

TOWN CLERK  
TOWN OF SANDWICH

APR 16 2014

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**MINUTES  
OF THE  
FINANCE COMMITTEE  
TUESDAY, APRIL 1, 2014  
7:00 P.M.  
TOWN HALL MEETING ROOM  
130 MAIN STREET, SANDWICH, MA**

Present: Paul Sylvia, Ellen Yaffe, Gene Parini, Tom Hickey, Mike Dwyer, Rich Reilly, Linell Grundman

Absent: Matt Terry and Anne Dessertine

Also Present: Town Manager George Dunham, Selectman Chair Jim Pierce and SCT.

**ITEM #1  
CALL TO ORDER**

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

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

Minutes of Tuesday, March 18, 2014-

**\*MOTION WAS MADE BY MS. YAFFE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MARCH 18, 2014 AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY MR. HICKEY VOTE - UNANIMOUS** Mr. Sylvia - abstaining

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

Overview of the **Index of Warrant Articles for the May 5, 2014 Annual Town Meeting - Article #2** is the larger budget. In light of much higher than usual Snow & Ice as well as Police and Fire Dept. overtime, concerned about the Reserve Fund, matching grant money for the cultural district and the Dept. of Natural Resources truck. Met with Police, Fire and DPW and discussed possible funding of an ambulance. Decided to perhaps wait until the fall when there might be enough money in the account and instead put the money towards Snow & Ice. The only real difference on the one page summary is no ambulance. Everything else has stayed the same for three or four weeks now.

Ms. Grundman, Mr. Pannorfi and the Town Manger met with the school leadership on Monday. There is a real effort to save the \$1million.

Ms. Grundman noted that the information given at the meeting was very positive and very clear.

Mr. Parini - a 3.78% school budget...it is his understanding that that percentage has been approved preliminarily by the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Sylvia - make sure that the school department savings are actuals.

Town Manger - if and when the Wing School is vacated there will be a net savings of about \$250,000 total.

Mr. Dwyer - there will be some expenses like renovations to accommodate the students in the other schools.

Town Manger - there will likely be plumbing and some construction costs.

Continuing overview of the warrant articles...

Mr. Dwyer noted that the Finance Committee is supposed to make recommendations for each article that has financial implications. The Board of Selectmen has already approved the budget. We don't even have our information. The Finance Committee Chairman had requested additional financial information from the School Superintendent in the past. We don't have everything we have asked for from the schools. We are not doing the job that we volunteered to do and are sworn to do...wants changes. Town Manager – The Board of Selectmen have not voted a final budget yet. The budget has been recommended by the Board of Selectmen.

Ms. Grundman – The Charter was written in 2000 and there have been changes. We are a work in progress. Appreciates what Mr. Dwyer said...there has to be better communication. The School Committee needs to be able to address our questions. We need to find a way to better communicate. In the past there have been adversarial issues between the school committee and the town.

Mr. Dwyer – there is a lack of respect that we don't have the information we ask for.

Ms. Grundman – personnel matters are part of the reason.

Mr. Dwyer – we should be able to get the information we need from the school department without breaking any collective bargaining rules.

Ms. Yaffe – Hears Mr. Dwyer's anger and frustration. We have nine people with difference ideas and opinions. Not every member has been present for the important meetings. We need to study the budget. Town Meeting needs to know that we have really looked at the budget before we give our recommendations.

Mr. Sylvia - We do need to do our homework. Received very few questions asked by the Finance Committee to be answered by Dr. Canfield. \$5.4 million for the high school budget...we should not be giving them more money. We were given the information from Dr. Canfield and no one else asked questions.

Mr. Parini – One question was a historical picture of the school budget...F/T e's etc. and enrollment. Dr. Canfield had mentioned that it was all in his presentation. I didn't see it.

Mr. Sylvia – you need to dig a little deeper. If we need more information, we will submit it to Dr. Canfield and we will get the information that makes us more comfortable. Maybe the Board of Selectmen Chairman Jim Pierce, who is present, can explain why the Finance Committee was not invited to the Board of Selectmen & School Committee meeting...making it a tri-board meeting.

Mr. Pierce noted that the Finance Committee is not actually an advisory committee to the Board of Selectmen...it is actually advisory to the Town Meeting. It makes its recommendations to the Town Meeting. The Finance Committee is not a policy making board so that should not have been a tri-board meeting. This year marks a real high point between the Town Manager and the Superintendent of Schools. I think that have done a wonderful job of not having to ask for the override this year.

Ms. Yaffe – feels comfortable going for the budget vote tonight.

**\*MOTION WAS MADE BY MS. GRUNDMAN TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF ARTICLE #2 AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY MR. HICKEY.**

Discussion-

Mr. Parini – with regard to the school budget increase of 3.78%...thinks that is a high percentage. But Dr. Canfield said in 2016 we will realize a savings. Can support a 3.78% budget know that there is going to be a saving the next year; however, there is no guarantee with that. Would support this know that we will be lead to believe that we will have a \$1 million dollar savings in the next year.

Mr. Reilly – Echo's Mr. Parini's thoughts and supports Dr. Canfield's presentation.

Mr. Parini – The Town Manager had to sacrifice a needed piece of public safety equipment. It always seems that you sacrifice public safety to meet the needs of the School Dept. There will come a time when we will afford some public safety needs.

**VOTE – 6 AYES / MR. DWYER - NAYE**

**ARTICLE #3 – FY'15 DPW – Sanitation Division Operating Budget.**

Town Manager gave an overview.

**\*MOTION WAS MADE BY MS. GRUNDMAN TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF ARTICLE #3 AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY MR. PARINI. VOTE - UNANIMOUS**

**ARTICLE #4 – FY'15 Golf Department Operating Budget.**

Town Manager gave an overview.

**\*MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. PARINI TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF ARTICLE #4 AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY MR. REILLY. VOTE – UNANIMOUS**

**ARTICLE #5 – FY'15 Capital Budget.**

Town Manager gave an overview noting that the Capital Improvement Planning Committee (CIPA) voted to approve this budget as presented.

Brief discussion.

**\*MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. PARINI TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF ARTICLE #5 AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY MS. GRUNDMAN. VOTE - UNANIMOUS**

**ARTICLE #6 – School Department Multi-Purpose, Synthetic Turf Athletic Field: Capital Outlay Expenditure Exclusion.**

Overview by Town Manager.

**\*MOTION WAS MADE BY MS. GRUNDMAN TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF ARTICLE #6 AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY MR. PARINI.**

Discussion –

Mr. Reilly noted that the CIPC last week did not want to make a recommendation so they did not take a position and noted that he personally will not be approving this. Thinks the town has a lot more pressing needs.

Mr. Sylvia agreed with Mr. Reilly that \$500,000 is a lot of money to spend on synthetic turf athletic fields.

Ms. Yaffe – is there any revenue involved...will they be renting out the fields?

Town Manager – yes, I think they plan to rent it out.

**VOTE – 5 AYES / 2 NAYES MR. SYLVIA AND MR. REILLY**

**ARTICLE #7 – Department of Public Work Public Roads & Public Infrastructure Improvements: Capital Outlay Expenditure.**

Overview by Town Manger.

**\*MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. PARINI TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF ARTICLE #7 AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY MS. YAFFE.**

Discussion-

Mr. Reilly explained that the CIPC approval...this is just a band aide.

Ms. Yaffe – It would be better to go with a ten year bond.

Mr. Sylvia noted that Ms. Yaffe did a great job making a presentation on this subject at a recent Board of Selectmen's meeting.

Mr. Reilly noted that the interest rates are at the lowest in years.

Town Manager – DPW Director Paul Tilton will take any amount. Main Street, Old County Road, Beal Ave. and the Library parking lot are at the top of the list of streets that need immediate attention.

**VOTE – UNANIMOUS**

**ARTICLE #8 FY'14 Snow & Ice Deficit Appropriation.**

The Town Manager noted that, when we write the motion it will include a number...right now it is at about \$165,000.

**\*MOTION WAS MADE BY MS. GRUNDMAN TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF ARTICLE #8 AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY MS. YAFFE. VOTE – UNANIMOUS**

**ARTICLE #9 – Sandwich Promotions Fund Appropriation-**

Town Manager gave an overview.

**\*MOTION WAS MADE BY MS. GRUNDMAN TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF ARTICLE #9 AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY MS. YAFFE. VOTE – UNANIMOUS**

**ARTICLE #10 – Chapter 90 State Aid to Highways Program-**

The Town Manager noted that the amount from the state is about \$700,000.

**\*MOTION WAS MADE BY MS. GRUNDMAN TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF ARTICLE #10 AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY MS. YAFFE. VOTE – UNANIMOUS**

**ARTICLE #11 – Establish Variable Interest Rate for FY'15 Tax Deferral Program.**

Town Manager gave an overview.

**\*MOTION WAS MADE BY MS. YAFFE TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF ARTICLE #11 AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY MR. PARINI. VOTE – UNANIMOUS**

**ARTICLE #12 – Approval of NRG (formerly the Mirant Plant) Tax Valuation Agreement**

The Town Manager gave an overview explaining that the building depreciates every year because it is treated as personal property. We have a five year agreement (we were hoping for a three year agreement). Values are going down but gradually. \$250 million is the current assessed value. Depreciation goes down over time. The actual structure is personal property.

**-The Committee decided to hold off on this vote at this time.**

**ARTICLE #13 – Community Preservation Act (CPA) Fund Expenditure – Administrative Costs & 10% Allocations**

The Town Manager gave an overview.

**\*MOTION WAS MADE BY MS. YAFFE TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF ARTICLE #13 AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY MS. GRUNDMAN. VOTE – UNANIMOUS**

**ARTICLE #14 – CPA Fund Expenditure – Sandwich High School Athletic Field Lighting & Bleachers (\$1,300,000)**

The Town Manager gave an overview.

**\*MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. PARINI TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF ARTICLE #14 AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY MS. GRUNDMAN.**

Discussion-

Ms. Yaffe expressed concern that we are spending so much money on our athletic fields. Is it really the best use of the CPA funds? There are so many other needs that the town has.

It was noted that Articles #14 & 15 would have to be bonded over time.

The bond is either five or ten years which will come from the appropriation on our tax bill. Articles 14 & 15 will require a 2/3rds vote at Town Meeting because we would be using future CPA money...money we don't have right now.

**VOTE – UNANIMOUS**

**ARTICLE #15 – CPA Fund Expenditure – Matching Funds for Federal Coastal Resiliency Grant for Town Neck Beach Restoration (\$1,000,000)**

The Town Manager noted that this is if we get the grant. Thursday night Kirk Bosma from the Woods Whole Group who is working on this project with the town will be coming to the Selectmen's meeting to give an update on this.

**\*MOTION WAS MADE BY MS. GRUNDMAN TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF ARTICLE #15 AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY MS. YAFFE. VOTE – UNANIMOUS**

**ARTICLE #16 CPA Fund Expenditure – Library Archives Improvements (\$19,281)**

A brief overview was given by the Town Manager.

**\*MOTION WAS MADE BY MS. YAFFE TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF ARTICLE #16 AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY MR. PARINI. VOTE – UNANIMOUS**

**ARTICLE #17 CPA Fund Expenditure – Cedarville Cemetery Assessment (\$20,000)**

A brief overview was given by the Town Manager.

**\*MOTION WAS MADE BY MS. YAFFE TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF ARTICLE #17 AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY MS. GRUNDMAN.**

Brief discussion

**VOTE – UNANIMOUS**

**ARTICLE #18 CPA Fund Expenditure – Grist Mill and Lower Shawme Pond Dam Assessment and Plans (\$100,000)**

A brief overview by the Town Manager

**\*MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. PARINI TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF ARTICLE #18 AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY MR. REILLY.**

Brief discussion.

**VOTE – 6 AYES – 1 NAYE / MS. GRUNDMAN**

**ARTICLE #19 – CPA Fund Expenditure – Land Purchase off Chase Road (\$239,000)**

**ARTICLE #20 – CPA Fund Expenditure – Land Purchased off Popple Bottom Road (\$51,000)**

The Town Manager gave a brief overview noting that the land purchase is conservation only or possibly public wells. We are purchasing the land in both Article #19 & #20 for less than the appraised value.

There is a loss of tax revenue.

**\*MOTION WAS MADE BY MS. YAFFE TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF ARTICLES #19 & #20 AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY MR. PARINI. VOTE – 5 AYES / 2 NAYES MR. DWYER AND MR. REILLY**

**ITEM #4**  
**COMMITTEE**

Sub-Committee Reports-

Mr. Parini attended the Sandwich Economic Initiative Corporation (SEIC) meeting with the Board of Selectmen on March 20. Thinks they made excellent progress. Would like to know how the \$50,000 was spent. How are they doing? How have they expanded the tax rate...have they created any jobs. The SEIC talked about a budget of \$250,000 including a staff. Would like to know more of their accomplishments. They have entered into a contract for money that they don't have enough money for. Would like to have the SEIC come in.

Mr. Sylvia noted that Mr. Dick Johnson from the SEIC was in to a FinCom meeting last fall. Would someone like to be the FinCom representative to the SEIC?

Mr. Parini noted that he would like it if he could come before the board.

Ms. Grundman thinks they come before us when they wanted to request \$250,000 sometime in the future. They deal with public/private discussions.

Mr. Sylvia – Hank Sennott appointed to their advisory board for public relations and Jim Lehane. Mr. Sylvia noted that the SEIC agenda and minutes are on the web site and the meetings are open to the public. They meet once a month...the next meeting is April 28 (Mr. Sylvia believes)

Mr. Dwyer – this committee should see that there will be a need for money.

Ms. Grundman – Water Quality Advisory Committee...Ms. Grundman would be happy to serve on this committee as liaison. She will talk with Dave Mason, the Health Agent.

Future Meeting Schedule-

The next Finance Committee meeting will be scheduled for Tuesday, April 15, 2014

Other –

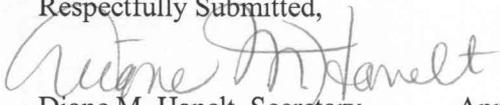
None

**ITEM #6**  
**ADJOURN**

9:10 p.m.

**\*MOTION TO ADJOURN WAS MADE BY MR. PARINI . SECONDED BY MS. GRUNDMAN  
VOTE – UNANIMOUS.**

Respectfully Submitted,



Diane M. Hanelt, Secretary

Approved: 4/15/14

Supporting Documents:

- Projected Revenues and Expenses – FY'15 (GHD BALANCED Draft 4/1/2014)
- FY'15 Budget Totals (GHD Draft 4/1/2014)
- FY'15 Recommended General Government Budget (GHD Draft 4/1/2014)
  - Summary of Significant Budget Changes
- FY'15 Capital Budget Summary (Approved by the CIPC 3/24/2014)
- Index of Warrant Articles (GHD Draft 4/1/2014)
  - May 5, 2014 Annual Town Meeting