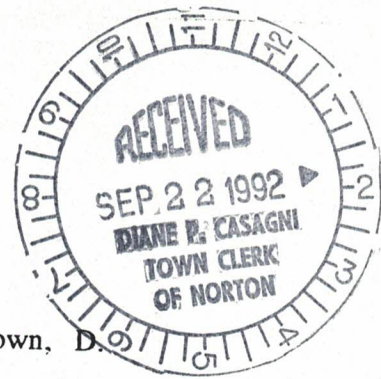


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FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

MARCH 31, 1992



PRESENT: M. Brown, W. Gouveia, M. Hackett, P. Helmreich, C. MacQuown, D. Summerfield, P. Zawasky.

Chair Hackett called the meeting to order at 7:35p.m.

Chair Hackett reminded the FinCom of the meeting on April 1, 1992 at 7:30 p.m. at the Norton High School regarding the Education Reform Bill presented by Representative Roosevelt.

A request from Ms. M. Bryan, a member of the Norton Community, was presented to the Chair for a copy of the FinCom By-Laws. It was suggested she contact the Town Clerk.

Chair Hackett then went over the FinCom's packages which included the following: A letter from Ms. Myers, Chair of the Norton Public School Committee, which contained some of the answers to the FinCom's questions on the School's FY'93 budget. Mr. Gouveia stated that although the letter states the total increase in salaries, the question still remains unanswered as to the how the increases were determined. As stated by Mr. Helmreich, section 6.6 of the Town Charter shows that the FinCom's request for this information is totally appropriate and within its guidelines. A request will be made for further information.

Also in the FinCom's packages was a letter from Fire Chief Burgess detailing a shortfall in salaries and that a request for \$6,000 will be forthcoming for the month of June. The reason for the request is that the Chief made an error in his budget and did not consider three days in the current fiscal year. Chief Burgess stated that two firefighters will be laid off in May. Also discussed were the EMT's on staff in the Fire Department. The Senior Firefighters are not required to be EMT's. There may also be two firefighters laid off in June. These layoffs will save approximately \$1,000 per week. The Town Manager stated that the Chief's weekly salary sheets are being monitored closely. Mr. Gouveia stated that he would be reluctant to put more money in the budget until the staffing level is back where it was voted on at Town Meeting last year. Mrs. Brown questioned the Injury and Vacancy balances - although the FinCom's latest printout shows zero expended, there has been approximately \$5,000 spent in that account. The current balance in the Fire Department's budget is \$190,637.54.

Mr. Gouveia then made a motion that the Finance Committee write a letter to the Board of Selectmen asking for their input on the policies they plan to implement on the potential shortfall in the Fire Department. Seconded by Mr. Helmreich. In favor: Unanimous. Motion carried.

Chair Hackett then welcomed the Town Manager, Stephen Lombard, to the meeting to discuss his FY'93 Budget.

The meeting then continued with the Town Manager and the FinCom going through the ledger sheets, prepared by the Town Manager, which contained the FinCom's

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recommendations on the same line (as presented at the last FinCom meeting by Mr. Helmreich).

Points of discussion were: Planning Board Administrator - asked if the Town Manager would support an \$8,000 reduction in salary, he replied affirmatively. Also questioned was who has ultimate responsibility for the hiring and firing of an administrator or town planner for the Planning Board. Mr. Lombard stated that the Planning Board gives him recommendations, but that he has the power to hire or fire. Mr. Helmreich then noted that the Town Charter states that this may be true for appointed committees, but not necessarily for the Planning Board as they are elected officials. The FinCom then suggested that Mr. Lombard request an opinion on this from Legal counsel.

Further points of discussion: Police; Dog Officer; Communications Department; School Department; Board of Health; Insurance Compensation; Unemployment - Mr. Lombard has budgeted zero for FY'93. The latest print out shows a balance of \$150,000, there may be \$100,000 left at the end of the fiscal year. This may be rolled over into next year's budget. The reason for this explanation is that if the Overrides do not pass, there will be layoffs in the Library, Council on Aging and the Recreation Department - according to Mr. Lombard's budget.

After some further discussion, Chair Hackett thanked Mr. Lombard who stated that he is looking forward to working together on the budget process.

Chair Hackett then asked for a motion to approve the FinCom's meeting minutes of January 13, 1992, as written. So moved by Mr. Helmreich, seconded by Mrs. Summerfield. In favor: Unanimous. Motion carried.

Mr. Gouveia then asked what the FinCom's next steps are. After some discussion, it was decided that no votes will be taken until after the FinCom's Public Hearing. A request was also made for the FinCom to prepare an impact statement on whether or not the overrides pass. Discussion then followed where Mr. Gouveia stated he felt the FinCom should make recommendations on the Overrides. Ms. Hackett stated that the FinCom should remain neutral and just present a budget. Mr. Helmreich noted that the FinCom is appointed to advise the community. Mr. Helmreich asked if a ruling from Town Counsel is necessary on this point. Mrs. Summerfield and Mr. Gouveia discussed what the printed FinCom presentation would contain - just cause and effect of recommendations or should it also include a recommendation on the overrides.

Chair Hackett noted that the FinCom has not yet received a copy of the final Warrant Articles.

There being no further business, Mrs. Summerfield moved that the meeting adjourn, seconded by Mr. Helmreich. In favor: Unanimous. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 10:05 p.m.

