

Town of Ayer

Finance Committee

Ayer Massachusetts, 01432



Location: Ayer Town Hall, Meeting Room
Finance Committee Minutes

Wednesday February 23, 2011

Present: Brian Muldoon; Chairman, Jesse Reich; Vice Chair, Scott Houde; Clerk
Absent: Andrew Crowley, member
One committee position open

Called to order at 7: 07pm by Brian Muldoon

- Mail
 - None
- Minutes
 - Motion to approve minutes for 1/4/11, 1/5/11, 1/6/11, 1/11/11, 1/26/11, 2/3/11, 2/17/11

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|------------|--------|
| Motion | SH |
| Second | JR |
| B. Muldoon | Aye |
| J. Reich | Aye |
| S. Houde | Aye |
| A. Crowley | Absent |
| | |
| Vote | 3 - 0 |

- Outstanding minutes are 12/8/10, 1/13/11, 1/19/11, 1/20/11, 2/1/11, 2/9/11
- Veteran's Agent submitted a Reserve Fund Transfer of \$42,367 to Board of Selectmen for reimbursement.
 - The budget for Veteran Services is \$76,000 for the year. Anticipated expenses are approximately \$118,000. Expenses have increased due to the struggling economy. The transfer request was approved by the Board of Selectmen at their meeting on February 23, 2011.
 - Motion to approve a Reserve Fund Transfer in the amount of \$42,367 to account 01547-53170

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|------------|--------|
| Motion | SH |
| Second | JR |
| B. Muldoon | Aye |
| J. Reich | Aye |
| S. Houde | Aye |
| A. Crowley | Absent |
| | |
| Vote | 3 - 0 |

- Chairman Brian Muldoon will sign the transfer request at Town Hall on Thursday February 24th.
- Mary Spinner - Transfer Station updated
 - The transfer station implemented single stream recycling last year. In addition to cost savings, the DPW hopes that more people will begin using the transfer station for recycling. The volume of recycling should increase.
 - The current transfer station stickers used in FY10 costs \$1.50 and were designed for 33 gallon bags. The bag size was unenforceable by the transfer station staff. This led to people using 60 gallon contractor bags with a single sticker. That led to the implementation of town bags for FY2011.
 - The current transfer station bag costs \$1.50 for a 33 gallon. A smaller 15 gallon bag is also available. The bags ensure compliance to trash size.
 - DPW gives the amount of bags needed for the year to the manufacturer. This is an estimation based upon trash moved in the past years. The manufacturer distributes supplies to the DPW and various other vendors (Moore's, Kelly's Hallmark, etc.) weekly based upon sales. The estimated cost for each bag is cents.
- Mary Spinner – Capital Exclusion
 - Mary is looking for support for the capital exclusion at the Spring Town Meeting.

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- It is important to show the age of the equipment being replaced when presentations are made to the town meeting. The infrastructure and capital expenses have been put on hold the past few years with the constrained budgets. In the past, the capital equipment was paid within the operating budgets. The presentation should be done at town meeting and stress the impact per tax billing which is quarterly. The BOS have approved the warrant for town meeting and the question will appear on the April ballot. The FinCom will make the presentation at town meeting.
- Motion to support Capital Exclusion for capital purchases in FY2012.

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|------------|--------|
| Motion | SH |
| Second | JR |
| B. Muldoon | Aye |
| J. Reich | Aye |
| S. Houde | Aye |
| A. Crowley | Absent |
| | |
| Vote | 3 - 0 |

- The Energy meetings have discussed the use of \$150,000 in state grants for energy efficiency. The funds have been allocated for the waste water treatment plant which is an oil burning facility. The project should be completed by the end of June 2011. Dan Sherman is currently establishing a maintenance schedule for the waste water plant which has never been done since the 1980s.
- The town must adopt “Stretch Codes” to achieve Green Community Status. Stretch codes require all houses built over 3,000 sq ft to conform to strict energy efficiencies.
- The town signed a 6 month contract with UniSun to place solar panels at areas around the town. This is a cooperative style agreement with 5 or 6 other towns to place solar panels around town property and then purchase that electricity.
- Brain storming session for Finance Committee Budget memo to Board of Selectmen
 - Brian Muldoon presented his first draft of the memo to the BOS for Finance Committee to review. The memo has notes for each department FinCom has met with compiled from meeting minutes and other notes.
 - Suggestions for amendments:
 - JR – Stress the impact of personnel losses at police, fire, and building maintenance.
 - MS – Why does the treasurer need a 5 hour per week person if workload has been reduced with the school regionalization?
 - SH – Stress the impact if the library loses accreditation.
 - SH – The revenue problems should be spelled out. The fees have not been revised in ten years, there needs to be a TIF committee, and no more concessions to builders for fees.
 - JR – no licenses for businesses. This will allow no one doing business in Ayer owes the town back fees or taxes.
- Discussion of the schools – Ayer and Regional
 - The cost for the snow removal from the roof is \$88,000. This can be deficit spent as a part of snow removal costs. Town accountant Lisa Gabree was informed by the Dept of Revenue.
 - BM – Ayer has one of the lowest tax rates in the state. It is about \$4 less than Shirley. That may cause some problems with the regional school funding and capital projects.
 - The RSC requested an additional \$167,000 from Ayer and \$83,000 from Shirley for FY2012. The agreement stipulates that any funding must be split in proportion between the two towns. If Shirley cannot pay the additional \$83,000 then Ayer is not responsible for the \$167,000. The assessment is approved by RSC and sent to the towns. If it is rejected by one town, the RSC must review the budget and present again for the towns. If it is rejected a second time there is a super town meeting with majority rule.
- Finance Committee Financial Survey
 - SH – Given the short time frame to finalizing the budget and my work schedule I suggest we shelf the survey until the FY2013 budget. If the survey is out for 2 weeks until mid March I don’t think there is time to collect the data and digest the results.
 - The committee agrees and the survey is on hold until October.

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- Reserve Fund Transfer Balance Account 01132 57800

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|----------------------------|--------------|
| Beginning Balance | \$180,000 |
| RFT fro Tax Title | (673.67) |
| RFT for Veteran's Benefits | (42,367) |
| Remaining Balance | \$136,959.33 |

Motion to adjourn at 8:35pm

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|------------|--------|
| Motion | SH |
| Second | JR |
| B. Muldoon | Aye |
| J. Reich | Aye |
| S. Houde | Aye |
| A. Crowley | Absent |
| | |
| Vote | 3 - 0 |

Brian Muldoon, Chairman _____ Date _____

Jesse Reich, Vice Chairman _____ Date _____

Scott Houde, Clerk _____ Date _____

Andrew Crowley, Member _____ Date _____