Draft- May 16th, 2016

Finance Committee Meeting

219 Massapoag Avenue Sharon, MA

Present: Alexander Korin, Laura Nelson, Gordon Gladstone, Patricia-Lee Achorn, William Brack, Ira Miller, Hanna Switlezowski, Edward Philips, Jason Gates and Arnold Cohen.

Absent: Charles Goodman

The Finance Committee welcomed Jason Gates to the Finance Committee as well as welcoming Laura Nelson back after a short hiatus due to work conflicts.

1. **Committee Leadership Reorganization**

**MOTION**: to nominate William Brack as Chair, Patricia- Lee Achorn and Ira Miller as Vice Chairs and Alexander Korin as the Clerk by Gordon Gladstone SECONDED: by Arnold Cohen **VOTED**:7-0-3.

1. **Planning Board Presentation on Master Plan**

Pat Pannone, Chairman of the Planning Board, discussed the master planning process resented by Ralph Wilmer, of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) to the Planning Board. The overview included how to do it, what it means, and how to go about accomplishing it. Currently the town of Sharon has a water, health, open space, post office square and recreation master plans; they are separate plans and they need to be updated and reviewed for overlap for integration into one larger plan.

Pat Pannone identified three phases to developing a master plan. It will begin with the Planning Committee identifying the elements they want included in the plan. They will then begin having surveys and community outreach, and information from the public. Lastly, they will identify what is most important and how those things can be achieved most effectively. The Master Plan is a “road map” identifying what we want Sharon to be in 5-1-15 years with prioritized action items for how to achieve those goals.

The next step in the process of creating a master plan is asking the Board of Selectmen to put together a Master Plan Steering Committee, which will consist of members of all the Town committees and community members.

There are several options for financing the $75,000 to $125,000 estimated for a Master Plan. MAPC has grants and is exempt from the MGL 30B process (Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 30B) requiring competitive bids. Funds could be raised at Town Meeting and bids solicited from consultants. There may already be “pockets of funds” within Town committee budgets that could be consolidated to support the planning.

The Finance Committee recommended going to an open bid to see what proposals are available. Concerns were expressed regarding MAPC’s ability to support the long range planning. Gordon Gladstone specifically stated that he would like to see a well articulated statement of the overall goals from Town leadership prior to appointing a committee. Pat Pannone agreed to provide this statement and also suggested that Sharon review the master plan to other towns, such as Easton, to develop a better sense of the project.

The Finance Committee would like to see the process include an RFQ (request for qualifications) to identify qualified professionals prior to requesting RFPs (request for proposal) from those qualified. A fully vetted RFP should include identification of the team members, scope of services, milestones and action items. A plan should include an existing building review for the Town with improvement planning and an economic development plan. A master plan will take approximately two years to complete and may be usable up to fifteen years, as long as the objectives are unchanged.

1. **Town Meeting Recap**

The Finance Committee discussed their plan to make information more available for the public prior to Town Meeting. The Finance Committee failed to identify the opponents to the CPC (Community Preservation Committee) funding for a playing field at Gavins Pond. There was an issue of process for the neighbors. The broader question is what can be done to make the public aware of who is doing what; the public is not seeking information. The Town should hire an individual to update the website periodically in order to make it more useful to the public.

The Town needs to get information out to the public, particularly regarding the Finance Committee, Zoning Board of Appeals and the Board of Selectmen. Keeping the website maintained on a regular basis will provide more useful information to Sharon’s citizens. The FinCom should ensure that advocates and opponents for Warrant Articles are reached. There is a responsibility to flush out questions and present to the Town questions asked and answered. For the Citizens Petition the only discussion heard was from opponents without rebuttal. Regarding the pipelines, the Finance Committee was not given enough information.

The Open Warrant Meeting public notice of the was changed to the first page of the Warrant rather than the cover.

1. **Vote Minutes from the March 21st, 2016 and March 28th, 2016**

**Meetings**

**MOTION**: to approve the minutes from the March 21st, 2016 meeting by Ira Miller **SECONDED** by: Gordon Gladstone **VOTED**: 6-0-4.

**MOTION**: to approve the minutes from the March 28th, 2016 meeting by Ira Miller **SECONDED**: by Gordon Gladstone **VOTED**: 6-0-2.

**MOTION**: to approve the minutes from April 25th, 2016 meeting by Ira Miller **SECONDED**: by Hanna Switlezowski **VOTED**: 5-3-0.

The minutes from April 27th were held for Alex Korin to edit.

1. **Topics Not Reasonably anticipated in 24 hours**

The Finance Committee would like to hold an All Board Meeting sometime at the beginning of June including the Board of Selectmen, Planning Board, Finance, Committee, School Committee, and Paul Linehan from the Capital Outlay Committee, to identify goals for the Town’s future and direction for a Master Plan. It would be helpful to have sample Executive Summaries from some Master Plans to review. MGL Chapter 41 Section 81D identifies nine elements of a master plan that are required by the Commonwealth.

Ira Miller discussed VisGov and their plan to add the last of the data shortly. A breakout of the School budget is needed from Sue Owen and Cindy Doherty. The financial data for the Schools should be available from the budget pie chart down to individual salaries. A question was raised regarding Google Analytics access. There will be a presentation for the Finance Committee made available online for the public. The plan is to have that happen in June.

A Pipeline Meeting will be held at Walpole High School on Monday, May 23rd from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm.

1. **Adjournment**

**MOTION**: to adjourn by Edward Phillips **SECONDED**: by Patricia-Lee Achorn **VOTED**: 10-0-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 pm.