

**Town of Norton
Finance Committee Minutes
Monday, February 13, 2006 at 7:30 p.m.
Municipal Center - Selectmen's Meeting Room**

RECEIVED
2006 APR -7 PM 3:59
NORTON TOWN CLERK

Call To Order

Meeting was called to Order at 7:30 p.m.

Present: Tom Deluca, Jackie Desrochers, Angel Doyle, Mike Fiore, Paul Helmreich, Lee Tarantino, Mike Thomas, and Philip Zawasky. Donna Summerfield was absent.

1. Approval of Minutes

MOTION was made by Mr. Fiore to approve the December 7, 2005 Finance Committee Minutes of Meeting as written. Second by Mr. Tarantino. Vote: All in Favor. MOTION CARRIES.

2. New Business

it was noted Mr. Thomas would be arriving to this meeting about 8:30 p.m.

Mr. Purcell distributed sheet and explained estimated revenues and expenditures sheet (new growth at \$300,000). Building permits are down which suggests things are slowing down. Recommending \$1M free cash to operating budget.

Snow/ice deficit already at \$31,000. School business assistance this fiscal year is a separate number (overpaid and no one had noticed overpayments-overpaid more than \$1,482,000). Discussion ensued.

It was discussed after Town had about 2-3 years of payments, Town had a non-payment year which created no free cash, etc.

Mr. Purcell said he put \$168,000 in water reimbursement but recalculating that entire cost.

Ch70 local aid is up about \$100,800 and doubted a material change in Ch70 formula. He said the focus has to be raising amount of aid per student. (\$463,000 additional on lottery (capping). Mr. Purcell aid he will attend a meeting at end of month on new formula.

Mr. Purcell referenced charter school tuition assessment reimbursement; \$45,000 less in reimbursement under Romney plan; Town is getting less help.

Estimated local receipts (excise taxes) - \$151,000 estimated increase in motor vehicle excise taxes. He said there was better F05 vs. F04 back taxes and commended Mrs. Donovan, Treasurer, for this.

\$334,000 growth (\$1/4M) available for discretionary spending. Expenditures were explained and discussed at \$219,837.

Discussion ensued on Reservoir/boat ramp. Possible purchasing of property by Town in that area.

2/13/06 Finance Committee Minutes
Page 2

Mr. Purcell discussed employee benefits: pensions are up (\$178,288). Health insurance at 10.4% and could drive down to 8.4% if co-pay gets changed from \$5.00 to \$10.00; from \$25.00 to \$50.00 for emergency room visits. Plan benefit designs to be reviewed on an annual basis. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Purcell discussed revenue and expenditure sheet: \$10.6M in fixed and shared expenses.

School Committee voted on \$24,951,563.00. Mr. Purcell said he offered to School Committee he could work with them on circuit breaker (about \$785,511), but they do not want him to do so. Mr. Purcell said \$2.2M is override number as of now.

Mr. Purcell said regional school budget he level-funded, but knows it won't be exact number he funded at.

Board of Selectmen will vote Thursday night whether or not to put on ballot and if before or after Town Meeting.

At 8:40 p.m. Mr. Thomas arrived.

Mr. Purcell said new circuit breaker number is not part of \$24,951,563 is what School Comm. told him.

Mr. Helmreich said he believed it was incumbent of this Finance Committee to take a position on ballot first or other alternative/procedure. Beneficial to wait until Wednesday night's FinCom meeting.

Mr. Purcell stated he consulted with Town Counsel on this issue. Attorney Goldberg recommended to hold Town meeting first and Mr. Purcell stated he also recommends this because a real number will be arrived at and able to be looked at. He said he would recommend this Thursday evening at Board of Selectmen's meeting. He said there seemed to be some conflict with Town's bylaws and statute (45 days Town's bylaws says and 35 days per statute).

Mr. Helmreich said he personally believed it should go to Town meeting before ballot, and Wednesday night FinCom to take a position where Town is at and what is needed as a whole Town.

Mr. Fiore stated \$1M in free cash by Town Manager is already factored in.

Mr. Kimball said a directive needed from FinCom on Wednesday evening and Board of Selectmen does listen, in his opinion, of what FinCom says. Also he felt it important meeting is televised on cable.

Mr. Thomas said Town-side also has needs and FinCom needs to know what those needs are.

At 9:15 p.m. Mr. Tarantino left meeting.

MOTION was made by Mr. Deluca to authorize deficit spending for snow account for Dept. 423. Second by Mr. Fiore. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

Adjournment

MOTION was made by Mr. Deluca to Adjourn at 9:40 p.m. Second by Mr. Fiore. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

Janet Sweeney
Recording Secretary