

**FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES**

**August 29, 2019**

Regular meeting of the Finance Committee was held on Thursday, August 29, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. in Room #112, Town Hall with the following members present: M. Trudell, A. Flowers, Burke, S. Ahern, M. Ahigian, J. Fisher, K. Greulich, A. Hamilton, L. Romanowiz, D. Shea, M. Sullivan and L. Van der Linden. Members absent were D. Crowley, S. Lawson and B. Bain.

7:00 p.m. – Quorum being present, the meeting was called to order by the Chairman M. Trudell.

**October 21, 2019 Fall Annual Town Meeting**

**Sewer and Water Chairman W. Abbott, Superintendent of Water B. Marshall**

**Article 12 – Darwin Lane Land Purchase, This is a petition of Sewer and Water Commissioners.**

Also in attendance was Bryar and Darren Hasenjaeger.

Article is requested by the Sewer and Water Commissions to purchase a 2.5 acre parcel (Parcel 42-240), located off of Darwin Lane for water protection purposes. There is a potential development of a 40B project on this site. (27 units) and project is 400 feet from the Town's Washington Well No. 5. This is a requirement of DEP around a well. Hasenjaeger's have approached the Town numerous times to purchase the property, but it did not go anywhere. Town Administrator had looked into a possible land swap, but too involved and suggested an outright purchase. Hasenjaeger 's are asking \$380,000 for the property with a completion date of November 15, 2019. Sewer and Water Commissioners voted 3-0-0 on August 12 to put this on the warrant. They have not voted on the article. Administration is in the process of obtaining an appraisal and this should be available on September 16, after which time the Sewer and Water Commissioners will take a vote. Parcel is landlocked and there is a need to have a way into to use the parcel. Property is located in a Zone I Water Resource protection area and there is a potential for contamination to the aquifer if the area is developed. Two options for the appraisal is 1) parcel is landlocked and has little value and abuts town owned property and 2) the worth of the property if there is access via 32 Darwin Land which is owned by the Hasenjaeger family. If the Town were to buy the land, it could only be used for passive recreation. Town Meeting would need to appropriate the money. Committee questioned if the neighbors were aware that if it is not purchased, there is a potential for a 40B development.

B. Abbott spoke to it not a must to have this, but there is interest if it is built on ,it increases the risk of contamination. Administration is asking for two different appraisals 1) land locked and 2) if, purchased, it will no longer be landlocked. There is presently sewer on Darwin Lane.

Held for additional information, when it becomes available.

### **Article 13 – MWRA Loan Program**

This article was previously voted in the October 15, 2018 FATM, and bond counsel had problems with the wording as submitted. If approved allows the Town to participate in the MWRA I & I program, which is funding in the form of grants and zero interest loans could be secured. Town had previously participated in this program. This requested would be for Phase 10 (\$638,000) and Phase 11 (\$810,000) for a total of \$1,448,000 Grant portion of these phases would be \$1,086,000 and loan portion would be \$362,000 payable over ten years. (75% is the Grant and 25% is borrowed by the Town) Other Towns apply for the Grant. Bond Counsel had found the error in the wording.

**MOTION MADE** by A. Flowers, Seconded by A. Hamilton for Favorable Action on Article 13, Motion Passed (12-0-0) (12 voting) Unanimous

### **Articles 19, 20 – Town Charter and By-Law Changes**

Speaking to these articles were the petitioners S. Khatib and J. Haner These proposed articles are to make the wording in the Town By-laws and Charter gender neutral. Board of Selectmen to Select Board. They spoke to believing in diversity. This is not just for women, it is for everyone. Approximate cost of \$10,000 for the costs associated with legal fees and the costs with changing the General Code, Charter and By-laws. This would be done under Article 2. Legal Fees for Town Counsel would be \$5,000. There are over 100 towns in the Commonwealth that have done this.

Committee discussed that this could be done with a Charter Review Committee. Last time the Town had a Charter Review Committee was seven years ago. Town is also looking to have a review done of the Zoning By-laws. Town's Charter and By-laws are on the Town's website.

Committee members and Town Administrator concerned with the implementation of this article and whether the wording in the previous By-laws is grandfathered. Question is whether or not to just make the changes. Different options as to what is being codified and what people need to refer to themselves. Town Counsel needs to be involved.

Town of Reading has just done this, and Administration will check with them as how they did it.

**MOTION MADE** by A. Flowers for Favorable Action on Article 19, Motion Withdrawn

Further action on these articles held till Administration hears back from Town Counsel.

### **Article 10 - School Medicaid and Parking Fees**

**MOTION MADE** by M. Ahigian, Seconded by K. Greulich for Favorable Action in the amount of \$592,871 from Free Cash, Motion Approved (12-0-0) (12 voting) Unanimous

**Adjourn:**

**MOTION MADE** by A. Flowers, Seconded by A. Hamilton to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 p.m. , Motion  
Approved (12-0-0) (12 voting) Unanimous

Respectfully submitted,

Clare P. Abril  
Clerk