

MINUTES

OF THE

FINANCE COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2008

SANDWICH PUBLIC LIBRARY
142 MAIN STREET

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Present: Paul Kilty, Hank Tuohy, John Vibberts, Bill Diederling, Ellen Scott, Veronica Mooney, Ellen Yaffee.

Absent: Glenn Pare' and Lou Cerrone

Also Present: Mr. Dunham, Town Accountant Ms. Doreen Guild

Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m.

**ITEM #2**  
**REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

No minutes presented for approval

**ITEM#3**  
**TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

- At this time a date in late October is being considered for the Special Town Meeting.
- Overview of the possible warrant articles.
- Hand out showing what the Finance Committee voted for 'up to' amounts for Reserve Fund Transfers at a previous meeting in June and the actual amounts. Updated information from the Town Accountant's Office regarding funding from the state.
- The Board of Selectmen is going to have an open forum next week. They are looking for public feed back on opening the East Sandwich Fire Station. We know that a central fire station should be built at Quaker Meetinghouse Road and Cotuit Road but we have to find out about sub-stations. There will be a more detailed explanation of the fire department from the Fire Chief and Deputy Fire Chief during the September 11 Selectmen's meeting.

Mr. Kilty noted that he would like information for any agenda items several days before the meeting so that the Committee can have the time to look at it. Referencing the East Sandwich Fire Station, the need is real but we do need to decide how to fund it.

Mr. Diederling noted that the Committee does not know if this is the most pressing need.

Mr. Kilty mentioned that the Committee needs to look at and prioritize spending.

**ITEM #4**  
**THE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SANDWICH FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Policies and Protocols-

Mr. Kilty noted that the Finance Committee is hosting a Tri-Board meeting next Tuesday, September 9. The Committee needs to discuss what the role and responsibilities are as far as the Long Range Plan goes. Mr. Kilty believes the Finance Committee should not be involved in policy making decisions. It is fine for the FinCom to provide guide lines and make suggestions. Weary of collaborating with the Board of Selectmen and the School Committee.

Mr. Tuohy believes that members are appointed to serve on the FinCom to be as objective as we can with the figures that are given to the Committee. Also has concerns about the Long Range Plan and the direction that the Town is heading. Although the downtown area is very important, seventy-five percent of the Town is located on the other side of Route 6. The Golden Triangle is our future.

Ms. Scott asked about budget information requested from the School Committee and the Golf Advisory Committee.

It was noted that the second part of the list for discussion from the first tri-board meeting hosted by the Board of Selectmen on July 10 has not been addressed.

Mr. Kilty noted that several things should be discussed such as budget information, Sandwich Hollows Golf Course and asset management.

Ms. Scott mentioned that the Finance Committee has had minimal discussion on questions about the Stabilization Fund and how much to keep in the fund. There are also questions about the Long Range Plan.

Mr. Diederling noted that, starting at beginning with the Long Range Plan, Mr. Leighton and Ms. Calmes-Jones of the Finance Committee were there as facilitators. The impression he is getting about rewriting the Long Range Plan is ok, but he has a concern that the other one did not get updated. Trying to see if the Selectmen would consider updating the current Long Range Plan.

Mr. Kilty does not see a need for a tri-board meeting right now.

Mr. Dunham noted that the Finance Committee is a group to mediate and it is also important that the Finance Committee be part of the information today.

Ms. Yaffee noted that the Charter Review Committee learned how to work with one another.

Ms. Scott suggested that all ideas need to get out and be discussed.

Mr. Tuohy feels that a workshop should be done first.

Ms. Guild offered that some people who watch the meeting on TV think that if something is said at a meeting it is engraved in stone.

Ms. Yaffee participated in the School's Long Range Plan and there was no numbers. It was prioritized objectives.

Ms. Mooney feels that not having the Finance Committee meetings televised is better and suggested that a workshop would be better.

Mr. Vibberts feels that the Finance Committee needs to be connected to the public. There needs to be balance.

Mr. Vibberts asked what role the Town Manager sees for the Planning & Development Director.

Mr. Dunham noted that he could take the biggest goals from the Local Comprehensive Plan and clarify what's good for the Town.

Mr. Vibberts sees the Finance Committee as a review or commend role. That is the strength of this Committee.

Mr. Diederling thinks the primary role is to advise the tax payers such as at Town Meeting and agrees with Mr. Kilty that the Committee should not get involved in the Long Range Plan and it goes to other things as well. The Committee should just comment on the end result.

Ms. Yaffee thinks the Committee should be making comments on the Long Range Plan process.

Mr. Dunham noted that the structural deficit has to be dealt with. We are going to squeak by next year, but then we have to look at it. We should look at it in 2.5% projections. We need to be straight forward with people.

Mr. Kilty suggested that there should be a policy of addressing all needs.

Mr. Tuohy would like to see more accountability from the School Committee, like the municipal side and wants to know what the real figures are from the School Committee.

Mr. Kilty noted that he will talk with Mr. Guerin and Ms. Grundman and approach the idea of work shops so periodically everyone is on the same page.

Ms. Yaffee mentioned that the Committee needs to be very clear about what it wants i.e. from the School Committee.

Mr. Diederling and Mr. Tuohy thought they were clear.

Ms. Scott feels that the Committee has not been specific enough.

Mr. Kilty noted that all questions for the School Committee will go through himself then to the Town Manager, Mr. Dunham.

Mr. Kilty asked that information to be discussed at a meeting be available ahead of time for review.

General discussion on prioritizing spending, what are the core needs of each department.

Mr. Kilty noted that some information may have to be table until next week so that it can be reviewed and absorbed.

Mr. Diederling suggested that the big questions are 1) prioritized spending, where does it go from here? 2) What the Committee wants to see from the School Committee and need to be very clear about it. 3) Structural deficit, who is going to address it? 4) Stabilization Fund 5) The debt level. 6) Sandwich Hollows Golf Club 7) Oakcrest Cove.

Mr. Kilty suggested the Committee look at how do we address these ideas. Perhaps we should look at some of the issues that could be addressed in a structural work shop with the School Department and the Board of Selectmen. What are the Committee's policies about debt coming off the books?

Ms. Scott expressed concern about having too many workshops.

Mr. Kilty noted that the Committee could have public workshops with no television coverage.

Ms. Scott noted that the second part of the Selectmen's agenda from tri-board meeting on July 10 asked what is the Finance Committee's role in reviewing the School Department budget and what the School Committee's role is. Who is in charge of reviewing the School Department budget?

Ms. Yaffee mentioned that, in the Charter, the Finance Committee can ask for anything it wants so you can present it at Town Meeting.

Mr. Dunham noted that if that if he is requested to submit an operating budget for 'x' amount he can do that but Mr. Dunham also thinks it is important to get a needs budget.

Mr. Kilty suggested that the Committee has to decide what is going to be a workshop subject and what will be discussed at a public meeting.

Mr. Diederling feels that the two most pressing things in terms of timing is instruction to the schools of exactly what we need and structural deficit conversation.

Mr. Dunham noted that the structural deficit issue should be talked about by a choice number of people such as the Town Manager, Assistant Town Manager, Town Accountant, School Business Manager and others as needed.

Ms. Yaffee suggested that there is a need to use visuals.

Discussion on the Capital Improvement Planning Committee. It was noted that Mr. Baker is currently the Chairman of this Committee. It is a five member committee including two Finance committee representatives. At this time, Mr. Kilty is currently on the CIPC but as Finance Committee Chair, Mr. Kilty should step down. It was agreed that Mr. Cerrone and Mr. Pare' will be serving on the CIPC as representatives from the Finance Committee.

The next Finance Committee workshop will be held on Tuesday, September 16, 2008. The purpose of the workshop will be to define the documents and format the Finance committee wants from the School Committee.

**ITEM #5**  
**OTHER BUSINESS**

-Re-Addressing topics for discussion-  
Discussed under item #4

**ITEM #6**  
**ADJOURNMENT**

**9:00 P.M.**

**\*MOTION TO ADJOURN WAS MADE BY MR. VIBBERTS. SECONDED BY MR. DIEDERING. VOTE - UNANIMOUS**

Respectfully Submitted,

Diane M. Hanelt  
Secretary

