

TOWN CLERK  
TOWN OF SANDWICH

NOV 15 2016

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MINUTES  
OF THE  
FINANCE COMMITTEE  
TUESDAY, MAY 17, 2016  
7:00 P.M.  
TOWN HALL MEETING ROOM  
130 MAIN STREET, SANDWICH, MA

Present: Linell Grundman, Bob Guerin, Gene Parini, Mark Snyder, Jim Lehane and Tom Witham

Also Present: Town Manager George Dunham, Finance Director Mimi Spahr, Town Moderator Garry Blank, Selectman Chair Susan James, Selectman David Sampson, School Committee member James Pierce, residents interested in volunteering to serve on the Finance Committee and SCT.

ITEM #1  
CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Meeting called to order at 7:05p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance.

ITEM #2  
PUBLIC FORUM

None.

ITEM #3  
REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

No minutes presented for approval

ITEM #4  
CORRESPONDENCE, STATEMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Grundman noted that we have candidates here who are interested in volunteering to serve on the Finance Committee.

Ms. Grundman thanked Mike Dwyer for his years of service on the Finance Committee and his wonderful contributions and input on the Wing School. Mr. Dwyer resigned from the Finance Committee due to work related matters, effective Tuesday, May 3, 2016...the day after the Annual Town Meeting.

Ms. Grundman noted that on Thursday night, May 19, 2016 we have a speaker, Dr. Ruth Potee at the Forestdale School Multipurpose Room to discuss 'addiction...developing of the brain'.

Mr. Snyder noted that the last major concert of the Arts Alliance is a Jazz night on Saturday, May 21 here in the auditorium and the upper level of the Sandwich Town Hall, 130 Main Street. Tickets are available at Splash Stationers at \$20.00 per ticket.

Ms. Grundman thanked the members of the committee who were present on the stage for the Annual Town Meeting.

ITEM #5  
OPEN DISCUSSION WITH INDIVIDUALS POTENTIALLY INTERESTED IN SERVING ON THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Town Moderator Attorney Garry Blank gave an overview of his appointment process for Finance Committee members. Attorney Blank thanked Ms. Grundman for all of her work on the Finance Committee, her past membership on the Board of Selectmen and many years volunteering on other committees for the town.

Ms. Grundman gave a brief overview of the role of the Finance Committee.

-Mr. Matthew Anderson, Rte. 6A, East Sandwich – introduced himself. Had questions about the time commitment, how readily available information is when asked for it.

Mr. Parini noted that during the budget season we meet every Tuesday night. Suggested that members get very familiar with the School Department budget.

Ms. Grundman – there is also the availability to take courses through the Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) – Association of Town Finance Committees (ATFC). The information packets come to us in a timely manner...several days in advance.

Mr. Snyder – this town is the most open for the municipal budget.

Ms. Grundman – the ATFC is part of the MMA and they have amazing staff and get us answers to any question at any time.

Mr. Parini noted that the Town Manager, Bud Dunham, is very transparent. The school side is getting better but we still have a little trouble getting information from them.

Mr. Guerin – now I want you to know, I ask questions because I think they are important and that is what I do.

-Mr. Anthony Teixeira, Quaker Meetinghouse Road – introduced himself.

Mr. Dunham gave an overview of a June meeting being planned with the Board of Selectmen, School Committee and Finance Committee. There will be a discussion on five year projections. We discuss things we don't have control over such as State Aid. The committee meets pretty much every week during budget season except the February and April vacations from school.

Ms. Grundman noted that January to April we meeting each week.

Ms. Grundman noted that education reform 1993 did not help the Cape at all. We have been at a great disadvantage do to this. The local appropriation has to pay for most of the funding we need.

Mr. Snyder – when students go out of town to another school, i.e. Sturgis and Upper Cape Cod Regional Vocational School, the town pays that now.

-Ms. Laura Wing, Spring Hill Beach introduced herself noting that she has a long, proud history in this town. Involved with the Beach Replenishment Committee...wants to know where the money goes. We spent a lot of money on the beach. How do you prioritize where to put the money? How do you split up the work amongst the nine (9) members of the Committee?

Ms. Grundman – we have some set liaisons to different committees i.e. the Board of Selectmen, the Water Quality Committee. We are working on a subcommittee to the Finance Committee and School Committee.

Mr. Witham – we are all supposed to be familiar with all the #'s...our job is to dig into the information given us.

The most important thing we can do to answer your questions is to study the budget as it is given to you. You must understand the language and prioritizing helps. Thinks the FinCom should avoid putting together its own budget.

Mr. Witham feels the FinCom should have a liaison with the Board of Selectmen and the School Committee at this time. We all want to build a budget that is appropriate for all departments.

Mr. Snyder – We discuss everything at this table. We don't discuss the budget outside of these meetings.

Ms. Grundman – We have a Town Manager who is part of each and every Finance Committee meeting. He keeps us up to date on any information.

Mr. Dunham – The budgets are presented to the Finance Committee by February 1. He gets his 'marching orders' from his bosses...the Board of Selectmen. The Library, Department of Public Works, Fire and Police, Schools budgets are more than \$500,000. All other departments are less than \$500,000. We usually have a level service budget. We are prudent because when we had a little extra funding we apply it to accounts that generally go over. We have some things that are mandated that the funding is not made available. Several departments have only two employees...most have three or four.

Ms. Wing – What is the Finance Committee relationship with the Board of Selectmen, the Capital Planning Committee (CIPC), etc.

Ms. Grundman – I think they are flawed but as good as they can be. Personnel relationships are important...you cannot improve communication enough. A good Chairman to Chairman relationship is a very good thing...we had it this year.

Ms. Grundman – We asked the CPC for information we did not receive. A liaison between the FinCom and the CPC is important.

Ms. Grundman noted that Tri-Board meetings were a regular part of the process. We have eliminated some of the tools that were taking us forward...we need to get over this.  
Mr. Dunham – in most other states, the budget...municipal and school is one budget unlike here in Massachusetts.  
Ms. Grundman noted that we don't meet much during the summer unless there is a need.  
Mr. Parini – Mr. Dunham presents a budget time line i.e. what step in the process we have to be in etc. The role of the FinCom is spelled out in the Town Charter. The FinCom has to recommend or not recommend all of the financial articles on an Annual or Special Town Meeting Warrant.

The question was asked... Does the Board of Selectmen value the Finance Committee opinion?

Ms. Grundman feels the Board of Selectmen does value the FinCom opinion.

Mr. Lehane noted that it is less important to him how many times we agree or not...there is healthy discussion on points of view. If we all agreed all the time then we would have one person running the town. We have a very good relationship with the boards in town. Feels far more removed from the school side of things than I do from the Town side of things. Thinks the FinCom gives you a great opportunity and you get into the guts of things. You learn the needs of the departments. There is a richness that comes from serving on this committee.

Mr. Snyder – Even if you are not appointed to this committee, watch us on television and the School Committee... you can educate yourself.

Ms. Grundman noted that unfunded mandates...mandates from the State that the State does not send us any money for...we are losing money on the local level.

-Mr. David Darling, East Sandwich, introduced himself. What does the law on Proposition 2 ½ mean to us.

Mr. Witham – It is outdated.

Ms. Grundman – It is our frame.

Mr. Dunham – The State voted it in but it applied only to the Towns. It does not award the town for savings. It is an artificial number and over time it won't work. It creates challenges.

Mr. Parini – Why do we even have to raise the taxes 2 ½ %. We have a declining population and decreasing student enrollment.

Mr. Snyder – 2 ½ % is a good idea...it is a constant.

Mr. Darling – believes in what Mr. Parini feels. Suggested another source of revenue...increase the room's tax.

#### **ITEM #6**

#### **TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

-FY'17 Budget voted at the Annual Town Meeting...was supported by the Finance Committee and the Board of Selectmen.

-Overview of Projected Revenues and Expenses FY'17 (Final ATM Budget 3/24/2016)

-FY'17 Cherry Sheet Receipts (GHD Draft 5/12/2016)

-Sending Tuition Assessments State Budget Process History

-Project FY'16 Budget Worst Case Deficits

-General overview of property and liability insurance, workers compensation (the School Department is the biggest workers compensation issues).

Mr. Witham asked about predicting school assessments.

Mr. Dunham noted that he should have the numbers by October 1<sup>st</sup>.

Mr. Guerin noted that the Upper Cape and Sturgis both have waiting lists to get in so we are probably looking at more students staying in Sandwich. So assessments may be going down.

Mr. Guerin – Chapter 70 money...we have passed through to the School budget.

Mr. Dunham – it does require Town Meeting vote.

Mr. Guerin – School Choice funding goes direct to the School Department?

Mr. Dunham – yes.

Mr. Snyder – is any budget turning money back to the town?

Ms. Spahr gave an overview noting that overtime is what you don't really know about. All other town departments are doing great. Kudos to the departments that have not spent all their money.

Mr. Snyder – are we going to get numbers before we vote Reserve Fund Transfers?

Mr. Dunham – we can give you approximate numbers.

**ITEM #7**  
**OLD BUSINESS**

Mr. Guerin offered - Fiscal 2017 Budget – Observations and Recommendations of the Finance Committee (Draft by Bob Guerin – FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES – NOT FINAL  
Brief discussion

Possible item for next meeting agenda – Discussion...Liaison position Capital Planning Committee (CPC).

**ITEM #8**  
**NEW BUSINESS**

Ms. Grundman – please keep us apprised of the funding for the East Sandwich Fire Station

**ITEM #9**  
**RE-ORGANIZATION**

**\*MR. SNYDER NOMINATED MR. GUERIN AS CHAIRMAN. MS. GRUNDMAN SECONDED. VOTE – UNANIMOUS**

**\*MS. GRUNDMAN NOMINATED MR. LEHANE AS VICE-CHAIRMAN. MR. SNYDER SECONDED. MR. LEHANE DEFERRED TO MR. REILLY OR MR. SNYDER.**

**\*MR. PARINI NOMINATED MR. SNYDER AS VICE-CHAIRMAN. MR. WITHAM SECONDED. VOTE – UNANIMOUS.**

**ITEM #10**  
**CLOSING REMARKS**

Ms. Grundman – if you are considering serving the Finance Committee, watch the meetings on our local television station... Sandwich Community Television (SCT)

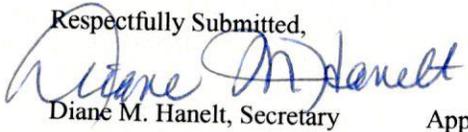
Mr. Guerin noted that the community owes the Town Moderator, Garry Blank a debt of gratitude for serving the community.

Mr. Snyder – agrees... Thank You Garry Blank

**ITEM #11**  
**ADJOURNMENT**

**8:55 p.m. \*MOTION TO ADJOURN WAS MADE BY MR. SNYDER. SECONDED BY MS. GRUNDMAN. VOTE – UNANIMOUS.**

Respectfully Submitted,



Diane M. Hanelt, Secretary

Approved: 4/9/16

Supporting Documents:

- Project Revenues and Expenses - FY'17 (Final ATM Budget – 3/24/16
- FY'17 Cherry Sheet Receipts (GHD Draft 5/12/2016)
- Sending Tuition Assessments State Budget Process History - FY'12-Present
- Projected FY'16 Budget Worst Case Deficits / Current Funding Available / Funding Shortfall that must be addressed
- Fiscal 2017 Budget – Observations and Recommendations of the Finance Committee (Draft by Bob Guerin – FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES – NOT FINAL