

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Minutes

October 13, 2016

Regular meeting of the Finance Committee was held on Thursday, October 13, 2016 at 7:30 p.m. in the Community Room, Walpole Public Library, with the following members present: D. Bruce, J. Denneen, S. Lawson, J. Leith, A. Healy, R. Mariani, K. Guyette, R. Nottebart, P. Hinton, M. Trudell, J. Burke. Members absent were: J. Vaillancourt, T. Bowen, P. Stasiukevicius and E. Barmakian. Also in attendance was Town Administrator J. Johnson, Finance Director M. Thompson, Fire Chief T. Bailey and Brian Jarvis, Project Manager for Police. Fire Station and Council on Aging Facilities.

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

October 17, 2016 Fall Annual Town Meeting

Article 4 – Fire Station Costs Update

Town Administrator spoke to receiving bids on October 6, 2016 for this project in the amount of \$11,937,933. He provided to the Committee Bond Counsel's recommended motion

Chief Bailey spoke to the present software will be carried over, dispatching functions will change and go under the Police Department. Same vendor for the police and fire communications. Balance in Ambulance Reserve Account is \$1,099,590.86. This account is used for the purchase of ambulances and offset to the Fire Budget. Town Administrator is comfortable taking \$100,000 from this account toward funding of this article.

MOTION MADE by S. Lawson, Seconded by J. Denneen for Reconsideration of Article 4, Motion Passed (11-0-0) (11 voting) Unanimous

MOTION MADE by J. Denneen, Seconded by R. Nottebart for Favorable Action on Article 4 as recommended by Bond Counsel in the Town Administrator's Memo dated October 11, 2016:

That the Town appropriate \$11,937,933 to pay costs of architectural design and constructing, originally equipping and furnishing a new Fire Station, along with any and all work associated with and appurtenant thereto, including the cost of a project manager and other related costs; and that to meet this appropriation,

1: the sum of \$337,933 shall be transferred from Free Cash,

2: the sum of \$100,000, shall be transferred from the Ambulance Reserve Receipt Account, and

3: the Treasurer, with the approval of the Board of Selectmen, is authorized to borrow the sum of \$11,500,000 pursuant to MGL, Chapter 44, Section 7(3) or any other enabling authority and to issue bonds or notes of the Town therefor, and further that the Board of Selectmen shall be authorized to apply for, accept and expend all funds received as gifts or state or federal grants associated with the project and to take any other action necessary or convenient to carry out this project; and provided further that any premium received by the Town upon the sale of an bonds or notes approved by the Town for this project, less any such premium applied to the payment of the costs of issuance of such bonds or notes, may be applied to the payment of costs approved by this vote in accordance with Chapter 44, Section 20 of the General Laws, thereby reducing the amount authorized to be borrowed to pay such costs by a like amount.

Motion Passed (11-0-0) (11 voting) Unanimous

Article 5 – Council on Aging Update

Chairman Bruce spoke to Finance Committee's vote on this article was a tie (7-7-0). He does not feel that there should be a motion on this article from the Finance Committee. There are four members of the previous vote absent and does not feel it is fair to take another vote without them present. Committee should be respectful to the members not present. Town Administrator spoke to working with Town Counsel and Board of Selectmen on this article. As this is a bonding article, wording has to be exact. Selectmen or a Town Meeting member can make a motion for article at Town Meeting. Chairman of the Board of Selectmen E. Kraus will put forward the motion. Town Administrator spoke to never encountering this action before. Town Counsel will be at Town Meeting to speak to the article. Ultimately it will be up to Town Meeting.

FinCom members spoke to not being against a senior center, but like to see more fiscal control and concerned with the numbers and project not yet put out to bid.

Finance Committee Public Hearing on Budgets/Articles

MOTION MADE by J. Denneen, Seconded by S. Lawson to open the Finance Committee Public Hearing on October 17, 2017 Fall Annual Town Meeting Budgets/Articles at 7:30 p.m., Motion Passed (11-0-0) (11 voting) (Unanimous)

Comments

FinCom Chairman spoke to all articles on the warrant open for discussion.

Article 2 – Supplemental Budgets

Additional monies for elections, police, schools and debt budgets. Questions as to why the money for schools was not taken out of Reserve Fund. It was decided to take the money from this article as special ed costs are considered unforeseen.

Article 3- Police station –

RTM's requested a breakdown of the monies for this project. \$1,420,000. These additional funds are required due to bids coming in higher than anticipated and will be used for radio communications, security, wiring, site contingency funds, computer network and furniture.

Article 4 – Fire Station

FinCom voted 11-0-0 for \$11,937,933 for this article.

Article 5 – COA

FinCom voted 7-7-0 previously on this article. Per Town Counsel, this is a no vote from the Committee. Board of Selectmen will make a motion to bring the article forward.

There were questions from the audience that they would like to hear from the committee members that voted no. The siting of the building was one of the main concerns, felt it should be in the downtown area, close to the library, pool, recreation, fire station. and playground areas enabling residents to take advantage to the downtown area. Some members felt that the requested amount of \$5,790,000 could be used to update the present police station/old town hall. It was felt that it would be cheaper than building a new facility on South Street. Town doesn't have actual bids for the project and there are many unknowns. Members spoke to seeing problems with anticipating receiving a Community Development Grant and fundraising. If these don't come through, no way to pay for it. Will have to go back to Town Meeting.

Police Station/Old Town Hall is a historical building and there are issues with parking, older residents need to park close to the building. Building is not handicap accessible. As building is a historical building, permission needs to be obtained from the Mass. Preservation Commission. Members spoke to it is not the FinCom's role to micro manage, plan is a good one, and if the Town was start over again it would be another decade. More seniors would come if it is a modern facility. There needs to be adequate space for wheel chairs, walkers, etc. Other communities have senior centers that aren't in the center of town and it works.

Committee Members spoke to not being against the senior center, felt that the need is there but have to look at the numbers. Where the money will come from it Town doesn't receive Grant and fundraising is successful. Focus should be on what to do with the police station/old town hall. If another building is built, it still has to be maintained or it will fall in disrepair and will need to be renovated at additional costs.

Selectmen M. Gallivan spoke to not being able to fundraise until there is a sketch and a firm location, need a specific plan, people won't give until these are available. Committee has been meeting weekly on design, Town owns the South Street property and has a design by an approved architect and has been approved by the Permanent Building Committee and Selectmen. Residents want a building but don't want an override. Town Administrator brought forward a plan to do it without an override, building should be a community center. Project cannot go forward until it receives Town Meeting approval. Seniors have supported everything through the years. It will never happen if it doesn't receive Town Meeting approval now. Money will come with approval of Town Meeting. Need to go forward and make it happen. Design money had previously been approved, seniors deserve a center. They are owed a state of art facility.

Project time line – Town Administrator spoke to obtaining site plan approval. Grant applications come out in December, and fundraising will take 9-12 months and hopefully project can be bid out in August, 2017 and build out in 20 months.

Article 8 – Memorial Pond Dredging

Expected cost of project is \$500,000 to \$1,500,0000

Article 9 – Chapter 90 Funds

If the funds are approved in the Fall, Town can bid out the work in the late Winter/early Spring

Articles 10, 11, 12, 13,14,15 – No specific questions. –

Article 17 Spectra Northeast Pipeline Costs - \$50,000 being requested to fight the Spectra Northeast Gas Pipeline Project, if necessary. B. Abbott, Sewer & Water Commissioner spoke to the intent of the money is to do a study. Commissioners have an issue if the pipeline goes within 400 ft of the well radius and passing through town's water supply. Project will need approval from the Federal Regulatory Commission. If it does not go forward protections are in place. RTM C. Snuffer spoke to the easiest way to keep them out is to not allow them on the property.

Articles 18-25 – Zoning Articles

Article 21 - RTM J. Hasenjaeger spoke to his concerns with the proposed change in Section 10-D/Open Space Residential Developments being removed from the Zoning Bylaw in its entirety. 2015 FATM a moratorium was approved allowing for the review of this section of the By-laws. This By-law allows for a waiver of the dimensional requirements within certain zoning districts and allows for the building of homes on lots significantly smaller than what is required. Original intent was that it was to come back with amendments, now section is being eliminated. Walpole is the only Town not to have open space. He would like to see it postponed for another year.

FinCom members spoke to open space being manipulated by developers. The interpretation by the Planning Board is not working as it deals with open space.

Mr. Hasenjaeger spoke to his concerns with the regulations being proposed on Accessory In-law suites. He does not feel that the Town should get involved with family relationships.

Mr. Hasenjaeger requested that copies of the Zoning tables be available at Town Meeting.

MOTION MADE by J. Denneen, Seconded by S. Lawson to close the Finance Committee Public Hearing at 8:45 p.m. Motion Passed (11-0-0) (11 voting) Unanimous

Meetings Update

October 17, 2016 – Town Meeting begins at 7:30 p.m. at the High School.

October 24, 2016 – Joint meeting with School Committee, Selectmen and Permanent Building Committee on the architect's report on the secondary school buildings. Tentative location at senior center at 7:00 p.m. Information is available on the Schools' website.

Adjourn:

MOTION MADE by J. Denneen, Seconded by S. Lawson to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 p.m., Motion Passed (11-0-0) (11 voting) Unanimous

Respectfully submitted,

Clare P. Abril
Clerk