

Finance Committee Meeting
Minutes- August 24th, 2015
Town Hearing Room, Sharon Community Center
Regular Session, 7:30 pm

Members Present: Ira Miller, Bill Brack, Laura Nelson, Bill Brack, Hannah Switekowski, Steven Ross, Ted Philips, Gordon Gladstone, Alexander Korin, Patricia-Lee Achorn and Charles Goodman

Absent: Aaaron Agulnek

1. Introduce new Finance Committee Secretary

Felicia Giszczynski, the new Finance Committee Secretary was introduced as well as her background as an English and Education major in college as well as her place of residence and her prior career information.

2. Review of Status of Fall Special Town Meeting

Fred Turkington, Town Administrator, presented information regarding the Fall Special Town Meeting. He discussed how there are some decisions that have a fast approaching deadline such as an article relative to civil service for the police that is part of the current collective bargaining negotiations and the school committee choosing to bring back the Heights roof in front of Town Meeting for approval in seeking State funding for the roof repair. He ended by discussing how town funds or other means to help pay for the fields will be brought up at the meeting as well. Mr. Turkington explained that there will not be a Fall Special Town Meeting, but there might be a Special Town Meeting and that the Selectman set a tentative date of January 19, 2016 if a Special Town Meeting is needed.

3. Review of Comparable Town Analysis

Fred Turkington, Town Administrator stated that there are five categories that will be compared which are income, property value, population density, student population and overall density.

The current categories are population, median income, property values, school enrollment and population density, all at an equal 20% of the overall data.

It was agreed that Alexander Korin and Fred Turkington would update the model to see if the overall rankings change in any way. The data will be finalized after the meeting on September 10th of 2015.

Fred Turkington brought forward the Premier, Clear Government document. He stated that there will be two ways in which to view the data, either on Facebook or on an individual towns website. Each community would generate their own data and then the residents would be able to comment on the information given. No action is required at this time, however it is something to think about joining in the future.

4. Review/discussion of September 10th strategic planning meeting

Fred Turkington, Town Administrator, stated that the meeting will be held at the Middle School in the school committee meeting room. The Superintendent will be making a narrative about initiatives that the school committee will be asked to look at. Opportunities will be given for revenue enhancements as well as an overall debt schedule will be provided along with actual borrowings from the past.

A summary of where the Town's longer term finances are going and the projected amount of taxes that are needed will be discussed. The goal of the meeting is to ensure there is a common background of information as to the Town's financial situation across all of the boards, discuss the priorities facing the town and discuss the budget process for FY17.

Gordon Gladstone stated that people need to know and understand where their money is going and in order to do so, they need information regarding education, police and fire and general administration and the total costs for each one including an allocation of fixed and uncontrollable. He then stated that he believes Fred Turkington should lead the meeting since he has the best knowledge to run the September 10th meeting.

Bill Brack suggested adding FY 17 to the Tax Rate Summary document to make it easier for the people who are viewing and make it so they understand that the preliminary projections for FY 17 are showing a 2.7% rate change.

The FY 2017 Preliminary Budget Issues were analyzed in regard to their targeting approach. The goal is to manage the budget with setting a tax target and manage tax rate growth. The appraisal reevaluation is currently happening and will be completed by November of 2015.

5. Review FY 2017 Budget Timetable

Mr. Turkington explained that his budget memo would be similar to FY 2015 in which he would ask the Selectman departments to budget according to current services and also outline any requirements that the departments feel are needed strategically. He agreed that after the September 10, 2015 meeting, additional direction might need to be provided to the public.

6. Review Fall Finance Committee calendar and discussion of topics of interests of Finance Committee members beyond budget and strategic planning

Questions were asked regarding issues of discussion for upcoming meetings as well as should we have more oversight of what other committees are doing. It was also discussed that there is a possibility of formalizing a spreadsheet so that it is part of the whole budgetary process in September.

7. Consideration of any items not anticipated at least 48 hours prior to the meeting

Approval of minutes were agreed upon.

A **MOTION** was made by Ira Miller and **SECONDED** by Gordon Gladstone in regard to the June 15th, 2015 minutes and approved by a vote of 10-0-0.

A **MOTION** was made by Ira Miller and **SECONDED** by Patricia-Lee Achorn in regard to the July 13th, 2015 minutes and approved by a vote of 10-0-0.

The next meeting will be the joint meeting on September 10th, 2015.