

Finance Committee Meeting
April 10, 2013
7:30 PM
Municipal Center – Selectmen’s Conference Room

Present: Chair, Lee Tarantino; Thomas DeLuca; Richard Dorney; Stephen Evans; Paul Helmreich; Michael Thomas.

Also present: Town Manager, Michael Yunits.

Absent: Vice-Chair, Michael Flaherty; Peter Carignan; Jackie Desrochers; William Rotondi.

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 April 3, 2013 Finance Committee minutes as amended. Seconded by Mr. Dorney. Vote: All in favor. **Motion carries.**

II. New Business

Annual Town Meeting Warrant Articles:

Article 4 – TIF, South Shore Millworks –

Mr. Jeff Burton, owner, and Mr. Kurt Holmquist of South Shore Millworks addressed the FinCom regarding the request for a TIF in Article 4. They gave a little history of the business, stating that the company had been in its present location since 1996. They explained that they are requesting a TIF for a 30,000 square foot expansion to the existing building. Mr. Holmquist explained that this article is requesting a 10-year TIF that would start at 90% and would be down to 35% at the end of the TIF term. He said that the company’s revenue is approximately \$12M/year currently, and that they anticipate that it would increase to about \$20M with the expansion. Mr. Burton said that with this expansion would bring the immediate hiring of about 6-8 employees and another 15 (approximately) over a 5-year period. He also said that the addition would streamline production and increase revenue.

Article 8 – Tentative License Agreement –

Mr. Yunits informed the committee that this article has been withdrawn.

Article 20 – Second-Hand Articles By-Law –

It was explained that this article would put in place a by-law that would regulate pawn shops. Police Chief Brian Clark explained that the by-law would require pawn shop owners to obtain a license and register with the Norton Police. It also would require that a written record of precious metals transactions be kept. This record would need to be submitted weekly to the police, and police would have open access to records at any time. The by-law also places requirements of the sellers.

Mr. Yunits said that town counsel has made a few changes and has approved the by-law draft in the warrant. He also said that it is possible that the Board of Selectmen will be voting on this tomorrow night.

Motion was made by Mr. DeLuca to recommend Article 20 as written. Seconded by Mr. Thomas. Vote: All in favor. **Motion carries.**

III. Old Business

Annual Town Meeting Warrant Articles:

Article 5 – MFN Regional Wastewater District –

Mr. Stephen Wiseman, W/S Board Commissioner, informed the committee that there was a productive meeting of the Intermunicipal Association and that he feels optimistic that an agreement will be made soon and it will

happen in FY14. He said that there will be another meeting on the 21st/22nd and that he is hoping there will be a verbal agreement made.

Mr. Tarantino reminded the committee that this agreement was already approved at town meeting a few years ago and that this article would simply re-affirm the ratification.

Mr. Tarantino suggested the possibility of recommending that the W/S Board take this off the current warrant and put it back on in October once an agreement has been made.

Mr. Wiseman said that he is fine if this article does not stay on the warrant right now. He said that a non-vote would not harm the negotiations or the formation of the district.

Article 6 – Water Treatment Plant (Wells 4, 5, and 6) –

Mr. Wiseman said that they have the preliminary design plan, with costs. Mr. Yunits asked whether it was a good idea to wait until the final costs were available, possibly the October Town Meeting.

Mr. Knapp, W/S Superintendent, said that he would prefer to wait until October. He said that he would prefer to wait and get an RFP (Request For Proposal) and get concrete numbers before presenting to the town.

It was decided that the W/S Board would come back to the May 6th Finance Committee meeting to re-discuss.

Article 10 – Water Enterprise FY14 Budget –

Mr. Yunits reminded the committee that there has been a drop in salaries because there is now one less employee in the department and that there will be a new W/S Superintendent at a lower salary.

Motion was made by Mr. DeLuca to recommend Article 10 in the amount of \$3,204,447. Seconded by Mr. Thomas. Vote: All in favor. **Motion carries.**

Article 11 – Sewer Enterprise FY14 Budget –

Mr. Yunits explained the difference between the Department Request amount and the Town Manager's recommendation is \$75K. He explained that he has reduced the \$50K Legal Services request down to \$5K because the IMA is almost done and therefore there will be a lot less need for legal services. Also, he explained that he has reduced the Engineering from \$50K down to \$20K.

Motion was made Mr. DeLuca to recommend Article 11 in the amount of \$968,958. Seconded by Mr. Thomas. Vote: All in favor. **Motion carries.**

Article 13 – FY14 Capital Plan -

Mr. Yunits informed the FinCom that the Capital Improvements Committee has voted to remove the 2 Fire Department purchases. He said that these 2 purchases would now come from the Fire Department budget.

Motion was made by Mr. Helmreich to approve the total Capital expenditure of \$1,004,894, breakdown as follows: \$436,021 Total Capital request; \$120,000 Total Borrowing; \$418,000 Total Water Surplus; \$30,873 Total Sewer. Seconded by Mr. DeLuca.

Discussion: Mr. Tarantino questioned whether in the future it would be possible to move funds from the Ambulance Fund to the Fire Department budget based on ambulance use. He noted that presently ambulance supplies, etc. come from the Fire Department budget.

Mr. Yunits stated that the present balance in the Ambulance Fund is \$681K. He also said that Emergency Medical expenses also come from the Ambulance Fund.

Vote: All in favor. **Motion carries.**

Article 19 – New By-Law: Marijuana Dispensaries –

Motion was made by Mr. Helmreich to recommend Article 19 as written. Seconded by Mr. DeLuca. Vote: All in favor. **Motion carries.**

FY14 Departmental Budgets:

#300 School Department –

Dr. Martes, Interim Superintendent, as well as a few School Committee members, were present to discuss the FY14 Schools budget. Dr. Joe Baetta, incoming Superintendent, was also present.

Dr. Martes reminded the committee that the last time he spoke with the FinCom the Charter School projections were at 188 students for FY14. He said that it is now down to 181 students. He said he is seeing a trend of students moving back to the Norton Schools. Dr. Martes reminded the committee that each Charter School student costs the town approximately \$10K. Therefore, he said, these 7 students could be considered as getting back \$70K as additional revenue to be considered for appropriation.

Dr. Martes said that he will have a better idea about possible retirements in the next few weeks.

He also said that the House released their budget today and that there is an additional allocation of \$83K for Norton's General Government.

It was decided that the School Department would return on May 6th to re-discuss.

#210 Police Department –

Motion was made by Mr. DeLuca to reconsider the Police Department budget #210-510. Seconded by Mr. Thomas. Vote: All in favor. **Motion carries.**

Mr. Yunits informed the committee that the new number for the PD budget is \$2,376,952.

Motion was made by Mr. DeLuca to recommend budget #210-510 in the amount of \$2,376,952. Seconded by Mr. Thomas.

Mr. Yunits informed the members that there isn't any retroactive over-time pay included for other years, only for longevity.

Vote: Yes - Mr. DeLuca, Mr. Helmreich, and Mr. Tarantino; No – Mr. Thomas and Mr. Evans; Abstention - Mr. Dorney. **Motion carries.**

Mr. Yunits informed the committee that the Board of Selectmen will be discussing the Veteran's District tomorrow night at their meeting.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for April 17, 2013 at 7:30 pm.

Adjournment

Motion was made by Mr. Helmreich to adjourn at 9:10 pm. Seconded by Mr. DeLuca. Vote: Unanimous. **Motion carries.**

Documents Referenced: Minutes of April 3, 2013
Annual Town Meeting Warrant draft
Updates Estimated Revenues and Expenditures
FY14 Capital Plan
Water and Sewer Budgets

Respectfully Submitted by:

Lee Tarantino, Finance Committee Chair

Date Approved

Sara Lyons, Finance Committee Secretary