

Finance Committee Meeting
Minutes – September 8, 2014
Town Hall, Lower Level Hearing Room, 7:30 P.M.

Members Present: Patricia-Lee Achorn, William Brack, Arnold Cohen (late), Gordon Gladstone, Charles Goodman (late), Alexander Korin, Ira Miller (Hamilton)
Absent: Aaron Agulnek, Laura Nelson, Edward Philips

1. The first item on the agenda was the new Town Administrator, Fred Turkington, updating the Finance Committee on the Fall Town Meeting. He stated that, if none of these articles were time sensitive, it could wait until May.
2. Article 1. Southeastern Regional School's request for stabilization fund article. As of August 23, two towns were for it, one was against, and one was for indefinite postponement.
3. Article 2. Animal control by-law update. Not ready yet. Wait for spring.
4. Article 3. Town Report distribution – general by-law change. Print fewer copies. Print on-line.
5. Article 4. Transfer middle school project funds to public safety building project. Need to find out how much.
6. Article 5. Transfer funds from Treasurer's account to Accounting account. From promotion funds. Can wait for spring.
7. Article 6. Re-appropriate funds approved at 2014 ATM. Library Trustees make sure they can spend \$25,000 to proceed on own if they don't get grant. Town Counsel said language would be clarified. Library would like to move forward.
8. Article 7. Purchase of 175 Pond Street. Property abuts high school. The town will own the property. \$317,500 purchase price agreed to. No Purchase and Sale yet. \$10,000 for demolition of house.
9. Article 8. Reallocation of funds for Fire Department and appropriate additional funds for portable radios. Fire Department funds used for portable radios, \$36,000 to reallocation. Need another \$30,000. Appropriation of ambulance receipts. Vote needs to be clarified at Town Meeting.
10. The next item on the agenda was the new in depth schedule for the Fall Town Meeting. November 17, Town Meeting. October 21, Finance Committee deadline for recommendations to Selectmen's office.
11. There was some discussion held on this new schedule. The time for submitting Finance Committee write-ups had been shortened, but most of the articles were not too complicated. Fred Turkington to notify the committee if the Fall Town Meeting was going to be postponed.
12. There was some discussion regarding the Southeastern Regional School budget and a suggestion to have a representative come in while they are in budget discussions and explain it.

13. Fred Turkington explained that there has been some discussion regarding the strategic planning process for a longer term look at forthcoming expenses, what it will mean to the town, and how it will be implemented.
14. There was considerable discussion on the strategic planning process and its use in the budget process.
15. There was much discussion on the budget process in the past and how it can be improved for the upcoming year.
16. Fred Turkington announced the town will hire a treasurer with cash management background. Personnel vote on revised job description. Goal to be in place for November 1.
17. The committee asked for an update on Rattlesnake Hill and what is happening with that property. Whether the owner will go back into litigation around the 40b process, and the status of Sharon Commons for the assisted living project. There will be a public meeting with the Planning Board on Wednesday night, September 10, and the Zoning Board of Appeals in October. Also, to keep the Finance Committee informed on what is the status regarding the school on Lake Massapoag and the finances involved.
18. The next item was the comparative town analysis.
19. Alex Korin explained how the weighting of the criteria affected which towns are chosen.
20. Fred Turkington gave his views on his experience with Wayland's list. Wayland Finance Committee recommendation on capital. We have to take into account variation of people's ability to pay. Look out for people on fixed income.
21. There was discussion how salary is determined per department per individual using benchmark towns.
22. There was much discussion regarding finding a set of comparison towns for management personnel review and overall budget review. Parameters for criteria: Population, EQV, Income. Add household income instead of DOR. Hope to conclude at next meeting.
23. The next meeting will be September 22, 2014.
24. It was **MOVED** and **SECONDED** to adjourn.
25. **VOTED:** 7-0-0.
26. The meeting was adjourned at 10 p.m.