

FINANCE COMMITTEE
Town of Becket
557 Main Street
Becket, MA 01223

Thursday, April 7, 2011

Call to Order: 7:05 PM

Present: Steve L., Ann S., Jeremy D., Chuck A., Craig K., Richard F.

Absent: None

Public Present: Becket Select Board: George F., Mark K., Bill C.; Public attendees David Shorley, Arlene Adler, Gale LaBelle, Beth Van Ness, Colleen O'Connor, E. Will, Geri Walter, Madeleine Swindelhurst, Kathy Hayn, Bill Elovirta, Mercedes Gallagher, Nina Weiler, Christine Bleau.

AGENDA

1. Review and approve minutes for March 23, 2011

Motion: Ann Second: Jeremy
Approved

2. Town Employee input:

Discussions surrounded the Town Budget salary increase percentage of 3% versus the Finance Committee recommendation of 1.5%. Topics such as the way the raise is distributed, the salary grid fairness, the age of the last salary grid were all discussed. It was reminded that the FC only recommends a percentage increase, not how this is administered. That is the responsibility of the department heads along with the Town Administrator and Select Board. It was deferred to that group to determine what was fair and if another survey needed to be completed in future years. As for the percentage increase Bill C. felt strongly about the 3% increase. Mark K. brought up General Dynamics, a local corporation had a 1.5% increase. Town employees wanted the 3% because they have not seen a net raise in a few years because of the increased cost of health care, residents thought the 3% was excessive, Mercedes G. brought up the State was cutting the budgets and raises for State employees was unsure. Overall the FC was standing by the previous recommendation of 1.5% (motion by JD second by DP, all pass) since there was not a raise in 2011 Budget cycle but most employees did receive 1.7% in 2010 Budget cycle (exception being the 4 highway dept employees who were at the top of their range and received 0.7%). George F, felt the proper way to handle would be to put in a line item for the ATM and let the voters decide.

It was also voted to include the compensation for the Tax Collector, Treasurer, and Assessors that is received from the Districts in the Town Compensation with the offset in Revenue as recommended by the Town Accountant. Motion by JD, second by DP, all pass. This will need to be explained by a FC member at the ATM.

3. Review updated overall budget

The ATM Warrant including the use of Free Cash was reviewed. Articles 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 15, 16, & 26 are all recommended by the FC without change or comment. No Action by the FC was taken on Articles 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, & 25 as they do not pertain to the FC recommending authority. Articles 13 & 14 were Tabled until data is available. Article 18 was Tabled until the following meeting when representatives of the CBRSD will be present. Article 20 was recommended by the FC as long as it could be determined the parcels would not carry any obvious liabilities to the Town. Article 2 was recommended with a change of Veteran's Benefits from 20K to 5K and a new total of \$147,300. Article 9 was recommended with a change to the Center Pond Lake District of 1,500 with a new total of \$38,500. Article 17 was recommended but with a figure up to \$321,600.

Detailed Budget recommendations from the FC are as follows. As previously noted all salary and wage related lines need to be recalculated and presented with the FC recommendation of 1.5% and including the Lake and Road District's compensation for the previous noted positions. Lines 17, 21, 25, 30, 34, 35, 96, 97, 103, 120, 121, 122, 150, 151, 152, 154, 155, & 156 are all recommended as requested. Line 119 (Building Inspector) was recommended to include the same hours as the previous year plus the 1.5% increase. Hour increase needs to be addressed as to need with the SB. At this time there was no support for increasing the office hours. Line 153 (Library) was recommended at \$36,000 as previously voted. At this time there were no open line items to be

recommended (or not) in the Budget for 2011.

4 Correspondence and transfers: The following Transfers from Reserve were approved unanimously: \$500 for Planning Board Expense (M: JD, S: DP); \$5,000 Municipal Building Utilities (M:DP, S: JD). The Transfer of \$600 to Emergency Management Expense was also voted for (M: DP, S: AS) and passed with one Abstaining vote.

5 Public Input No other noted than above.

6.Any other business: None

Adjourn 10:00 PM

Respectfully submitted by Dan Pamell

Approved by Stephan LaBelle

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Stephan LaBelle", written over a horizontal line.