

**DRAFT**

**FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**Minutes**

**May 1, 2014**

Regular meeting of the Finance Committee was held on Thursday, May 1, 2014 at 7:30 p.m. in the Finance Committee Room, #112, Town Hall with the following members present: L. Pitman, S. Lawson, J. Burke, J. Denneen, M. Iwanowicz, C. Lane, A. Healy, and S. Ahmed. 7:35 p.m. –J. McDermott, 7:55 p.m. – P. Hinton. Absent were: D. Bruce, D. Crowley, D. DiCenso, J. Lowre and T. Williams. Also in attendance was Town Administrator M. Boynton, Assistant Town Administrator J. Johnson, Finance Director M. Thompson, Town Accountant J. Cuneo, Fire Chief T. Bailey, Police Chief R. Stillman, Deputy Police Chief J. Carmichael, Assistant Superintendent of Schools J. Kenney, Business Director M. Frascia, School Committee Chairman N. Gallivan, Selectmen M. Gallivan, Town Moderator J. Rockwood and members of the public.

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

Welcome back was extended to Finance Committee Member Carol Lane who has been absent due to illness. Her expertise and experience has been missed.

**May 5, 2014 Spring Annual Town Meeting**

General discussion held on the recommendations that need to be voted on for Town Meeting. Finance Committee had held off voting these articles pending any additional information on them.

**Article 3 – Previous Year’s Unpaid Bills**

There are no outstanding prior year’s bills.

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by S. Lawson for Reconsideration, Motion Passed (8-0-0) (8 voting) Unanimous

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by S. Lawson for No Action, Motion Passed (8-0-0) (8 voting) Unanimous

**Article 4 – Snow & Ice Deficit**

Town Administrator spoke to the snow and ice deficit for this year to be \$115,000, he feels that all the bills from the various contractors have been submitted. Recommended funding is from Overlay Surplus.

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by S. Lawson for Reconsideration, Motion Passed (8-0-0) (8 voting) Unanimous

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by S. Lawson for Favorable Action on the snow and ice deficit in the amount of \$115,000 to be funded from Overlay Surplus, Motion Passed (8-0-0) (8 voting) Unanimous

7:35 p.m. – Committee Member J. McDermott

### **Article 5 – FY14 Operating Budgets**

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by S. Lawson for Reconsideration of Article 5, Motion Passed (9-0-0) (9 voting) Unanimous

Town Administrator spoke to reviewing the various FY14 budgets and they seem to be in good order. The only budget he has concerns are the Legal Budget. There have been unanticipated costs due to the many 40-B projects, Board of Appeals have four different cases pending. He feels that the anticipated shortage to be between \$20,000 - \$30,000. He is recommending No Action on this article, and recommends that any deficit in this budget could be handled through the Reserve Fund.

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by J. Burke for No Action on Article 5, Motion Passed, (9-0-0) (9 voting) Unanimous

### **Article 15 – Old Post Road Water Storage Tank**

In a letter dated April 29, 2014, Sewer and Water Commissioners advised the Finance Committee that due to recent developments associated with a potentially costly treatment system for Washington Well #6 and for logistical issues relative to public safety communications, Commission has voted to defer action on the construction of the new water storage tank. They want to resolve all the issues dealing with replacement and style, capacity and the communications issue.

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by J. Burke for Reconsideration of Article 15, Motion Passed (9-0-0) (9 voting) Unanimous

**MOTION MADE** by S. Lawson, Seconded by J. Burke to Refer Article 15, back to Sewer and Water Commission for further review. Motion Passed (9-0-0) (9 voting) Unanimous

### **Articles 21, 22, 23 and 25 – Municipal Contracts**

Town Administrator spoke to negotiations being ongoing for the DPW, Clerical, Police and Library.

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by J. Burke for Reconsideration of Articles 21, 22, 23 and 25, Motion Passed (9-0-0) (9 voting) Unanimous

**MOTION MADE** by J. Burke, Seconded by J. Denneen for No Action on Articles 21, 22, 23 and 25, Motion Passed (9-0-0) (9 voting) Unanimous

**Article 24 – Firefighter’s Contract**

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by J. Burke for Reconsideration of Article 24, Firefighter’s Contract, Motion Passed (9-0-0) (9 voting) Unanimous

Town Administrator spoke to this agreement being in place prior to the old contract expiring. Requested amount is \$54,527 from Taxation. It encompasses nominal increases. Largest item is that as of July 1, 2014, there will be a 60/40 insurance split for new Fire Department employees. This is a long term benefit to the Town. Changes include Sick Leave Buy-back has been reduced, revamping of the paramedic program, and residence change, and increase in clothing allowance. Net cost of living for the 3 years was 2, 2 ½ and 2 ½ . Towns are pretty much relying on mutual aid from other communities for assistance. Call departments are pretty much gone. Administration is pleased with the outcome of the contract negotiations. There have been no steps added to the contract. On a question from the Finance Committee, pensions are not based on overtime but stipends are included and considered part of the salary. Longevity stayed the same. Other surrounding communities have the 60/40 split in place There does not appear to be any shortage of applicants when there is an opening, change in the insurance should not be a detriment to applicants.

7:55 – Committee Member P. Hinton

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by J. Burke for Favorable Action on Article 24-Firefighter’s Contract in the amount of \$54,527, from Taxation, Motion Passed (10-0-0 (10 voting) Unanimous

**Town Moderator**

J. Rockwood extended his thanks to the Finance Committee for all their dedication, time and effort that they have spent on preparing for Town Meeting.

**8:10 – Finance Committee Public Hearing on Budgets and Articles**

**MOTION MADE** by S. Lawson, Seconded by J. Burke to open the Finance Committee Public Hearing on Budgets and Article at 8:10 p.m., Motion Passed (10-0-0) (10 voting) Unanimous

Chairman opened the discussion on specific questions and comments from the audience.

J. Moraski, RTM Member had questions on the number of firefighters anticipated to retire. Chief spoke that four members could possibly be retiring in the next five years. Department consists of 32 fireman, they don't have to leave at age 55, and the savings of health insurance costs due to 60/40 won't be realized for a number of years.

Town Administrator spoke to there being a dramatic change in the future in OPEB numbers if the other unions agree to the 60/40 split. Non-union hires falls under the jurisdiction of the Board of Selectmen The number will have to be updated this year and need to know what the funded figure is going forward. Auditors should have a 30 year project.

There were no other questions, Regular session resumed.

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by J. Burke to close the public hearing at 8:35 p.m. Motion Passed (10-0-0) (10 voting) Unanimous

#### **Article 27 – South/Common Street Acquisitions (Superfund Site)**

Town Administrator spoke to the application for the covenant has been approved and completed as to form. Approval will have to be posted of the application , advertised and all parties notified. The covenant for the parcels will all be in place. Town has not exercised the tax title property till now, responsible parties to contribute to the clean up. Federal protection can exercise the tax title, Town will receive protection from the Federal Government. State has right to enforce the clean-up. Covenant is not to sue, Commonwealth or Federal Government can't come back and obligate the Town for clean-up of the site. Superfund sites are under Federal control. Prior to this, the Town couldn't obtain the covenant to sue till now. Hopefully the covenant will be signed by September. Site needs to be secured, funding aspect is the next piece of the puzzle. Consent degree dictates what has to be cleaned, removal of buildings will require mediation with Covidien and Grace. EPA is in charge of the site, not touching the area above the culvert or the property site. There are no costs involved under this article, coming down the line is the construction and removal of buildings, Town first has to take ownership of site.

Committee had questions on the cost of maintaining the site with police and fire. Town Administrator spoke to this being normal maintenance, Town might have to maintain asphalt, vegetation, but not approaching this till something happens. All parcels under agreement with the exception of one, allowing the tax title properties to be conveyed to the Board of Selectmen, some buildings will be removed and working with responsible parties on the easterly side. Number of pieces are fitting together. A lot of time has been spent to get to this point. EDIC has been involved to have a reuse of the property, either commercial or municipal. Once property is cleaned, then Town can begin construction. Future buildings will be designed to answer any concerns. Cost of maintenance of

property will be normal maintenance. Town wants the property to be ready to go forward. Additional costs could be incurred if we don't meet deadlines, need to deal with responsible parties.

S. Lawson spoke to attending the meetings, and feels that the questions have been answered, consultants were well spoken and organized. A lot of the people involved have done their homework.

**MOTION MADE** for Reconsideration on Article 27, Motion Passed (10-0-0) (10 voting) Unanimous

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by S. Lawson, for Favorable Action on Article 27, Motion Passed (10-0-0)

### **Minutes**

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by J. Burke to approve the March 10, 2014 Minutes, Motion Passed (10-0-0) (10 voting) Unanimous

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by J. Burke to approve the March 13, 2014 Minutes, Motion Passed (9-0-1) (S. Ahmed abstained) (10 voting)

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by J. Burke to approve the March 20, 2014 Minutes, Motion Passed (9-0-1) (S. Ahmed abstained) (10 voting)

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by J. Burke to approve the March 24, 2014 Minutes, Motion Passed (9-0-1) (S. Ahmed abstained) (10 voting)

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by J. Burke to approve the March 31, 2014 Minutes, Motion Passed (9-0-1) (S. Ahmed abstained) (10 voting)  
March 31, Joe Josette (9-0-1)

### **Article 20 – Veterans Work Off Program**

After further consideration of her previous vote, S. Lawson would like to reconsider her vote.

**MOTION MADE** by S. Lawson, Seconded by P. Hinton for Reconsideration of Article 20, Motion Passed (10-0-0) (10 voting) Unanimous

**MOTION MADE** by P. Hinton, Seconded by J. Burke for Favorable Action on Article 20, Motion Passed (9-0-1) (S. Lawson abstained) (10 voting)

### **Town Meeting Room Assignments**

Finance Committee will meet (if necessary) at 7:00 p.m. in Room 2128, High School on the following dates: May 5, May 7 and May 12, 2014.

### **School Tours**

The tour of the Bird Middle School on May 2, 2014 has been cancelled. It will be rescheduled for a future date.

### **Reserve Fund Transfer**

#### **Board of Selectmen-Expenses**

Town Administrator spoke to this request for the Board of Selectmen for Professional Services in the amount of \$10,000. This is for a consultant to perform peer review of a traffic study for Burberry Homes. Concern that this 40-B application would incur expenses and there is insufficient money to handle this type of expense through available funds. There is also the need to do drainage analysis. Legal expenses for Kopelman and Paige will come out of the legal budget. Burberry Farms had done a traffic study on Memorial Day and Town does not feel this was a good example for the figuring of traffic flow. It is anticipated that the Town's traffic study would be done on May 5, 2014. There is also the need to get this done soon. Information will then go on to the Housing Appeals Committee. He would like to see it done before they hand down their ruling.

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by S. Lawson to approve a Reserve Fund Transfer in the amount of \$10,000 for Board of Selectmen – Expenses for Professional Services to do a traffic study and any other necessary studies, Motion Passed (10-0-0) (10 voting) Unanimous

### **Town Administrator**

Town Administrator extended his annual thank you to the Finance Committee for all the work they have done in preparation for Town Meeting. He appreciates the time spent by the Committee visiting the various departments to see their operations and the review of the capital requests. Department heads truly appreciate the interest taken by the Committee.

### **Adjourn:**

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by P. Hinton to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 p.m. Motion Passed (10-0-0) (10 voting) Unanimous

Respectfully submitted,

Clare P. Abril, Clerk