

Finance Committee Meeting

April 5, 2010

7:30 PM

Municipal Center – Selectmen's Conference Room

Present: Chairman, Wayne Graf; Vice-Chairman, Thomas DeLuca; Pasquale Barletta; Michael Flaherty; Paul Helmreich; Cheryl McFaun; Lee Tarantino; Philip Zawasky; Town Manager, James Purcell.

Absent: Robert Bouchard; Jackie Desrochers; Michael Thomas.

Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm.

I. Approval of Minutes

Motion was made by Mr. Tarantino to approve the March 31, 2010 Finance Committee minutes as written.

Seconded by Mr. Helmreich. Vote: All in favor, with Mr. Flaherty and Mr. DeLuca abstaining. **Motion carries.**

II. New Business

Special Town Meeting Article 4 – Increase in demand charges - Ms. Jacqueline Boudreau, Tax Collector/Treasurer, addressed the Finance Committee regarding a Special Town Meeting article that requests that the demand fee from the Collector's office be raised from \$5 to \$15.

Ms. Boudreau said that the law has been changed to allow for a charge of up to \$30. She said that she feels that a charge of \$30 is a lot, but that \$15 is fair.

Mr. Tarantino asked what the cost is to send a demand notice. Ms. Boudreau said that it costs about \$2K in postage and printing, and noted that she can't really wage what the staffing costs because sending the demand notices is done on an as-needed basis. She also pointed out that spending that \$2K results in \$20K in collections.

Mr. Tarantino brought up the possibility that \$15 is not a high enough charge.

Ms. Boudreau explained that the demand is sent only once, when the original bill is 7-14 days overdue. When those demands are 7 days overdue then the Deputy Collector pursues the collection adding their own fees.

Motion was made by Mr. DeLuca to recommend article 4 on the special town meeting warrant. Seconded by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: All in favor, with Ms. McFaun opposed. **Motion carries.**

Special Town Meeting Article 5 – Rescinding of Borrowing Authority – Mr. Purcell stated that at the May 2007 town meeting, authorization was made to borrow \$735,060 for emergency repairs at the Yelle and Middle schools. He said that the bills came to about \$84K less than that and that this article would rescind the extra funds, therefore getting it off the balance sheet.

Motion was made by Mr. Helmreich to recommend article 5 on the special town meeting warrant. Seconded by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: All in favor. **Motion carries.**

Local Receipts

Mr. Purcell informed the FinCom that Mr. Puello has increased the FY11 estimate for "other excise" (under Local Receipts) by a little under \$100K because of the recent receipt of the Quarterly Distribution notification of the 1st quarter of the meals and hotel tax.

Mr. Purcell said that because of this increase in Local Receipts, and because of a new number received from the Bristol County Agricultural High School, the overall deficit has been lowered to \$199,778. He stated that the Bristol County Agricultural HS number is \$19,404, which is a drop from \$29,106. The drop is due to lowered enrollment.

Special Town Meeting Article 1 – Unpaid Bills – Motion was made by Mr. DeLuca to recommend article 1 on the special town meeting warrant in the amount of \$1,855 to come from Free Cash. Seconded by Mr. Zawasky. Vote: All in favor. **Motion carries.**

Special Town Meeting Article 3 – Utility Easements – Mr. Purcell explained that these easements are needed for water/sewer purposes and that this article would give the Selectmen the authorization to enter into the agreement.

Special Town Meeting Article 6 – Recreation Department – Mr. Purcell explained that there are funds, in the amount of \$8,152.45, that were appropriated in May 1986 for recreational purposes that are now being requested by the Recreation Department for use in FY11. Mr. Purcell said that he feels it is very important to have a town pool in operation and feels that it is a public safety issue because kids need a place to swim and if a place is not provided then some kids may choose to swim in unsafe areas.

Special Town Meeting Article 10 – Acceptance of Arrowhead Drive as a public way – Mr. Purcell said that he is unsure if the petition for this article is in legal standing and that he will check with legal council.

Free Cash –

Mr. Purcell said that if the \$400K goes to the operating budget, per Article 27 of the Annual Town Meeting warrant, the Free Cash balance would be \$106,339.29.

Annual Town Meeting Article 2 - Chapter 90 –

Mr. Purcell reviewed the Chapter 90 formula as follows: Road miles of the town accounts for 58.33%, population accounts for 20.83%, and employment accounts for 20.83%. He stated that the article would authorize the participation of the town in the Chapter 90 program.

Motion was made by Mr. Helmreich to recommend article 2 of the annual town meeting warrant in the amount of \$432,639. Seconded by Mr. DeLuca. Vote: All in favor. Motion carries.

Town Clerk's position – Mr. Helmreich suggested that the FinCom restate their position on the question of whether the Town Clerk's position should become an appointed position or remain an elected position.

Motion was made by Mr. Helmreich restating the Finance Committee's support of making the Town Clerk's position an appointed one, as the FinCom stated at the November 2009 Town Meeting. Seconded by Mr. DeLuca. Vote: All in favor. **Motion carries.**

III. Other Business

Mr. Purcell reminded the FinCom that the public hearing for the Zoning Board is April 6th, tomorrow night. He said if anyone had any questions he/she could submit them to the board before the meeting.

Mr. Purcell said that the Wetlands Bylaw is very close to it's final form. He said that the document has been cut down in volume. He also said that the FinCom could revisit the topic once it is complete.

Mr. Purcell informed the FinCom that the town is close to an agreement with another town for forming a veteran's service agreement.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 12, 2010 at 7:30pm.

Adjournment

Motion was made by Mr. Zawasky to adjourn at 9:10 pm. Seconded by Mr. DeLuca. Vote: Unanimous. **Motion carries.**

Respectfully Submitted by:

Sara Lyons

Sara Lyons, Finance Committee Secretary