

**Finance Committee Meeting**

**May 17, 2010**

**7:30 PM**

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

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**Present:** Vice-Chairman, Thomas DeLuca; Pasquale Barletta; Robert Bouchard; Jackie Desrochers; Michael Flaherty; Paul Helmreich; Cheryl McFaun (late arrival); Michael Thomas; Lee Tarantino; Philip Zawasky.

**Absent:** Chairman, Wayne Graf.

**Call to Order**

Meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm.

**I. Approval of Minutes**

**Motion** was made by Mr. Helmreich to approve the May 12, 2010 Finance Committee minutes as written. Seconded by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: All in favor, with Mr. Flaherty and Ms. Desrochers abstaining. **Motion carries.**

**II. New Business**

**Wetlands By-law –**

**Motion** was made by Mr. Thomas to recommend article 29 on the Annual Town Meeting warrant. Seconded by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: All in favor, with Ms. Desrochers and Mr. Tarantino abstaining. **Motion carries.**

**Arrowhead Village public way petition –**

**Motion** was made by Mr. Thomas to recommend article 13 on the Special Town Meeting warrant. Seconded by Mr. Zawasky. Mr. Thomas said that he is against supporting this article. Mr. Tarantino agreed and stated that the Arrowhead subdivision was built as a private way with the agreement that town resources would not be used for plowing, etc. Vote: All opposed, with Ms. Desrochers abstaining. **Motion fails.**

**Water/Sewer Department –**

Members of the Water/Sewer Commission, as well as Mr. Duane Knapp, Water Superintendent, discussed for the FinCom their **proposed budget for FY11**. Also present were Attorney Cove and Mr. Fran Yanuskiewicz, of Weston and Sampson.

Ms. Diane McElligott, the new chairwoman of the Commission, explained that the overall change from FY10 to the proposed FY11 budget is 2.34%. She said that the department have the same 2% contractual pay increase that other departments are receiving and noted that those same individuals are also taking on the additional 5% in health care premiums that other town employees are taking on. Ms. McElligott stated that the Superintendent's salary is at its cap at \$89,819. She said that there is a new contract that would go into effect, if the salary range warrant article were to allow for it, and the contract would provide for a 2 ½% increase, which would be a difference of \$4,546 because it would be retroactive for FY10. She explained that FY11 would be the second year of a 2-year contract.

Mr. DeLuca noted that the FinCom would not be supporting the salary range article.

Mr. DeLuca questioned what amount was budgeted for in the W/S budget for legal fees and pointed out that an attorney was not necessary for discussion on salary range issues. Atty. Cove noted that he worked on the salary range issue pro bono.

Ms. McElligott said that the FY11 budget would be balanced, including bond issues, with the possibility of a surplus.

There was a discussion on whether or not the Water Department would be raising the rates. Ms. McElligott explained that the rates would not be raised but the rate structure would be, therefore increasing revenue. She went on to explain that the rate ranges would be redistributed and that there would be an increase for most customers. Only the customers who use the very least amount of water, the 0-400 cubic feet range, would remain the same. Mr. Helmreich noted that in FY10 the Water Department used funds from the Water Surplus account to supplement the Water Department's operating budget. He said that he had attended a few Water



Department meetings and informed the commission that the FinCom did not want that again in FY11. The solution for this is to increase revenue by adjusting the rate structure. Mr. Knapp pointed out that a large part of the budget goes to fire protection – hydrant repairs and maintenance.

The Water/Sewer Commission also discussed **Article 27** on the Annual Town Meeting warrant regarding **land acquisition for wastewater disposal**. Atty. Cove explained that the town of Mansfield has already voted to pay appraised values for the 2 parcels of land involved. They appropriated approximately \$1.4M. He went on to say that the land is in Norton and that Mansfield does not have the authority to take this land by eminent domain as Norton does. Therefore this would be a partnership with Mansfield's money and Norton's legal ability to take the land. Ms. McElligott explained that Mansfield would provide the funding and then they would be repaid when the debt was transferred to the tri-town district. Atty. Cove stated that this article merely gives the town the authority to take the land. Mr. Tarantino explained that the actual agreement between Mansfield and Norton would be made after the authority is given at Town Meeting.

Mr. DeLuca requested further information of the Water Commission regarding **Article 2** of the Special Town Meeting warrant. Mr. Bouchard inquired about alternatives to using the **Newland Street forced main** and the taking over of the Red Mill Village pumping station. Ms. McElligott stated that when Red Mill Village was built, it was agreed that the forced main would be turned over to the town once the building was complete. She said that it would be easier and more sensible to pump into one lift station and then pump it all down the road. In addition, having sewer in the area would get more residents to tie in as there are a lot of Title V failures in that area. More tie-ins would mean more funds to support the possible creation of a Sewer Enterprise account.

**Motion** was made by Mr. Helmreich to recommend article 22 (Water Department Budget) on the Annual Town Meeting in the amount of \$3,151,383. Seconded by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: All in favor, with Ms. Desrochers and Mr. Tarantino abstaining. **Motion carries.**

### **III. Other Business**

There was discussion regarding what the final total budget figure would be for FY11. The consensus was that the amount of \$47,736,194, which reflects the 4% cut in local aid, would be used.

**Motion** was made by Mr. Thomas to identify \$47,736,194 as the total budget for FY11. Seconded by Mr. Helmreich. Vote: All in favor. **Motion carries.**

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for May 24, 2010 at 7:30pm.

### **Adjournment**

**Motion** was made by Mr. Zawasky to adjourn at 8:50 pm. Seconded by Mr. Thomas. Vote: Unanimous. **Motion carries.**

Respectfully Submitted by:

*Sara Lyons*

Sara Lyons, Finance Committee Secretary