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NORTON TOWN CLERK

**Finance Committee Meeting  
April 23, 2007  
Municipal Center - Selectmen's Conference Room**

**Call To Order**

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

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

**New Business**

Mr. Purcell discussed handouts distributed to FinCom: "Estimated Revenues and Expenditures"; "Balance of General Government Accounts: level-funded and level-service exercise"; "General Government Budget Summary"; and "Funding Worksheet (for special and annual)".

Mr. Purcell said there was a new decrease of \$48.00 for vocational school

Mr. Purcell said he had not looked at water budget. Some linkage between Middle School repairs and debt exclusion but no levy capacity built in on "what if" (only what is known).

School Committee: Yelle and Middle School budget and two impact statements.

Mr. Helmreich said Dr. Ansay's communication was via e-mail from her and he did not open on Friday but opened on Saturday and he apologized for this.

Instruction Supplies : 168 should say 147.

102 should say 110

102 (last column) should say 110.

Dr. Ansay explained impact on this year's budget. Staffing: 16 positions eliminated. Program changes (gifted and talented taken away, etc.).

Next year library remains closed. \$147,000 reduced instruction supplies and all professional development eliminated except courses by contract. Talented and gifted eliminated, special education hardware and achievement testing also eliminated.

Custodian and paraprofessional and 1/2 time clerical person cut. \$66,132 went to supplies last time and sped tuitions at \$153,424 increase and two new sped students and collaborative placement rate increase effective 3/31/07.

Level Service discussed; possibly increase of fees for transportation and athletics fees. Libraries to remain closed. \$10,000 for professional development. This maintains custodian position paraprofessional, etc. (short even with \$219,000). This budget = \$207,739.00.

Needs Based budget voted by School Committee. This is an increase but does not reinstate all positions. Would eliminate all user fees; all libraries to be open; instruction supplies budgeted and \$19,000 for professional development. Keeps custodian and paraprofessional and reinstates five teachers at Norton High School (100 new students) and terminated five teachers. One teacher at L.G. Nourse with a class size of 27 and one teacher at Middle School. This budget is \$1,215,733.00 over FY07 (still short and would required an override).

Mr. Helmreich referenced needs based budget and possibly to keep user fees in and asked if there was any consideration to that?

Dr. Ansay said it would be \$230,000 less without taking user fees out. She said this discussion did come up. Families would be hit two times though; some families paying \$800 yearly in user fees. Discussion ensued.

Mr. O'Reilly asked how \$219,000 was derived at? Mr. Helmreich said it was derived from three different sources: 1) change in levy limit; 2) reduction in charges from Mansfield sewer; 3) increase in state aid. It was a 70/30 split (school receiving 70%).

Mr. DeLuca said health insurance must be taken into consideration for new hires (\$996 is something in excess of \$1M).

Dr. Ansay said it comes out of a different area.

Dr. Ansay said she worries about the next couple of years for schools. If they do not reinstate now it will be a large hole.

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Special education costs were discussed. Out of district students was noted on last page of budget sheet (cost of school, etc.). Dr. Ansay said 21% of students are on IEP Plans; many districts are at 18%.

Mr. Thomas discussed health insurance and reopening contracts.

Dr. Ansay said they are in negotiations with all of their unions to increase co-pay. This is the last year for all contracts and they "heard "Town boards and understand.

Mrs. Gradie said they are well aware of health insurance issue and something needs to be done.

Yelle School: repair of beams needed but also need sills.

Middle School: Replacement of windows discussed.

Accountability of contractor(s) was discussed.

Mr. Tarantino asked if responsibility will be written into contract?

Mr. Helmreich asked if responsibility will be with Russell Barr or contractor? He said it needs to be clear on where warranty/responsibility lies.

Mr. Tarantino asked why they are not running both projects the same (Yelle and Middle Schools and overseeing)?

Dr. Ansay said there is a difference of magnitude and may be able to do some overseeing.

Mr. Fiore asked if financial health of Russell Barr was looked into. Former contractors (i.e., Westcott) are out of business.

Dr. Ansay said certified financial statement from auditor received. Mr. Steve O'Connor, lives in community and does this for a living to help in overseeing Yelle project along with Mr. Paul Doherty. Russell Barr will be at Town Meeting also.

Mr. Zawasky asked about the elimination of windows?

Dr. Ansay said she would look into that.

Mr. Helmreich said at May 14 Town Meeting they will recess and reconvene on May 23.



Mr. Helmreich said projections for Yelle are based on \$150,000; contract fee is \$18,000. He asked if \$18,000 is included in \$150,000 contract fee.

Dr. Ansay said it was not included. She said she was attempting to cover cost in maintenance lines for schools.

Mr. Helmreich said bids will not be in for Special Town Meeting on May 14.

Dr. Ansay said all information will be in for 5/23/07 Town Meeting. \$150,000 should be number for Yelle School

**MINUTES**

**MOTION was made by Mr. Fiore to accept the Finance Committee Minutes of 3/28/07 as amended. Vote: All in Favor, except of Mr. DeLuca abstaining. MOTION CARRIES.**

**MOTION was made by Mr. Fiore to approve the Finance Committee Minutes of 4/11/07 as amended. Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.**

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**Acceptance of Roads:**

Mr. Helmreich said all was signed off on roads but not Maple Street petition.

**Article 6:**

**MOTION was made by Mr. DeLuca to accept Fuller Drive as a public way. Second by Mr. Fiore. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.**

**Article 7:**

**MOTION was made by Mr. DeLuca to accept McTee Drive as a public way. Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.**

**Article 8:**

**MOTION was made by Mr. DeLuca to accept Birch Brook Lane as a public way. Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.**

**Article 9:**

**MOTION was made by Mr. DeLuca to accept Goodwin Drive as a public way. Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.**

**Article 10:**

**MOTION was made by Mr. DeLuca to accept Brahman Drive as a public way. Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.**

**Article 11:**

**MOTION was made by Mr. DeLuca to accept Tucker Place as a public way. Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.**

**Article 12:**

**MOTION was made by Mr. DeLuca to accept Susan Circle as a public way. Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.**

**Article 13:**

**MOTION was made by Mr. DeLuca to accept Hampshire Court as a public way. Second by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.**

**Communications/Correspondence:**

Mr. Helmreich said at Wednesday's meeting FinCom to act on town manager's budgets and vote on town manager's revenue based budget and consider level-service budget and vote a revenue based budget for schools and consider recommendation of override and which one and what amount.

Mr. Tarantino said the override does not have to go to Town Meeting. He said there is an obligation to tell Town what is requested and what Town has funds for. It is not FinCom's responsibility to come up with a balanced budget. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Helmreich said he will check with town manager on that.

Mr. Helmreich said FinCom can only recommend one budget.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION was made by Mr. Zawasky to Adjourn at 9:15 p.m. Second by Mr. Fiore. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.**

Respectfully Submitted by:

Janet Sweeney  
Recording Secretary