

TOWN OF NORTON
FINANCE COMMITTEE
Minutes of the Meeting
April 24, 2002

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NORTON TOWN CLERK

CALL TO ORDER: 7:40pm by Chair, Paul Helmreich

Present: Paul Helmreich, Donald Brown, Donna Summerfield, Mike Fiore, Jackie Desrochers,
Bill Gouveia, Philip Zawasky, Mike Thomas, John Luti

Absent:

MINUTES

A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes of the April 10, 2002 meeting.
Vote: 7 in favor; 2 abstentions (Zawasky & Summerfield)

A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes of the April 17, 2002 meeting as amended
(Gouveia was opposed to Article 23).

Vote: Unanimous

PUBLIC HEARING

At 8:00pm Chairman Helmreich opened the Public Hearing. He reiterated the crisis status of the Town's Budget. Norton is facing reduced revenues from the State due to a recession that was already in process in late summer and escalated by the 9/11 tragedy. Norton will be at the tax levy this year. State aid is the biggest factor in the budget this year. Projected cut of 5% less in state aid equates to \$698,100 less in state aid. The Finance Committee will be recommending \$698,100 to come from the Stabilization Fund to help fund Town Budget for next year. At the present time, the Stabilization Fund has a balance of approximately \$1,800,000. It is projected that the budget will be at crisis status for at least two (2) years...possibly longer.

Health insurance for Town employees is expected to increase by approximately \$600,000. Budget for Town Government is up by \$474,000. School Department projected budgeted for next year is up by \$712,000 from last year. Town employees are being cut by ten (10) full and part-time positions. The School Department is cutting seventeen (17) full and part-time positions. If cuts from state aid are worse than the projected 5%, other cuts might be taken.

Mr. Helmreich offered to entertain questions from the audience. Seeing none, a motion was made by Fiore and seconded by Brown to close the Public Hearing at 8:12pm. Vote: Unanimous

WARRANT ARTICLES

Article 6 - Capital Outlay

Brown made a motion seconded by Fiore to recommend \$651,923. \$31,500 to come from Ambulance Fund.

Vote: Unanimous

Finance Committee Meeting
April 24, 2002
Page 2

Article 6 - Capital Outlay (cont'd)

Discussion

School Dept. – First priority for the School Dept. is access to the fields at Norton Middle School.

Highway Dept. – Sweeper has two more years left on obligation

Fire Dept. – Gouveia made a motion seconded by Thomas to reduce the line item for the Chief's car from \$26,500 to \$19,000 for the purpose of purchasing a Ford Taurus.

Vote: 8 in favor; 1 opposed (Summerfield)

Fire Dept. – Gouveia made a motion to remove line item to replace the Dept.'s Suburban, affectionately known as the "workhorse" by the firefighters. After lengthy discussions regarding safety issues with this vehicle, Fire Dept. Deputy Chief, Rick Gomes came to the FinCom Meeting to explain why the Fire Dept. felt it was necessary to replace the Suburban. Motion to remove the line item was withdrawn.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 10:15pm.

NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, May 1, 2002 @ 7:30pm

Respectfully Submitted by:

Christine McSweeney
Secretary Norton Finance Committee