

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Minutes

March 20, 2008

Regular meeting of the Finance Committee was held on Thursday, March 20, 2008 with the following members present: T. Jalkut, L. Donovan, R. Knobel, M. Hickey, S. Kelliher, J. Muti, C. Lane, S. Rose, S. Connell, T. Bowen, M. Kent and M. Gallivan. Also in attendance 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

May 5, 2008 Spring Annual Town Meeting Warrant

Town Administrator spoke to being out of town from April 9 through 21. He presented some recommendations and draft motions for the Committee's review. They are subject to change based on Capital Budget meeting with the Finance Committee. He is available to the members for any questions that they might have on the budget or articles.

March 13, 2008 Budget Adjustments (dated 3/12/2008)

Municipal additions, things that had been cut - only change is Economic Development Director position increased to full time from part time, position offers better value than as part time, restores it back to what it a few years ago. This will result in a change in personnel but will have an impact on things we need to do, i.e. preparing Grant applications, etc. He is particularly interested in a public works development grant for the downtown. He estimates this will cost 4 to 6 million to do the work, make the downtown more pedestrian friendly. Downtown sidewalks need to be addressed, haven't been done in 18 years. The biggest complaint is the amount of empty storefronts. Like to restore position in Engineering from 10 hours to 20 hours. Position is presently being held by a retired Town employee, position is very technical and individual needs to know the throughout the town. Veterans - Increase of \$5,000 for benefits, and increases in street lighting, this has been underfunded. Committee questioned if there was room in the budget for a part time position in Police Department. Mr. Boynton is not in favor of this new position, he would like to see some changes in the way things are done in the Police Department. He needs to understand why the officers are in the station so much, need to free up the staff, he doesn't understand what the duties are that are keeping the officers in the station. There is no money available to fund this position. Police Department anticipates six retirements next year. Finance Director will be helping the Administrative Secretary with the payroll. He receives many requests for additional hours and help in different departments of the Town. He would like to see at some time, a floating secretary at the Town Hall.

FinCom Members spoke to different departments having grown due to a building boom such as the Building Inspector's Office. Town Administrator spoke to one employee being out on a long term illness, and department is dealing with heavy amount of renovation projects and attempting to deal with enforcement issues. Walpole Mall is expanding and he does not feel it is the time to make any changes. Town Administrator doesn't receive many complaints on this department.

Members also spoke to the Snow and Ice Budget being underfunded each year and whether the Town is acting responsibly and not providing the proper funding. Budget goes over every year. Town Administrator spoke to the one budget that the State allows the Town some leeway.

Budgets

Budgets were reviewed and committee asked questions on the individual budgets.

May 5, 2008 Spring Annual Town Meeting Articles

Article 2 – Personnel By-laws

No By-law changes being proposed.

MOTION MADE by S. Connell, Seconded by M. Gallivan for No Action on Article 2, Motion Approved, Unanimous (12-0-0) (12 voting)

Article 3 – Personnel Board Salary Schedule

Computer Technician, Assistant Town Administrator and two police sergeants are the only changes being recommended for change on the Salary Schedule.

MOTION MADE by S. Rose, Seconded by S. Connell for Favorable Action on the Personnel Board Salary Schedule, Motion Approved, Unanimous (12-0-0) (12 voting)

Article 4 – Personnel Board Salary Increases

No Action, no funding being requested above the funding that is included in the budgets.

MOTION MADE by S. Rose, Seconded by S. Connell for No Action, Motion Approved, Unanimous (12-0-0) (12 voting)

Article 5 – FY08 Budget Adjustments

Town Administrator is waiting for the final numbers on health insurance surplus, as Town didn't have the amount of enrollees that were anticipated, also medical payments to firefighters. Hold

Article 6 – FY09 Budgets

\$63,524,486 pending any budget adjustments. Held

Article 7 – Capital Reserve Stabilization Fund

\$15,000 being requested to offset the Debt Service, this requires a 2/3 vote of Town Meeting for passage.

MOTION MADE by S. Connell, Seconded by T. Bowen to transfer \$15,000 from the Capital Reserve Stabilization Fund to offset the FY09 Debt Service Budget, Motion Approved, Unanimous (12-0-0) (12 voting)

Articles 8 – Water Enterprise Fund

Held for further discussion.

Article 9 – Sewer Enterprise Fund

Held for further discussion.

Article 10 – Stabilization Fund

No funds being requested to be appropriated to the Stabilization Fund.

MOTION MADE by C. Lane, Seconded by J. Muti for No Action on Article 10, Stabilization Fund, Motion Approved, Unanimous (12-0-0) (12 voting)

Article 11 – Prior Year's Bills

No outstanding bills know at this time, but Town Administrator recommends keeping the article open. 4/5 vote of Town Meeting required for passage.

MOTION MADE by T. Bowen, Seconded by S. Kelliher for Recommendation at Town Meeting on Article 11, Motion Approved, Unanimous (12-0-0) (12 voting)

Article 12 – Snow and Ice Deficit

Held pending receipt of final numbers.

Article 13 – Capital Improvements

Held – Capital Budget Committee identifying funds that are available from prior year's capital projects.

Article 14 – Capital Equipment

Held for discussion with Capital Budget Committee

Article 15 – Street Projects

Held for discussion with Capital Budget Committee.

Articles 16 - Roof Repairs/Bird Middle School

Held – pending receipt of wording from Bond Counsel.

Article 17 – Street Improvements

Held – pending receipt of wording from Bond Counsel.

Article 18 – Equipment Leasing

There is no equipment anticipated to be leased at this time. Leasing requires that it be approved every year by Town Meeting. Town hasn't leased any equipment in years.

MOTION MADE by T. Bowen, Seconded by S. Connell for No Action on Article 18, Motion Approved, Unanimous (12-0-0) (12 voting)

Article 19 – Grant Matches

Administration is recommending No Action, as there are no Grants being proposed at this time.

MOTION MADE by R. Knobel, Seconded by S. Connell for No Action on Article 19, Motion approved, Unanimous (12-0-0) (12 voting)

Article 20 – Recreation Revolving Funds

Held pending discussion with Recreation Department

Articles 21, 22 – Town By-laws Codification

Presently being worked on, Town Clerk and J. Johnson to speak to. Various documents would be included in one book and would be updated periodically. Committee questioned the possibility of putting this in a disc format also. This will be looked at.

Article 23 – Board of Assessor’s Tax Exemptions

Standard article of the Board of Assessors, no changes.

MOTION MADE by R. Knobel, Seconded by S. Kelliher for Favorable Action, Motion Approved, Unanimous (12-0-0) (12 voting)

Article 24 – Student Parking Fees

\$40,000

MOTION MADE by S. Connell, Seconded by S. Kelliher for Favorable Action in the amount of \$40,000 from Taxation to supplement the Fiscal Year 2009 Walpole School Budget, said monies to be received from Parking Fee, Unanimous (12-0-0) (12 voting)

Articles 25 -29 – Municipal Contract negotiations

Town Administrator is in active negotiations with all the unions.

MOTION MADE by R. Knobel, Seconded by S. Connell for Recommendation at Town Meeting on Articles 25 -29, Motion Approved, Unanimous (12-0-0) (12 voting)

Articles 30 -34 – Economic Development Articles

Committee will invite the Economic Development Committee to a future meeting, after the FinCom has had the opportunity to discuss the articles amongst themselves.

Articles 35 -40 – Street Acceptances

Town Engineer M. Walker to come in before the Committee on the Street Acceptances.

Article 41 – Mylod Street Roadway Easements

Town Administrator has no issue with these easements, housekeeping issue. Discuss this with Town Engineer as it is a petition of Board of Selectmen.

Article 42 – Coney Street Roadway Easements

Town Administrator has no issue with these easements, housekeeping issue. Discuss this with Town Engineer as it is a petition of Board of Selectmen

Article 43 – Zoning By-Law/Use Regulations

Article is mute, due to the vote of the March 19, 2008 Special Town Meeting Should be No Action. There is nothing to prevent the Town from coming back with a new table of uses, but Town Administrator doesn't anticipate it be ready for the Fall Town Meeting. Consultants have completed their work, if they are retained in the future, will require additional funding (Kendall Fund).

MOTION MADE by C. Lane, Seconded by R. Knobel for No Action on Article 43, Motion Approved, Unanimous (12-0-0) (12 voting)

Articles 44 - Rezoning Baker Street

Private Citizens Petition

Article 45 – Rezoning on Age Qualified/Highway Business District

Private Citizens Petition

Article 46 – Cell Tower/Wagon Road

This came about due to concerns raised on leasing this tower without Town Meeting Authorization. Town Administrator couldn't find that this was ever approved. It might have been leased out without getting the Town Meeting approval. This allows the town to have the correct legal language. Money for the lease goes to Sewer and Water as this is their tower. Town Administrator to look at other locations having cell towers leasing.

MOTION MADE by S. Rose, Seconded by S. Connell for Favorable Action on Article 46, Motion Approved, Unanimous (12-0-0) (12 voting)

Pool Vandalism

Town Administrator provided to the Committee an update on the vandalism that occurred last weekend at the Center Pool. \$30,000 at least in electrical costs, could go high as \$50,000. Insurance policy should cover the damages.

MOTION MADE by R. Knobel, Seconded by S. Connell to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 p.m. Motion Approved, Unanimous (12-0-0) (12 voting)

Respectfully submitted,

Clare P. Abril, Secretary

