutional controls and make the property open space. The new institutional controls would forbid development of the land. The town would not ask that the land be deemed "Conservation Land", because that would place restrictions on the land. The Army Corps of Engineers would do the clean up of the land and if anything hazardous were to be found, the town would not be liable. Atty. Reich went on to explain that there would be a net zero in acquisition, that acquisition costs would be offset by the tax liability. Mr. Purcell said that the town would buy the property from the McGinn family and then the McGinns would gift to the town that same amount. He said he anticipates both transactions would take place between June 7th (the day of Town Meeting) and June 30th (the end of the fiscal year), so it would be balance neutral.

Article 4 – The Shpack property – Atty. Reich explained that this town-owned property that has previously been gifted to the town by Ms. Lea Shpack is currently conservation land. This article is asking for the land to be changed from pure Conservation land to Conservation & Conveyance. Atty. Reich explained that the town is looking to change the use of this land to allow for easements for access. This article would give the Selectmen authorization to petition the courts to change the use of the property. Atty. Reich said that it would go to the State Legislature and that it could possibly take many months. He said that this petition would also add institutional controls on the property and that when institutional controls are added, it permanently changes and

restricts the use of the property, but at the same time it relieves the town of any liability if hazardous materials are found.

Motion was made by Mr. Tarantino to accept Article 3 on the Special Town Meeting warrant as written, including the transfer of \$10,500 from Free Cash. Seconded by Mr. DeLuca. Vote: All in favor. **Motion carries.**

Motion was made by Mr. Tarantino to accept Article 4 on the Special Town Meeting warrant as written. Seconded by Mr. DeLuca. Vote: All in favor. **Motion carries.**

C. Planning Board Articles – Mr. Charles Gabriel, Town Planner, addressed the FinCom regarding the zoning articles on the Annual Town Meeting warrant.

Article 29 (previously 31) – Mr. Gabriel provided the FinCom with a handout of revisions for this article. Mr. Gabriel said that this article has been re-written, but the substance is the same. This article would amend the zoning by-law so that it would be required to obtain a special permit to construct a building which equals or exceeds 10,000 sq. ft. Also, a special permit would be required at 5,000 sq. ft. increments for buildings that exceed 10,000.

Article 30 (previously 32) – Water Resource Protection – Mr. Gabriel explained that this article, which would amend the zoning by-law, is required by the DEP. He provided the FinCom with a handout of revisions recently made. He noted that a sentence that the DEP had originally asked the Zoning Board to remove has been added back in, with consent from the DEP.

Article 28 (previously 30) – White family land parcels – The request of this article is to rezone the parcels of land from industrial to residential. Mr. Gabriel explained that the land is presently being used for residential purposes, so it's actually in non-conforming use. He said that there is one industrial building on the parcels and that the rest of the land surrounds this building. He explained that the article would have all of the property rezoned as residential with the exception of the piece of property with the building on it. Mr. Gabriel said that the Zoning Board has received written approval for this from the Whites.

Mr. Graf pointed out some inconsistencies between the parcel numbers listed on the map and the parcel numbers listed in the article. Mr. Gabriel said that he would rewrite the article according to the map.

Mr. Tarantino expressed concerns about surrounding a single industrial parcel with residential parcels. Mr. Gabriel said that buffers are built in for residential properties that abut industrial property.

Motion was made by Mr. DeLuca to recommend article 28 (previously 30) as amended, per the presented re-write, including the correct parcel numbers. Seconded by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: All in favor. **Motion carries.**

Motion was made to recommend article 29 (previously 31) as amended. Seconded by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: All in favor. **Motion carries.**

Motion was made to recommend article 30 (previously 32) as amended. Seconded by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: All in favor. **Motion carries.**

D. Local Aid – Mr. Purcell informed the FinCom that on April 14th, the House Ways & Means Committee released their report stating that the Local Aid cut will not be any more than 4%. Mr. Purcell provided the FinCom with a handout outlining FY11 estimates for Local Aid. The Governor's budget totals at \$15,479,094, and the HWM budget totals at \$14,630,855. He noted that the difference between the Governor's proposed budget and the House Ways & Means proposed budget is that 4%. He also pointed out that the cuts that were made were in Chapter 70 School Aid and Unrestricted General Government Aid.

Mr. Purcell said that, if using the HWM number, and assuming that both General Government and the School Department are level-funded, the total budget will have a \$630,279 deficit. He pointed out that, because of the 70-30 split between schools and general government, the schools would then need to cut an additional \$442K from that level-funded budget.

III. Other Business

A. Town Clerk's position – Mr. Purcell said that if the upcoming election yields a result of changing the Town Clerk's position from an elected one to an appointed one, Mr. Purcell would change that full-time position from 30 hours to 35 hours and decrease the 2 part-time positions in that office by that same amount.

B. Veteran's Services District – Mr. Purcell explained that the town may enter into a partnership with the town of Easton to form a Veteran's Services District. He said that the Selectmen plan to vote on it tomorrow night. Mr. Purcell said that this partnership has the potential to save the town approximately \$33K without any loss of Veteran's services to the town.

C. Reserve Fund Transfer Request – Motion was made by Mr. Tarantino to transfer \$4K from the Finance Committee Reserve fund to account #001-210-570-5242 (Repair Maintenance Equipment) for the repair of Police Department security cameras. Seconded by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: All in favor. **Motion carries.**

D. Mr. Graf reminded the FinCom members that the final tour of the high school will be on Tuesday, April 27th at 6pm.

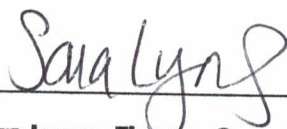
Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for April 26, 2010 at 7:30pm.

Adjournment

Motion was made by Mr. Zawasky to adjourn at 9:00 pm. Seconded by Mr. DeLuca. Vote: Unanimous.
Motion carries.

Respectfully Submitted by:



Sara Lyons, Finance Committee Secretary