

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
March 6, 1991



Present: M. Brown, J. Desrochers, M. Hackett, P. Helmreich, B. Kimball, C. MacQuown, B. Nugent, D. Ward

P. Helmreich informed Committee of letter received from Robert Kelliher concerning the Reserve Fund and how much was spent and on what in fiscal year 1990 and 1991. P. Helmreich said he would provide that information to Mr. Kelliner.

On the schedule tonight, the Communications Commission and the Water and Sewer Departments.

P. Helmreich also informed the Committee that he had definitive information relating to the proposed by-law regarding fees allocated by the Town Treasurer/Collector and Town Clerk. S. Lombard has received information from Town Counsel giving the following opinion: If the town enacts the by-law requiring all town offices to pay all their fees into the town treasury, such fees cannot be retained by the Town Clerk or the Town Collector. They will only be entitled to the salary established for their positions and that would apply to the present Town Clerk and Town Collector as well. Town counsel's opinion is that passage of the by-law would be enough and that the Town Clerk and Town Treasurer/Collector, as well as subsequent persons to fill those two positions, must accept the salary passed at Town Meeting.

P. Helmreich noted that he has received a letter from the O'Laughlin Construction Company disagreeing with the proposed cuts in the Building Inspection Department. P. Helmreich noted that this is the third letter he has received concerning the proposed Building Inspection Department cuts.

Communications Commission

H. Baker discussed enhanced 911 service (Article 20 in the Warrant). He noted that the Governor signed a bill enabling legislation for the State, through the State Emergency Telecommunications Board, to supply the equipment which will be funded through non-business abusers of 411. H. Baker stated that equipment and maintenance will not cost the Town. The Town only has to supply personnel. He also noted that if the Town accepts the provisions of the bill, it would be two to three years before 911 enhancement could be implemented.

Discussion followed on reduction of phone costs, financing, and assurance of funding.

Article 15

Discussion next turned to quarterly tax bills. J. Clark informed the Committee that she lost two people in her department. She also stated that in order to process 24,000 bills, the Assessors

Office and the Tax Collector's Office have to have a program change before bills can be sent out on July 1. B. McCaffrie stated that there would not be enough time to get the program implemented for 1992 tax bills. Discussion followed on whether it nor it would be practical to move article 15 at this time or whether it might be more appropriately placed on the October, 1991, warrant for possible implementation in fiscal 1993.

Water Department

D. Callahan stated that, except for union contracts, all salaries are level funded and all line items are level funded with the exception of postage, maintenance of hydrants, and telephone costs. Discussion followed on the water surplus account.

Sewer Department

D. Callahan noted that all line items are level funded with the exception of electricity which took a huge jump as a result of 6 additional pump stations coming on line. He also noted that sewage treatment costs paid to the Town of Mansfield have doubled because the Town now has to pay their full share.

Discussion followed on costs for gas and propane and electricity. D. Callahan to get those estimates to the Committee. D. Callahan also to give Committee the revenue figures resulting from the Knollwood subdivision hookup. D. Callahan also noted that he is checking to see if there is a small cities grant to assist low income tenants to hook up to the sewer line.

P. Helmreich suggested that D. Callahan delete Article 14 (transfer the sum of \$5,000 from the Water Surplus Account to the Water Salaries Account for the purpose of funding overtime due to construction projects) from the May warrant and put it in the Special Town Meeting warrant, since the money cannot be used until July 1 if it is voted in the regular warrant. Discussion followed on the water surplus account and Article 40 (to amend the Town of Norton Zoning by-law Section 4.1).

Other Business

Kevin McCaffrie came before the Committee to inform members that he is unable to purchase software for the allotted amount of \$3,500. He stated that he could purchase a computer and software for the sum of \$3,100, which would be an expenditure of funds in a different manner but for the same appropriation. Discussion followed. The Committee indicated its approval of the proposed expenditure.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 10:00 p.m.