

**Finance Committee Meeting
March 19, 2013
Butterick Building Room 205**

Members in attendance: John Kilcoyne, Robert Brown, Lisa Call, Patrick Fox, Mary Cliett, Barbara Bartlett, Joseph Sova, and Town Administrator, Terri Ackerman.

Chairman John Kilcoyne called meeting to order at 7:03 PM.

Discuss and take position on Senior Center Articles 12, 13, and 14

Chairman Kilcoyne began by reading aloud a memo sent via email to the Finance Committee earlier in the day from the Senior Center Building Committee. Mr. Kilcoyne then read aloud the response which was sent following that memo. Jack Chandler from the Building Committee (in audience) requested a correction to Mr. Kilcoyne's response in regards to the wording of the recommendation of the Sterling Senior Center Committee, and handed out copies of the report dated November 7, 2011.

Patrick Fox expressed his concerns regarding the Building Committee's memo and reminded everyone that the Finance Committee does not make the decisions of the Town, only recommendations.

Chairman Kilcoyne explained how much the tax bills would be increased if the Town accepts a \$2.5 Million Article, or even if it accepts a \$1.8 Million Article.

Article 12 – Fund Senior Center

Motion to NOT SUPPORT Article 12 as worded – Lisa Call

Second – Joseph Sova

Comments: Mary Cliett states that she believes the square footage may make the building too small, BUT that it should also be used as a community center. She would like to see proposals entertained that would include that feature.

VOTE on Motion to not support Article 12 as worded:

Yes: John Kilcoyne, Robert Brown, Lisa Call, Patrick Fox, Barbara Bartlett, Joseph Sova

No: Mary Cliett

Article 13 – Fund Senior / Community Center

Patrick Fox suggests that the numbers in the article be altered based on a 5,300 square foot building (as opposed to 5,000 sq ft). Proposed amendment: \$1,885,963.

Proposed amendment, moved by Patrick Fox, seconded by Joseph Sova. Lisa Call suggested substituting \$1,900,000 and leaving 5,300 square feet.

VOTE on amendment: All in favor, none opposed.

VOTE on Article 13 as amended:

In Favor: John Kilcoyne, Robert Brown, Lisa Call, Patrick Fox, Mary Cliett, Barbara Bartlett, Joseph Sova

Opposed: None

Article 14 – Fund Furnishings for Senior Center

Article to be withdrawn if both Articles 12 and 13 do not pass.

Lisa Call questions amount of \$250,000, as calculations on itemized list only come out to approx. \$155,000.

Committee decides to hold – warrant will read “report at Town Meeting”. New numbers required for Town Meeting.

Personnel Board Articles

Jed Lindholm (Personnel Board) and Don Jacobs (Sterling’s new part-time H.R. Administrator) presented Article 2’s 2.2% wage increase as a “Structure Adjustment” (as opposed to COLA, etc) and explained the rationale behind it. The increase is based on the history of the past 5 years, and upon C.P.I. (Consumer Price Index).

Patrick Fox asked if in the future, before the Personnel Board “announces” another wage increase, if perhaps the board could have some sort of consultation with the Finance Committee.

Article 2 – Amend Personnel Classification and Compensation Plans

VOTE: Motion to support Article 2: Joseph Sova

Second: Mary Cliett

Vote Unanimous (7-0)

Discussion of Article 15 – Amend Personnel Bylaws

Finance Committee will “report at Town Meeting” on Article 15. While Article 15 is not financial in nature, the committee did have reservations in regards to a few of the procedural changes which may cut out the need for Finance Committee pre-approval, which had just been discussed in regards to the wage increase article. Mr. Lindholm and Mr. Jacobs explained that the bylaw is separate from the Employee Handbook, or Practice Guide, in which they would still incorporate Personnel Board consultation with the Finance Committee on any matter that would affect the Town’s budget.

Discuss Line Item Budget and Potential Cuts

Finance Committee discussed Line Item Budget and came up with the following potential cuts for recommendation:

\$1,000 – Reduce Accountant Expense

\$3,500 – Reduce Tax Title, Treasurer/Collector
\$500 – Reduce overtime Treasurer/Collector
\$1,000 – Reduce Town Clerk Expense (possibly from Codification and/or Annual Town Reports)
\$1,800 – Reduce I.T. (if possible to host only 1 GIS)
\$5,000 – Reduce Professional Services Expense
\$100 – Reduce Finance Committee Expense
\$5,000 – Reduce Facilities Management Expenses
\$4,000 – Reduce Board of Appeals Expense
\$1,000 – Reduce Conservation Commission Expense
\$800 – Reduce Open Space Committee Expense
\$7,800 – Reduce Police Dept Budget (possibly from Dues, Printer/Copier, Motorcycle?)
\$5,000 – Reduce Fire Dept / Ambulance Budget
\$500 – Reduce Animal Control Budget
\$3,000 – Reduce Inspectional Services Budget (Wire Inspector)
\$1,000 – Reduce Board of Health Budget
\$1,000 – Reduce Council on Aging Budget
\$2,000 – Reduce Veteran's Services Budget (based on recent activity)
\$5,333 – Reduce Library Budget

VOTE: Lisa Call moves to vote to recommend reducing FY14 budget by \$137,000 (incorporating the items above, \$59,000 + \$9,000 in health insurance, and \$20,000 in fire equipment moved to Capital – voted at a previous meeting.)
Seconded by Barbara Bartlett. Vote Unanimous (6-0, Joseph Sova Absent)

VOTE: Increase hours for Library Employee to 20 hours/week

Lisa Call moves to support March 2nd request from Library to increase hours for part-time employee to 20/wk, with the understanding that this will result in the employee receiving benefits not currently received. (Also understood is that the expenses for these benefits will replacing expenses slowly coming off the Library budget due to retiring employees.)

Seconded by Barbara Bartlett. Vote Unanimous (6-0, Joseph Sova Absent)

Reserve Fund Transfer

Request dated 3/19/13 to transfer \$757 from the Reserve Fund to Facilities Manager Salary for Holiday Pay Adjustment.

VOTE: Motion by Lisa Call, second by Barbara Bartlett

In Favor: Lisa Call, Barbara Bartlett, Mary Cliett, John Kilcoyne, Robert Brown

Abstained: Patrick Fox

Absent for Vote: Joseph Sova

Ms. Ackerman encouraged Finance Committee Members to attend the Sterling Municipal Light Board meeting on Monday, March 25th if possible, as there will be a discussion regarding PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes).

Ms. Ackerman will contact Department Heads this week with the cuts proposed by the Finance Committee.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, March 26th at 6:30 PM (new time)

Motion to adjourn: Lisa Call. Second: Patrick Fox

Meeting adjourned 9:48 PM