

## **FINANCE COMMITTEE**

### **Minutes**

**February 22, 2010**

Regular meeting of the Finance Committee was held on Monday, February 22, 2010 at 7:30 p.m. with the following members present: T. Jalkut, J. Muti, M. Boragine, R. Knobel, C. Lane, S. Connell, Paul Stasiukevicius, D. Burke, T. Bowen, and J. Stadtler. Also in attendance was Town Administrator M. Boynton and Finance Director M. Good, Selectmen C. Snuffer.

7:30 p.m. – Quorum being present, the meeting was called to order by the Chairman T. Jalkut.

#### **Tri-County Regional Vocational School**

Tri-County – Present was Superintendent B. Renzoni, School Business Administrator S. Dockray and Walpole's Representatives to the Tri County School Committee, L. Hoegler and R. Rockwood.

Superintendent Renzoni said the purpose of the meeting with the Finance Committee was to discuss the FY2011 Member Town Assessments. They would be willing to come back to discuss their budget when the Governor has set the House 1 Budget

It was explained that there is a 4.67% change in enrollment (up 42 students) 92% of their students graduate and their drop out rate is 1.1%. Foundation budget per pupil is set at \$14,209. Individual growth factor is set by DOR. Tri-County Student Enrolment District apportionment. They live with what the Town gives them.

Mr. Dockray spoke to school transportation. They have to provide transportation for all students and cannot charge fees for transportation. This is State mandated. They are assuming a shortfall of \$325,795 for transportation in this year's budget. Preliminary assessment for net minimum contribution for FY10-11 is \$833,306, assessment is up 9.2%.

Tri-County understands what is going on with the other towns. They are coming up with the required minimum and cannot go any higher. They try to help communities as much as they can. Salary raises amount to 3%, they are presently in negotiations.

School Committee Member L. Hoegler invited the Finance Committee to come up and have dinner, hold a meeting and tour the school and see what the school offers.

#### **8:15 p.m. – Personnel Board**

Present for this discussion on the articles was the Chairman B. Davis, Members M. Campbell, P. Hinds and N. McCabe and Personnel Board Secretary V. Donohue.

**Article 2 – Personnel By-Laws.** Three changes are being proposed: Article 9 – Increases, - to bring in line with the new Performance Evaluation rating, Article 16 Holidays – clarifies holiday time for part time personnel and Article 39 – Sick Leave Bank –implements a beginning balance of accrued sick time prior to becoming a member of the Sick Leave Bank.

**MOTION MADE** by S. Connell, Seconded by M. Boragine for Favorable Action on Articles 2 – Personnel Board By-Law proposed changes, Motion Approved, Unanimous (10-0-0) (10 voting)

**Article 3 – Salary Schedule** -3% cost of living adjustment

Discussion ensued on the appropriateness of granting 3% cost of living adjustments based on what is happening outside.

Mr. Davis explained that the 3% is what is in the union contracts. They did not want to have non-union personnel treated as second class citizens. It is a philosophical issue and they shouldn't be treated differently due to not having a contract. It discriminates against them. Possibility that management could look into unionizing. They looked at the ramifications of dividing up the town employees.

Mr. Jalkut spoke to a lot of places are adamant that they are not giving raises, issue of unions receiving raises occurred three years ago and we have to live with it. Issue of raises being 1% would this set a precedent for the unions? One of the potential trade offs is health insurance vs pay increases. This is a vote of the Board of Selectmen to go with a different insurance. (Rate Saver 70/30). This issue needs to be discussed.

Town Administrator spoke two union contracts (Police and Fire) had to be decided by an outside party, they review how to react with other unions, making a comparison with what happened with them, and a comparison of other communities. Municipal side has no impact on the school side. If the raises are taken away from the non-union side, drives home the point on the need to organize. He has surveys of what other communities have done. Town did not make any mistakes when the union contracts were settled, they were based on the information available at that time. There are many repercussions on not granting pay increases. Active negotiations are ongoing with schools, municipal side is watching what is going on with the Teacher's union. It will behoove everyone to sit down and look at the existing contracts.

FinCom Members spoke to the frustration of the voters, feel government doesn't reflect what is going on in the world. Most people are receiving -0-, Social Security -0-, people are receiving cuts in pay and then it is seen that Town Hall is getting 5%. Need to start

moving in today's world. It is a self fulfilling prophecy to continue doing it, to continue on this road means there is no money for anything other than salaries. Government needs to be more responsible to the taxpayers and need to look forward and do something different.

Selectmen C. Snuffer spoke to this being appropriate to having this discussion, dealing with parody and reality with employees. If you want to have a town that is 100% union, take this action.

### **Town Administrator Update**

Town Administrator spoke to being unsure what the local aid numbers will be, doesn't want to touch the insurance numbers at this time.

Regionalization Meeting - 15 communities have been invited to attend a discussion to looking at regionalizing services. Animal control, veterans agent need to be addressed immediately with the retirement of our agent. Some services may save money, some may not.

Super Fund Site/South Street – in holding pattern, EPA still negotiating with responsible parties, they have not come up with an agreement. This could take a couple of years, EDIC is working on it

February 25, 2010 meeting – Discussion on School Budget with an opportunity for School Department to give presentation of their needs.

9:20 p.m. – **MOTION MADE** by R. Knobel, Seconded by M. Boragine to adjourn the meeting, Motion Approved, Unanimous (10-0-0) (10 voting)

Respectfully submitted,

Clare P. Abril  
Clerk

