

Finance Committee Meeting

January 26, 2009

7:30 PM

Municipal Center – Selectmen's Conference Room

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NORTON TOWN CLERK

Present: Chairman, Michael Thomas; Vice-Chair, Wayne Graf; Pasquale Barletta; Paul Helmreich; Lynn Regan; Lee Tarantino; Town Manager, James Purcell.

Absent: Robert Bouchard; Thomas DeLuca; Jackie Desrochers; Cheryl McFaun; Philip Zawasky.

Call to Order

Meeting was called to Order at 7:40 pm.

I. Approval of Minutes

Motion was made by Mr. Helmreich to approve the January 21, 2009 Finance Committee minutes as amended. Second by Ms. Regan. Vote: All in favor, with Mr. Graf abstaining. **Motion carries.**

II. New Business

Special Town Meeting Warrant –

Article 1 – Mr. Purcell provided the FinCom with a handout outlining the unpaid bills to be included in Article 1. This included an additional bill in the amount of \$179.51 for a wage expense for the Assessor's office. This brings the total to \$1,542.69.

Motion was made by Mr. Graf to reconsider Article 1. Second by Mr. Helmreich. Vote: Unanimous. **Motion carries.**

Motion was made by Mr. Helmreich to recommend \$1,542.69 for Unpaid Bills, Article 1. Second by Mr. Barletta. Vote: Unanimous. **Motion carries.**

Mr. Helmreich suggested reopening Article 1 to state in the motion where the funding would come from.

Motion was made by Mr. Helmreich to reconsider Article 1. Second by Mr. Graf. Vote: Unanimous. **Motion carries.**

Motion was made by Mr. Helmreich to recommend \$1,542.69 for Unpaid Bills, Article 1, coming from Free Cash. Second by Mr. Graf. Vote: Unanimous. **Motion carries.**

Article 2 – Mr. Purcell provided the FinCom with a handout outlining the Operating Budget Supplements to be included in Article 2. Mr. Thomas, referring to the 2 Miscellaneous expenses (for Worker's Comp.) listed on the handout, said that the goal is to pay as many expenses as possible now while there is still Free Cash available.

Motion was made by Mr. Helmreich to recommend Article 2 in the amount of \$216,467.00 to come from Free Cash. Second by Mr. Barletta. Vote: Unanimous. **Motion carries.**

Attorney Laura Pawle, addressed the FinCom regarding Articles 4, 5, & 6 as follows:

Article 4 – This article is a follow up to the vote at the October '08 Town Meeting that did not include "allowing access" to the water tower through an easement on the Senior Center parcel and the Salt Shed parcel.

Article 5 – This article would ratify 2 existing lease agreements involving the telecommunications carriers that have facilities on the old water tower.

Article 6 – This article consists of 2 parts: (1) to allow the Board of Water/Sewer commissioners to extend existing leases and enter into new leases with telecommunications carriers at the Cottage Street property, and (2) to ratify a lease with a single telecommunications company involving the land at 14 Newland Street.

Mr. Purcell said that the responsibility for the upkeep of these particular leases lies with the Board of Water/Sewer commissioners and the Selectmen.

Motion was made by Mr. Graf to recommend Article 4. Second by Mr. Helmreich. Vote: Unanimous. **Motion carries.**

Motion was made by Mr. Graf to recommend Article 5. Second by Mr. Helmreich. Vote: Unanimous. **Motion carries.**

Motion was made by Mr. Graf to recommend Article 6. Second by Mr. Helmreich. Vote: Unanimous. **Motion carries.**

Article 3 – Salary Plan – the request is for the salary range for the Water Superintendent to change from \$70K-\$90K to \$80K-\$100K. Mr. Helmreich said that this change is needed in order to fulfill the current 3-year contract (FY '09-'11). He said the contract includes a cost of living increase as well as a raise. Mr. Purcell said that in this contract there is a cap of accrued sick days. Also, effective July 1, 2010 the health benefits package will be 75/25. The 3-year contract provides for 6.5%, 5%, 5% raise increments, as well as an additional 2% each year for cost of living.

Motion was made by Mr. Helmreich to recommend Article 3. Second by Mr. Graf. Discussion followed. Mr. Helmreich said that he supports the article and the salary increase in light of the fact that there is only one Water/Sewer Superintendent and that the workload for the position has increased over the years. Mr. Tarantino said that he feels he can't support this because of the failing economy. Mr. Graf agreed. Mr. Barletta said that if this is supported it could set precedence. Mr. Graf questioned whether or not the support or rejection of this article would change anything because there is an existing contract. Mr. Helmreich stated that the salary of the Water/Sewer Superintendent is paid from the Enterprise Account. Mr. Purcell asked the FinCom to consider that a lot of the salaries in Norton are 20% less in comparison to the same positions in surrounding areas.

Vote: 4 in favor (Mr. Thomas, Mr. Graf, Mr. Barletta, Mr. Helmreich), 1 opposed (Mr. Tarantino), and 1 abstention (Ms. Regan). **Motion carries.**

III. Old Business

Mr. Purcell said that the amount to be cut from Local Aid has still not yet been determined.

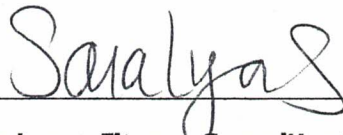
Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for February 9, 2009 at 6:15pm at the Yelle School cafeteria, preceding the Special Town meeting.

Adjournment

Motion was made by Mr. Graf to adjourn at 8:30pm. Second by Mr. Helmreich. Vote: Unanimous. **Motion carries.**

Respectfully Submitted by:



Sara Lyons, Finance Committee Secretary