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NORTON TOWN CLERK

**Finance Committee Meeting
April 2, 2007
Municipal Center - Selectmen's Conference Room**

Call To Order

Meeting was called to Order at 7:31 p.m.

Present: Chairman, Paul Helmreich; Vice-Chair, Lee Tarantino, Tom DeLuca, Wayne Graf, Mike Thomas, Mike Fiore, and Philip Zawasky. Jackie Desrochers was absent. Town Manager was also present.

1. Approval of Minutes

MOTION was made by Mr. Thomas to approve the Finance Committee Minutes of Meeting of March 21, 2007 as amended. Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

Communications/Correspondence:

A letter to Mr. Purcell and Mr. Kimball was received on Thursday, 3/29/07 from Dr. Ansary that override was set at \$1.67M set by School Committee. School Committee will attend Board of Selectmen meeting on April 5.

Mr. Helmreich spoke of needs-based and adequate budget. Mr. Helmreich said he e-mailed Dr. Ansary and has received no response yet. One typo in budget about \$100,000 being incorrect and last week Board of Selectmen and School Committee held meeting on 3/29 and reviewed various items and problems. Board of Selectmen urged school committee to decide on override and if so an amount needed.

Also need to schedule a public hearing possibly on April 30, 2007; formal hearing needs to be advertised in newspaper.

Water Commissioners to be in Wed. evening and Planning Board in when they are ready.. Herb Ellison of Library said they are looking at a level-funded budget but they should still come in (impact of level-funded and level-service budget beneficial). Mr. Helmreich asked Mr. Purcell to have Library Board come in.

2. New Business

Mr. Purcell explained budget books. One message in past was there was too much paper (this one has less volume) If any member needs more written backup material let him know and he'll add to it.

Mr. Purcell discussed various items, including but not limited to, F07 tax levy calcs and actual compared. A budgeted tax levy he thought of \$22,052,379. Since Fall Town Meeting new sheets shows different number from '07; Town picks up \$300,000 (error) and was underreported. The positive swing = \$311,502. So '08 estimate is \$23,172,978 for total tax levy (now a surplus number).

Mr. Purcell spoke of another change on expenditure side. The day after their last meeting F07 and F08 Town's sewer bills from Mansfield were substantially lower than in past. \$685,000 sewer income estimate. He would like to check number (lower bill = lower sewer tax bill). Discussion ensued. Sewer rates increased last year for operating and capitalization expenses. Mr. Purcell wants to give number more study (hopes betterment income will go away). About \$160,000 less.

Town Accountant, James Puello, discussed Gasbe 45 and changeover from UNIX to Windows based system. \$11,000 is amount needed and Mr. Puello explained conversion to Windows-based. If ever Data National does not support system anymore as it is older it would be costly.

President of Data National, Rob Raymond, said he was working to upgrade system and Unix system is not "latest" nor "greatest". Hardware discussed and would include billing collections; water and sewer billing, etc. Enough errors are occurring where Town should upgrade, however, not an immediate issue. Current system is antiquated at 17 years old.

Hardware company is saying Town needs to do more about this system. It was noted purchase orders are all done manually now and ability to take a Excel templates and plug into database so not needing to rekey it.

Mr. Helmreich stated \$70,000 appears to be figure. H asked about a "bandaid fix" and if training was also factored into this figure.

Mr. Raymond said Unix server to buy would be about \$15-\$20,000 and would "buy" some time.

Mr. Fiore agreed it was something Town needed to do.

Mr. Tarantino asked about maintenance fee; upgrades.

Mr. Raymond said \$25,000 is maintenance fee/training/hardware and conversion. He said hardware quoted in price is configured with this system.

Mr. Kimball, Chairman of Board of Selectmen, said a \$140,000 grant for training in company he formerly worked for was obtained. Possibly a grant could be looked into.

Mr. Raymond said \$16,000 is training amount. Also, a helpline is offered and advantage of keeping up with software from transfer.

Loss of date was discussed. Mr. Raymond said they have done about 22 projects like these for municipalities and have never gone back to fix a problem. He said Hull and Sandwich conversions happened over one week. Mr. Puello had a list of people/references to talk to and upgrading much easier than a whole new system integration.

Fixed and Shared expenses:

Mr. Purcell referenced binder and reviewed info with Committee. He discussed existing debt summary and two factors in decrease in debt obligations from '07: Lincoln Woods note has gone away and interest expenses get smaller each year. Overall debt to be down in '08 from '07.

Mr. Purcell discussed debt ceiling

MOTION was made by Mr. Fiore to approve \$1,590,395 obligation Town has at present of existing date and figure to change if needed (570-711), under Maturing Debt. Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

MOTION was made by Mr. Fiore to approve interest of \$841,912 for debt service (750-590). Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

Other areas reviewed were pension, health insurance, medicare and social security

Employee Benefits: Bristol County offered a discount on a single payment vs. a double payment A net gain of \$12,000 to \$13,000.

MOTION was made by Mr. Fiore to recommend \$1,835,289 for account 910-510, employee benefits-personal services. Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

MOTION was made by Mr. Fiore to recommend \$5,856,012 for employee benefits, other personal services, account 510-511. Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

MOTION was made by Mr. Fiore to recommend \$300,000 for other charges and expenses, employee benefits, 910-570. Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

Unemployment:

MOTION was made by Mr. Fiore to recommend \$130,000 for Unemployment Compensation, 911-570. Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

MOTION was made by Mr. Fiore to recommend \$115,000.00 for account 940-540, miscellaneous/supplies. Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

MOTION was made by Mr. Fiore to recommend \$390,000 for account 940-570, miscell./other charges and expenses. Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

MOTION was made by Mr. Fiore to recommend \$150,000 from FinCom Reserve Fund (transfer) to 132-502. Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

Legal Services:

Mr. Purcell said he is struggling to stay within \$80,000 this year and very careful to charge off to appropriate account.

MOTION was made by Mr. Fiore to recommend \$80,000 for account 151-520, legal services/purchase of services. Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

Tax Title Foreclosure:

Mr. Purcell spoke of a different kind of auction (abutters' auctions). Not a cash "need" when this process started; a question/interest of abutters. \$540,000+ auction had yielded.

MOTION was made by Mr. Fiore to recommend \$40,000 for Tax Foreclosure (158-570), general expenses. Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

Elections:

Discussion ensued on override (nothing in number for override).

MOTION was made by Mr. Fiore to recommend \$550.00 for Elections, personal services (162-510). Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

MOTION was made by Mr. Fiore to recommend \$22,808.00 for Election, Other Charges and Expenses (162-570). Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

MOTION was made by Mr. Fiore to recommend \$2,914.00 for Southeastern Regional Planning (176-560). Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

MOTION was made by Mr. Fiore to recommend \$3,500.00, Town Report/Services (195-520). Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

Postage: It was noted to take no action on postage until increase looked into.

MOTION was made by Mr. Fiore to recommend \$2,000.00 for Sealer Weights and Measures, Other Charges and Expenses (244-570). Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

MOTION was made by Mr. Fiore to recommend \$94,282 for street lighting, other charges and expenses (425-570). Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

MOTION was made by Mr. Fiore to recommend \$3,956.00 for Sanitary Landfill, Other Charges and Expense, (438-570). Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

MOTION was made by Mr. Fiore to recommend zero for Moderator. Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

MOTION was made by Mr. Fiore to recommend \$2355.00 for Finance Committee (131-570)-level-funded. Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

MOTION was made by Mr. Fiore to recommend \$100, Web Committee (156-570). Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

MOTION was made by Mr. Fiore to recommend \$300 for ZBA (177-570). Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

MOTION was made by Mr. Fiore to recommend \$100 for Industrial Development Commission. Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

MOTION was made by Mr. Fiore to recommend \$2,000 - Tree Warden. Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

MOTION was made by Mr. Fiore to recommend \$100 for Commission on Disability. Second by Mr. Zawasky.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Zawasky asked Mr. Purcell about the renaming of said commission?

Mr. Purcell said he would look into this and if not will make change. he noted tab section of binder says "commission on disability".

Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

MOTION was made by Mr. Fiore to recommend \$300-Historical Commission. Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

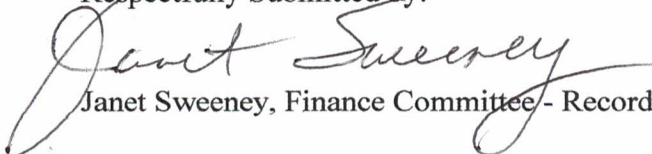
MOTION was made by Mr. Fiore to recommend \$1,500.00-Memorial and Veterans Day. Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

MOTION was made by Mr. Fiore to recommend \$300.00-Historical District Commission. Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

Adjournment

MOTION was made to Adjourn at 9:30 p.m. by Mr. Zawasky. Second by Mr. DeLuca. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

Respectfully Submitted by:


Janet Sweeney, Finance Committee - Recording Secretary