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MINUTES
OF THE
FINANCE COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2011
7:00 P.M.
TOWN HALL MEETING ROOM
130 MAIN STREET

Present: Bill Diederling, Paul Sylvia, Paul Kilty, Tom Hickey, Linda Bliss, Ellen Yaffe, Courtney Bridge and Gene Panini

Also Present: Town Manager George Dunham; Superintendent of Schools Dr. Richard Canfield; Town Accountant Doreen Guild, Selectmen Frank Pannorfi, John Kennan and Jim Pierce; School Committee member Susan Sundermeyer; SCT

ITEM #1
CALL TO ORDER

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

Mr. Diederling introduced the newest member of the Finance Committee, Gene Parini and Mr. Parini offer a brief overview of his interest in volunteering to serve as a member.

ITEM #2
INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL DISCUSSION WITH SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
DR. RICHARD CANFIELD

Mr. Diederling introduced Dr. Canfield. Dr. Canfield offered a few words noting that he will be trying to make the schools a unified Pre-K through 12. Thanked the schools' custodial staff for doing a great job getting the schools ready for the fall session. Mr. Dunham was acknowledged by Dr. Canfield who noted that they have a very good working relationship.

Mr. Diederling expressed his confidence in what he has seen so far in a new beginning. Mr. Diederling noted that he and Mr. Sylvia did meet with Dr. Canfield during the summer. We have been trying to get answers about school staffing and we look forward to getting that type of information. Dr. Canfield noted that he has a 'Program and Staff Use Report' that has worked well in other towns. Mr. Diederling mentioned that the way the budget should be presented...revenues and expenses are separate items. In the past these items have been present by the schools in the same budget. Dr. Canfield noted that as the budget process progresses please feel comfortable to let him know what is working well and what you are not comfortable with.

Brief discussion about technology. Dr. Canfield offered that it is all about finding balance. Get the right people together and try to agree on the technology product that meets everyone's needs.

Mr. Diederling noted that Dr. Canfield is welcome at any Finance Committee Meeting whether he is on the agenda or not.

Dr. Canfield noted that, on the matter of receiving questions from the FinCom or feedback, he prefers to communicate through the Chairman of each board and prefers the gift of time. He will be meeting with the Town Manager tomorrow to get a sense of the budget and the time line.

Various questions were raised by members of the Committee such as-

-Will we have a chance to put a list of items together...can we e-mail them. Mr. Diederling - yes, e-mail to me and they will be e-mailed to Dr. Canfield and, if necessary, put Dr. Canfield on a future agenda.

-In discussing next year's budget, would like to see the associated employee costs separated out so we can see what each department is costing us i.e. the Police and Fire Depts. etc. So we can understand the school cost for each department. If the health insurance line items could be separated out that would be a big help.

-Would like a breakdown of each department. Mr. Dunham offered that state law states that anyone who works twenty hours a week is entitled to full benefits.

-Dr. Canfield was asked if he has met with parent focus groups yet. Dr. Canfield noted that he has met with the Parent/Teacher Associations from each school. He would like to have a parents counsel to meet with the superintendent so everyone understands what's happening in the school system.



ITEM #3
REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of April 5, 2011-

***MOTION WAS MADE BY MS. YAFFE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF APRIL 5, 2011 AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY MR. SYVIA. VOTE – UNANIMOUS**

Minutes of June 14, 2011-

***MOTION WAS MADE BY MS. YAFFE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JUNE 14, 2011 AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY MR. SYLVIA. VOTE – UNANIMOUS**

Minutes of June 28, 2011 –

***MOTION WAS MADE BY MS. YAFFE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JUNE 28, 2011 AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY MS. BRIDGE. VOTE – UNANIMOUS MR. KILTY ABSTAINING**

Minutes of July 12, 2011-

***MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. SYLVIA TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JULY 12, 2011 AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY MR. KILTY. VOTE – UNANIMOUS MS. BRIDGE AND MS. YAFFE ABSTAINING**

ITEM #4
TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Dunham gave an overview of FY2011 Reserve Fund Transfer Requests / Approvals noting that the current FY'11 Reserve Fund Balance is \$110,343.31. Although the Fire Dept. had originally requested a Reserve Fund transfer, they ended up making it on their own within their own budget so no transfer was required.

Overview of Projected Revenues and Expenses – FY'12 (Approved at ATM/Annual Town Meeting – 5/2/11); Projected Revenues and Expenses – FY'12 (GHD Draft – Post ATM Vote – 9/13/2011) with particular attention to State Aid: Discretionary \$2,217,374 and State Chapter 70 Aid: School \$6,376,394 on the Revenues side and County/State Assess. \$2,097,994 and School (Operating) Budget Ch. 70 \$6,376,393 on the Expenses side. The current estimated FY'12 Budget Balance is \$124,050.

One of the things going in our favor this year is health insurance reform. Mr. Dunham gave a brief overview of the Mass. Municipal Health Reform Legislation of 2011 Changes to Ch. 32B noting that the Steering Committee recommends to the full board, on which the Town's Human Resources Director Marie Bucker serves as Vice-Chairman. Sandwich is about the third largest town in the group. During the second week in October the final votes will be taken. The Town Manager will ask the Board of Selectmen to adopt the new section of the law as set forth with the reform. The Town Manager will meet with all the employees groups. There is not a lot of choice on their part as to what gets implemented once the Board of Selectmen takes a vote. This is for one year only. Should have some hard numbers for the Finance Committee in January 2012.

Overview of FY'12 Reserve Fund Transfer request – Town of Sandwich Comprehensive Water Resources Management Plan Interim Wastewater Solutions Study (Draft August 2011) by Wright-Pierce Engineering.

***MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. KILTY TO APPROVE A RESERVE FUND TRANSFER OF UP TO \$25,000.00 FOR THE WRITE-PIERCE STUDY AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY MR. HICKEY. VOTE – UNANIMOUS.**

Mr. Dunham gave an overview of a List of Potential November 7, 2011 Special Town Meeting Articles and noted that the Finance Committee needs to meet by the first week in October to vote the articles.

Mr. Diederich noted that the FinCom will need to meet before then to discuss some of the articles.

Mr. Dunham handed out copies and gave an overview of a memo he sent to the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) dated September 9, 2011 regarding upcoming Town of Sandwich Community Preservation Act (CPA) Requests & Future CPA Projects as well as information from a CPC meeting held September 12, 2011 'Town of Sandwich – Estimated Community Preservation Act Calculations'.

ITEM #5
FINANCE COMMITTEE ITEMS

Tri-Board Subcommittee Update – P. Sylvia – Vote

To be presented later in this meeting.

Appoint Capital Improvement Planning Committee (CIPC) member-

Mr. Diederling noted that he has spoken with Mr. Vibberts who currently serves as the FinCom representative to the CIPC. Mr. Vibberts recommends that someone else be considered.

Ms. Yaffe nominated Mr. Hickey. Mr. Kilty seconded the nomination. Mr. Hickey declined, noting that he is looking to serve on the Waste Water Committee.

It was agreed that Mr. Vibberts would continue to serve.

***MOTION WAS MADE BY MS. BLISS TO RE-APPOINT MR. VIBBERTS TO THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING COMMITTEE (CPC). SECONDED BY MS. BRIDGE. VOTE - UNANIMOUS**

Tri-Board Subcommittee Update – P. Sylvia

Mr. Sylvia gave an overview of a memo dated July 15, 2011 from the Tri-Board members (Ms. Grundman, Mr. Sylvia and Ms. Sundermeyer) to the Chairpersons of the Board of Selectmen, School Committee, Finance Committee as well as to the Town Manager and the Superintendent of Schools regarding 'Proposal to Establish Triboard Subcommittee. The Board of Selectmen and the School Committee have already approved this proposal.

Mr. Diederling noted that we want specific achievable items and he doesn't see it in this document. Hopes that this will be forthcoming...encourages a more specific role.

Mr. Sylvia mentioned that the Tri-Board will get direction on specific items from the Town Manager. Wants to be flexible enough to accommodate any needs. The Tri-Board Subcommittee meetings will be posted and open to the public.

Mr. Sylvia agreed to stay on in the capacity of representative from the Finance Committee to the Tri-Board Committee.

***MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. KILTY TO ACCEPT THE PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH TRIBOARD SUBCOMMITTEE AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY MR. BRIDGE. VOTE – UNANIMOUS**

***MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. KILTY THAT MR. SYLVIA CONTINUES AS THE FINANCE COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE TO THE TRIBOARD SUBCOMMITTEE. SECONDED BY MR. BRIDGE. VOTE – UNANIMOUS**

Draft Letter to Charter Review Committee - Discussion

Overview by Mr. Diederling.

Mr. Kilty – the Finance Committee can make suggestions to the Charter Review Committee (CRC) when it is established...doesn't think we should have a letter before it is established. When a CRC is established one question would be to please clarify/define the roles of the Finance Committee. Thinks it is outside of the role of the FinCom to ask about fees for the Town (as noted in the memo). Believes that is the role of the Board of Selectmen and School Committee. The most important is objectivity and integrity, approval of reserve fund transfers and make recommendations on warrant articles at Town Meeting. Recommends deleting paragraphs 3 & 4 from the memo.

Ms. Bliss thanked Mr. Diederling for pulling this memo together. Feels there is no particular need for discussion on fees as noted in paragraph 3.

Ms. Yaffe – The Charter is intended to be general...there are some specifics but the Town By-Laws are more specific. Would prefer the Committee do bullet points and sit with the Charter Review Committee and discuss the bullet points. Agrees that it is outside of the role of the FinCom to ask about fees. Suggested that this discussion be tabled to a future date.

Ms. Bridge also expressed concern about paragraph 2 and the fees issue.

Mr. Diederling will take paragraph 2 out of the letter.

It was agreed to table this discussion at this time.

Follow-up Discussion on Role of FinCom pertaining to the CPC (Community Preservation Committee) articles – Discussion

Mr. Diederling noted that basically you really cannot tell a Finance Committee member how to vote...what to base his/her vote on.

Ms. Yaffe offered that, as Finance Committee members, we look at the financial aspects of the warrant articles. We are saying 'yes', the town can afford this.

Mr. Kilty mentioned that another issue that sometimes comes is whether or not to support an override...sometimes we have to decide if we support an override or cuts. You may have a lot of different opinions...you may not have a unanimous vote.

Ms. Yaffe – if this committee cannot support an override when/if it is necessary, there should be a statement made at a Town Meeting in favor or against an override.

Mr. Kilty - Thinks there should be more than just that the Finance Committee recommends...or not. There should be more of an explanation.

Mr. Diederling – As I understand it, Ms. Yaffe recommends that we only consider if an article is financially sound for the Town. I disagree.

Ms. Yaffe noted that she is only comfortable with voting on an article if it is financially viable for the Town.

Mr. Kilty suggested that, as we enter on the time line for our budget and we start voting on the warrant articles, communication is critical between the CPC, Board of Selectmen, the School Committee and the Finance Committee. At last year's Annual Town Meeting the Board of Selectmen supported a CPC article and the Finance Committee did not...partly because we did not have all the information that the Board of Selectmen had.

Mr. Diederling agreed that we need to do our research.

Ms. Bridge – doesn't think she could base her vote just on the money aspect. We should know more about the background of an article.

Finance Committee Membership on WQAC (Water Quality Advisory Committee – Discussion/Vote

Mr. Diederling read a letter dated August 16, 2011 from the WQRC inviting the Committee to choose a designee to become a member of the Town's Water Quality Advisory Committee (WQRC) Community Outreach Team (COT). The WQRC COT meets on Tuesday nights but it would not be every Tuesday night.

Mr. Kilty nominated Mr. Hickey. Ms. Yaffe seconded the nomination.

***MOTION WAS MADE BY MS. BRIDGE THAT MR. HICKEY BE THE FINANCE COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE TO THE WQRC COT. SECONDED BY MS. YAFFE. VOTE – UNANIMOUS**

ITEM #6

OTHER

Mr. Diederling reminded the Committee of the Annual Meeting of the Association of Town Finance Committee which will be held on Saturday, October 15, 2011 at Tri County Regional High School in Franklin from 9 am to 3 p.m.

ITEM #7

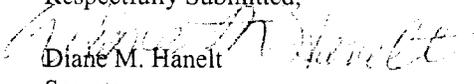
NEXT MEETING DATE

The next Finance Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 20 at 7:00 p.m. at Town Hall, 130 Main Street, upper level meeting room.

9:20 p.m.

***MOTION TO ADJOURN WAS MADE BY MR. KILTY SECONDED BY MS. BRIDGE VOTE – UNANIMOUS.**

Respectfully Submitted,


Diane M. Hanelt
Secretary

Approved: 9/20/11

Supporting Documents:

- FY2011 Reserve Fund Transfer Requests/Approvals
- Projected Revenues and Expenses – FY'12 (Approved at ATM 5/2/11)
- Projected Revenues and Expenses – FY'12 (GHD Draft – Post ATM Vote – 9/13/2011)
- Mass Municipal Health Reform Legislation of 2011 – Changes to CH. 32B

- Comprehensive Water Resources Management Plan / Interim Wastewater Solutions Study / Draft August 2011 by Wright-Pierce
- List of Potential November 7, 2011 STM Articles (GHD Draft – 9/13/2011)
- Mission Statement and Guidelines for Proposed Tri-Board Sub-Committee
- Draft 8/19/2011 letter from Finance Committee to Charter Review Committee
- Letter dated August 16, 2011 from the Water Quality Advisory Comm. (WQAC) re Community Outreach Team (COT)
- Letter dated July 15, 2011 re Proposed Tri-Board Sub-Committee
- Letter dated September 9, 2011 from the Town Manager to the CPC re Upcoming CPA Requests & Future CPA Projections.