

**Finance Committee Meeting
March 26, 2013
Butterick Building Room 205**

Members in attendance: John Kilcoyne, Robert Brown, Patrick Fox, Mary Cliett, Barbara Bartlett, Joseph Sova (7:00), Lisa Call (7:00), and Town Administrator, Terri Ackerman.

Chairman John Kilcoyne called meeting to order at 6:36 PM.

Board of Health – Request to Reconsider Budget Cut

David Favreau came before the Finance Committee to request one last consideration of the decision to cut \$1000 from the Board of Health Budget expense categories. Mr. Favreau was concerned that an incorrect FY12 number swayed the Committee's decision, and explained that the Expenses on the Line Item budget for FY12 were printed as \$2,816 when the actual number was \$3,815.

Mike Rivers - Public Comments

Mike Rivers informed the Finance Committee of an "Action Item" voted by the SMLD Board at their meeting of the previous night. He explained that as of January 1, 2014 all payments to the Sterling Municipal Light Department will go through SMLD and no longer accepted at the Town Hall. Mr. Rivers stated that this would result in a cost savings for the Town. (Or a time savings, allowing Town employees to concentrate on other things.)

Mr. Rivers also wished to explain Article 16 to the committee, who had voted to not support the raise in salary for the Light Board Members. He explained that the funds would come from the SMLD, and not the Town, and that the salary increase in the Article would be in line with the increases of the Town employees for the timeframe since the \$600 salary was originally set many years ago.

Mr. Rivers also inquired about Schedule A, and discussion followed regarding the reasons for the lateness of the filing. Chairman Kilcoyne was concerned as well, as to why the Finance Committee was not made aware of this issue by the Board of Selectmen before the fact.

Discuss Revenue and Expense Totals; Summary Sheets

Town Administrator Terri Ackerman had incorporated changes made per Finance Committee votes at the last meeting. Sheets were reviewed and discussed.

Town Operating Budgets

VOTE: Patrick Fox makes a motion that 25% of the DPW Superintendent's salary come from the Water Budget. Seconded by Lisa Call.

After further discussion, Mr. Fox amends motion to 20% (\$15,696). Ms. Call seconds. Vote is unanimous (7-0)

Discussion of DPW Budget and suggestion by Bill Tuttle to decrease DPW Expenses to \$13,575 (to level fund).

VOTE: Patrick Fox moves to accept this proposal, decreasing DPW expenses per Mr. Tuttle's suggestion. Seconded by Lisa Call. Vote unanimous (7-0)

VOTE: Lisa Call moves to restore \$700 (of the previous \$1,000 cut) to the Board of Health Budget, making the expense line item now \$4,530. Seconded by Mary Cliett. Vote unanimous (7-0)

Discussion of the Treasurer/Collector's concern regarding the large cut (\$3,500 of the \$5,000 requested) voted by the Finance Committee in the Budget for Tax Title. Program started up with attorney fees (to collect Tax Title) and per Treasurer/Collector, they need as much of the requested funding as the Town can give to make the program a success.

Discussion of memo from Police Chief Gary Chamberland, in which he proposed ways to reduce his budget request by \$8,130 (which is \$330 more than asked by the Finance Committee).

VOTE: Joseph Sova moves to accept the Police Chief's proposed reduction to the Police Department Budget of \$8,130, as opposed to the \$7,800 originally directed by the Finance Committee. Seconded by Lisa Call. Vote is unanimous (7-0)

Discussion of email from Fire Chief David Hurlbut regarding Ambulance Insurance Coverage. The budgeted amount of \$21,000 could now be reduced to \$1,218 by adding them in with the rest of the town's Fleet Schedule (as opposed to keeping them on a separate insurance policy).

VOTE: Joseph Sova makes a motion for revenue transfer of \$332,500 from Ambulance Receipts to the operating budget. Seconded by Lisa Call. Vote is unanimous (7-0)

VOTE: Motion to also accept Chief Hurlbut's recommendation to reduce Ambulance Expense from \$86,050 to \$76,268. Moved by Lisa Call. Seconded by Joseph Sova. All in favor. (7-0)

Total Operating Budget: **VOTE:** Joseph Sova moves to now approve the amount of \$9,380,935 for the Total Operating Budget. Seconded by Lisa Call. Vote is unanimous (7-0).

Discuss and Vote Town Meeting Articles

ATM Article 4 - Create and Fund Town Planner Position

VOTE: Patrick Fox moves to NOT Support Article 4. Joseph Sova seconds. Vote to Not Support: 6 in favor, 1 opposed. (Lisa Call opposes at this time due to lack of information, could possibly reconsider with more information as promised by Selectman Patacchiola.)

ATM Article 7 – Water Department Operation Enterprise Fund

VOTE: Lisa Call moves to support Article 7 with a total of \$844,858. Joseph Sova seconds. Vote is unanimous (7-0)

ATM Article 18 – Ballot Question (Citizen’s Petition “Capital and Extraordinary Expenses”)

Discussion regarding the wording of the article and concerns regarding logistics, etc. **VOTE:** Patrick Fox moves to “Report at Town Meeting”. Seconded by Barbara Bartlett. Vote is unanimous (7-0)

ATM Article 24 – Replace Ambulance

Discussion of the wording of the Article, which would require amendments per Chief Hurlbut’s memo discussed earlier, and vote of the committee. (Article should now read: “To see if the town will vote to transfer the sum of \$10,000 from the Capital Fund to put toward the down payment of a lease purchase of new ambulance which will replace ten-year old ambulance, or take any action in relation thereto.” The other \$10,000 of the \$20,000 needed would come from Fire Budget.)

VOTE: Barbara Bartlett moves to support Article 24 with amendments. Seconded by John Kilcoyne. Vote is unanimous (7-0)

Finance Committee agreed that *ATM Articles 45, 46, 47, and 48* (all WRSD-related Articles) do not require vote to support or to not support, as they are not financial in nature.

ATM Article 56 – Apply Stabilization Fund to Reduce the Tax Rate

Discussion of the amount to print in the article to transfer from the Stabilization Fund – it was decided to print \$200,000 – but try to decrease to \$100,000 on the floor at Town Meeting.

VOTE: Joseph Sova makes the motion, Mary Cliett seconds. Vote is unanimous (7-0)

Special Town Meeting Articles

VOTE: Lisa Call moves to “Report at Special Town Meeting” on STM Articles 1-8. Seconded by Mary Cliett. All in favor (7-0) (While discussion will take place at future meeting(s) prior to STM, positions will not be taken in time to print in the warrant.)

Reserve Fund Transfers

VOTE: Lisa Call moves to approve request to transfer \$15,000 from the Reserve Fund to “Professional Services” (for legal services March-June, including Town Meeting). Seconded by Joseph Sova. Vote is unanimous (7-0)

VOTE: Barbara Bartlett moves to approve request to transfer \$6,000 from the Reserve Fund to “Facilities Maintenance Expenses” (for the septic emergency at WRSD Chocksett-Houghton – 2 of 3 pumps stopped working). Seconded by Mary Cliett. Vote is unanimous (7-0)

Other Committee Business

Review / discussion of Finance Committee Report / Letter for warrant and 2012 Annual Town Report.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, April 23rd at 7:00 PM

Motion to adjourn: Lisa Call. Second: Mary Cliett

Meeting adjourned 9:52 PM