

FINANCE COMMITTEE

MINUTES

March 19, 2009

Regular meeting of the Finance Committee was held on Thursday, March 19, 2009 at 7:30 p.m. in the Finance Committee Room, #112, with the following members present: T. Jalkut, L. Donovan, C. Lane, M. Barry, P. Stasiukevicius, R. Knobel, S. Connell, M. Boragine, T. Bowen, and M. Kent. Also present was Town Administrator M. Boynton and Finance Director M. Good.

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

FY2010 Budgets

Town Clerk/Registrars

Speaking to these budgets were Town Clerk R. Fucile. He presented to the Committee an overview of what the department is all about. Office is made up of two full time union employees and himself, who works part time in the amount of 24 hours. Last year office was involved with four elections and two town meetings. FY10 there will be only one election and two town meetings. Month of January, office does the census and registering dogs. They receive 90% response on census. They have receipts in the amount of \$27,000 for the licensing of the dogs, they also have two people that are under the work out program that help out with the census. Department took in \$64,894 for receipts of vital records. Next year there will be the Federal Census conducted, this a census that takes place every 10 years. Only department costs incurred were for a machine for the disabled which is required by law, it costs \$2,000 to program it. There has been a reduction in the expense budget for equipment maintenance, travel, dues and elections and registrars line items. He has done away with the cost of the hard copy of the Massachusetts General Laws, that the office has been keeping up with, he can no longer afford to keep it up, but feels that the technology has caught up with it and he doesn't feel it is necessary.

Under Elections and Registrars Budget – Town Administrator spoke to the line item for salaries being increased, this is due to the possibility of clerical positions being bumped, that might create a higher rate with one of these positions. He will make the budget adjustments, if this is necessary.

Town Administrator Update

Town Administrator spoke to attending a meeting with C. Winston, Chairman of the Board of Selectmen, N. Gallivan, School Committee Chairman and L. Lynch, Superintendent of Schools. \$500,000 expected to come into the schools from the stimulus package, they seemed to be in agreement on the 66/33 provision and keep it all as town's funds, this provides more money for school and municipal services.

He has also spoken to P. Ceseary, Chairman of the Library Trustees on recommending an additional \$61,000 for the library budget, but there is a long way to go, they are trying deal with the number needed for certification, and need to know the number needed as a minimum to obtain a waiver for certification.

He is trying to minimize the layoffs, if able he would like to put the craftsman position back in the Building Maintenance Budget.

Town Administrator is attempting to work on the Police Department numbers. Town Hall clerical – adjustments have been done on the salary scale, It error, it included an extra step, union has agreed not to take any step increases this year, but will still receive cost of living plus the scale adjustment. It was agreed that this was not the intention. There is a potential savings of \$16,700, clerical union was encouraged by not losing any positions to layoffs. He is exploring the two clerical positions in Assessors/Finance Department being shared by one person and possibly some funding for the part time position in the Town Accountant's Office and Animal Control/Veterans Office. Town Clerk's office was able to pick up some of the dog licensing, and Tax Collector will pick up the demand notices for the dogs as part of her duties.

T. Jalkut spoke to the issue of trying to keep the library certified or put all police officers back to the original number.

Recreation

Present for this discussion was Recreation Director J. Cole, and members of the Recreation Committee.

J. Cole had previous presented to the Committee a report on the Pools. He estimated a \$20,000 gap, but there will be a \$4,000 - \$8,000 savings with the change in lifeguard requirements. They are looking into children and they have talked to the Selectmen on increasing the daily fee for tags to \$7.00 and increasing the fees for the swim team, also having the swim team purchase pool tags. They are also looking into possibly receiving a discount for swim lessons if you purchase a tag.

Town Administrator spoke to the summer recreation program being tied into the summer pool

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program, and the difficulty in trying to break down the cost of the two pools. Summer rec should reflect an offset to the costs of the pools, it is not being charged against the operation of the pool.

T. Jalkut spoke to the Finance Committee issue of \$83,000 in capital for the pools. Selectmen feels it is a #1 priority was the pools and released hold on capital monies. Budget issue is that Recreation is going to lose the window person. J. Cole is looking into changing the coverage to afternoons.

Recreation Committee's Report of March 11, 2009

J. Cole outlined proposed recommendations for dealing with the budget cuts as outlined in his report of March 11, 2009.

East Walpole Library – Issue has been on spending money that is in capital for improvements to this facility and whether the Town should continue to put money into this facility and how much it is used. Recreation Director feels that the programs continue to grow at this location and he knows what works there. He is trying to see what programs maximize the facility, some of the recommended programs should be there.

Town Administrator spoke to Blackburn being maxed out for programs. The fixing up of the additional space needs to be done at this facility, it will hold the computer classes. He would like to see Building Maintenance finish the work that was started. He will have Town Counsel review the deed for this building to see if there are any restrictions on it.

Economic Development Officer, S. Mercandetti

S. Mercandetti, outlined the duties of the Economic and Development & Grants Officer in a report received March 19, 2009. She is responsible for providing professional, technical, marketing and administrative work in the areas of economic development and grant administration. It is a dual position being a liaison between business and municipal.

Town Administrator spoke to Ms. Mercandetti working on different transportation projects, Washington Street and making sure projects stay on course. She interfaces with Engineering, and Department of Public Works. She is working on an assisted living facility that is looking to come into the town. This position can help expedite the process. Prior to this time, position hasn't done much but feels we are in a different spot than we were in a year ago. She is looking into downtown revitalization, and like to be in a good position of things change.

There are Grants available for community/downtown development and looking into what type of vision does the town want to see downtown. We need to know what we are designing for and come up with a plan to know what to apply for She is also looking into

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private foundations. She has applied for six grant applications and like to have six more in the works.

Committee questioned her work on the Use Table – She was the liaison to the business community, and her role to the committee was to provide information. There were also two people who represented the businesses. Her role is to be an advocate for the business community.

Town Administrator is going to go back and take a look at the proposed Use Table, adjustments will have to be made , it will come back before the town.

Downtown redevelopment – S. Mercandetti is going door to door and meeting with the property owners and having meetings to obtain a vision of downtown, this is part of the planning process.

Town Administrator spoke to the Kraft Family developing a parcel in Foxboro abutting the town's property, she will be involve with attending meetings with various town agencies that could be involved.

L. Pittman, Chairman of the Economic Development Committee spoke to the commercial tax base going down and the need to expand the commercial tax base and maximize what we have, it is a long term investment.

Minutes

MOTION MADE by R. Knobel, Seconded by S. Connell to approve the March 12, 2009 Minutes as amended, Motion Approved, (10-0-0) (10 voting)

9:20 p.m. – Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Clare P. Abril
Clerk