

Pursuant to a call to order and notice duly given in the manner required by law and the By-laws of the Town of Dartmouth, a meeting of the Finance Committee was held on Thursday, April 24, 2008 at 7:00 P.M. at the Dartmouth Town Hall, Room 315.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Greg Lynam, Stewart Washburn, Larry Fox, Peter Friedman, Dave Ferriera, Francis Pettengill, George Jacobs, Shannon Jenkins, Melissa Haskell

BEGINNING RESERVE FUND BALANCE: \$ 639,438.60

ENDING RESERVE FUND BALANCE: \$628,959.35

(Reserve Fund Transfers: \$2,506.38 – Sick Leave/Vacation Benefit Settlement; \$645.50 – Sick Leave/Vacation Benefit Settlement; \$7,327.37 – Sick Leave/Vacation Benefit Settlement)

RESERVE FUND TRANSFERS

MOTION

Melissa Haskell moved that \$2,506.38 be transferred from the Reserve Fund to the Sick Leave/ Vacation Benefit Settlement Account. Francis Pettengill seconded the motion.
(Vote 8-0-0)

MOTION

Melissa Haskell moved that \$645.50 be transferred from the Reserve Fund to the Sick Leave/ Vacation Benefit Settlement Account. Larry Fox seconded the motion.
(Vote 8-0-0)

MOTION

Melissa Haskell moved that \$7,327.37 be transferred from the Reserve Fund to the Sick Leave/ Vacation Benefit Settlement Account. Larry Fox seconded the motion.
(Vote 8-0-0)

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLANNING COMMITTEE BRIEFING

Ed Iacaponi noted that the Capital Improvements Planning Committee had revamped their recommendations after meeting with the Department of Public Works.

Michael Gagne discussed the mechanical system upgrade of the Town Hall and said he would have a projection of the cost savings and rationale for making the upgrade.

- Larry Fox to send email with requests for information for energy costs.

With regard to the energy usage/payback period for the Quinn School windows, Peter Friedman spoke with the engineer that did the calculation for the payback period and found the calculation to be very conservative, taking into account only conductive loss and no infiltration costs. Mr. Friedman did some revised calculations and factored in the 55% reimbursement by the Commonwealth. Mr. Iacaponi expressed some skepticism about the reimbursement and said he would be uncomfortable making that representation based on the past performance of the Commonwealth on its pledges to reimburse. David Ferreira reiterated Mr. Iacaponi's concerns and pointed out that eighty-three projects had been approved by the State and Dartmouth has not yet filed a request. It was Mr. Ferreira's feeling that it would be a long wait to receive these funds as only \$500 million is available per year in funding and this includes new schools in addition to renovations. George Jacobs asked how long the windows were likely to last, noting that without including financing costs and state reimbursement, they would need to last at least 27

years. Mr. Iacaponi said that the existing windows were more than 50 years old, but indicated that the CIP would be reviewing this project.

A discussion ensued about the library HVAC system upgrades. Mr. Iacaponi reiterated that the roof replacement for the Southworth Library was a top priority. Mr. Gagne discussed the possibility that energy rebates might be gained by changing the HVAC systems. Gregory Lynam declared his support for improvements that would save future dollars in electric and energy costs.

Mr. Lynam asked about sander body that is on the list of capital needs. Mr. Gagne said that it would enable the Town to sand/salt more efficiently and can disburse product in a more controlled manner. The increased efficiency would allow for more miles of street to be done with a single load.

There was a discussion about the addition of police cruisers. Mr. Friedman said that the long-term stabilization fund should not be used to do routine expenditures. Ed Iacaponi said that Massachusetts had changed the law so the Stabilization Fund could be used for any municipal purpose. Mr. Friedman expressed his concern about the level of the Stabilization Fund.

Larry Fox shared views on funding of books and computers. Mr. Gagne suggested a collective discussion on this issue ahead of Town Meeting.

REVIEW OF SCHEDULE A

Peter Friedman said that he thought there was agreement by all that we should be looking for cost savings now, but was concerned about future sustainability.

Peter Friedman asked why the legal expense was not reduced since there are legal expense line items for each department. Mr. Iacaponi responded that they are just being implemented.

Mr. Lynam asked if the Conservation Commission was a necessary and legally required department. There was discussion on this issue. Melissa Haskell pointed out their various functions and noted that there was no other entity to perform these functions if the department was eliminated.

The Police Department budget was discussed. Shannon Jenkins asked why the overtime and additional hours in the police budget was not reduced with the hiring of seven additional officers. Mr. Iacaponi pointed out that it takes time to train the new officers and get them on the street to impact overtime and additional hours.

Gregory Lynam inquired about the cost to turn on and off the streetlights. Mr. Gage said that the total cost was approximately \$15 thousand.

Discussion included the Vocational School assessment, the ambulance contract and the Library budget.

Francis Pettengill requested an update on group insurance.

Mr. Jacobs asked why step increases were assumed to be automatic as in the past? Why aren't step increases being addressed in contract negotiations? Mr. Jacobs observed that structural change cannot happen without addressing step increases.

MOTION

Shannon Jenkins moved that the meeting be adjourned. The motion was seconded by George Jacobs.

(Vote 9-0-0)

9:23 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Haskell

Clerk