



TOWN OF DARTMOUTH MASSACHUSETTS

Finance Committee
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Peter Friedman, Chairman
Greg Lynam, Vice-Chairman

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, August 21, 2008 at 7:00 P.M. at the Dartmouth Town Hall, Room 315.

Members Present: Patrick Roth, Francis Pettingill, Peter Friedman, Melissa Haskell, Shannon Jenkins, Greg Lynam, Stephen Mitchell, Dave Ferreira

Members Absent: Larry Fox

BEGINNING RESERVE FUND BALANCE: \$781,799.59

ENDING RESERVE FUND BALANCE: \$767,799.59

(\$14,000 – Replacement Police Cruiser)

Meeting with Chief Pacheco

Chief Mark Pacheco was in to discuss the Reserve Fund Transfer request that was submitted to purchase a new police cruiser to replace one that had been damaged. The Finance Committee was reminded that the Police Department had asked for four cruisers for this fiscal year and had only received two. The damaged cruiser would be saved for parts. The only thing that cannot be saved is the damaged prisoner cage. There was some discussion about the salvage value.

MOTION

David Ferreira moved that \$14,000 be transferred from the Reserve Fund to the Replacement Equipment Account. Francis Pettengill seconded the motion.

Vote 8-0-0

Discussion of fall meeting schedule.

The Finance Committee discussed the proposed schedule and agenda of meetings and reviewed topics to discuss and other groups with whom they wished to meet. It was agreed that a meeting should be set up with the Planning Board to discuss street acceptances. Greg Lynam proposed that the meeting should include a discussion of impact fees. There was some concern expressed about impact fees. Shannon Jenkins said that she would follow-up to get the developer perspective on impact fees. Ed Iacaponi said that he would follow-up with Michael Gagne to discuss street acceptances. Mr. Iacaponi said that the street acceptance process had evolved with the Planning Board such that developers knew that if they met certain requirements with their roads, the Planning Board would recommend the acceptance of the street. Melissa Haskell asked about the risks associated with denying a street acceptance and the legal issues associated with that. Shannon Jenkins indicated that she was concerned about opening up the Town to potential litigation. The discussion was suspended to allow the FinCom to meet with its next appointment.

Meeting with Bill Stanton from The Trustees of Reservations (“TTOR”) and Dexter Mead from Dartmouth Natural Resources Trust (“DNRT”)

Mr. Stanton and Mr. Mead had an appointment with the FinCom to let them know about the Agricultural Preservation Restriction that the their two groups were partnering to acquire on the Cornell Farm that is located on the corner of Smith Neck and Rock O' Dundee Roads.

Mr. Mead reviewed the history of DNRT including their protection of land in Dartmouth through the ownership of 1,500 acres and holding of conservation restrictions on 900 acres. DNRT has help other organizations protect and additional 2,000 acres of land. Mr. Mead further noted the various groups with who DNRT had successfully partnered. Among the various projects Mr. Mead highlighted was the Silverbrook Farm that was preserved as a result of funding from DNRT's fundraising, money from the State's Agricultural Preservation Restriction program, the Community Preservation Act funding and funding from the Dartmouth Agricultural Preservation Trust Fund. Mr. Mead noted that the farmer that

owns and works this farm has gone on to become a leader in the “Buy Local” movement and operates a Community Supported Agriculture program (“CSA”), which in the summertime, works in conjunction with seven other local farms to provide produce to CSA members.

The Cornell Farm on Smith Neck Road was the latest project on which DNRT was partnering. The Trustees of Reservations is spearheading the project. When this project reaches its successful completion, the TTOR will end up owning this particular property and will manage the farmland as a farm. At this juncture, TTOR is not sure if it will be a Community Supported Agricultural farm or an educational farm. Part of the property will be open to the public as a nature preserve. The Cornell Farm abuts the Brownell farm on which there is already an agricultural preservation restriction. Additionally, the Cornell family is taking a purchase price that is about \$500,000 less than the market value.

Patrick Roth noted the positive impact Silverbrook farm was having on the area farming community and pointing out that his daughter sells to Silverbrook farm, that the farmers market in Dartmouth was organized by this farmer and that this farmer goes to Cambridge to the farmers’ market there five days a week. Mr. Roth discussed the large operation that Silverbrook has become and number of farms it helps to support in the area with its CSA program.

Gregory Lynam and Francis Pettingill asked questions about the property taxes that the Town would be giving up in protecting this parcel versus that collected if the land were to be developed and the cost to the Town for developing a this parcel.

Mr. Lynam also asked for CPC financial information from Ed Iacaponi.

Dexter Mead said that the Agricultural Commission was working on a study of the economic impacts of farm land and their costs to the community, taxes versus contribution to the Town.

Mr. Mead offered to take FinCom members on a tour of the Farm if they would like to see it.

Resume Street Acceptance Discussion

A brief discussion about street acceptances resumed and the suggestion was made that perhaps Town Meeting take another non-binding vote on the issue.

Outstanding Items

Mr. Pettingill reminded the FinCom that we should be having a discussion about insurance and asked if Michael Gagne and Ed Iacaponi could bring the Committee up to date.

FinCom members requested a full briefing on contracts, specifically police and DTA. There was agreement that the briefing would be done on the 11th of September.

Mr. Iacaponi said he wanted to discuss raising the demand free to \$30 as allowed under the law.

There was discussion about meeting with the Personnel Board about the amendments they wish to make to the personnel by-laws.

The Committee also agreed that we should be discussing warrant articles as they become ready.

Shannon Jenkins asked for information relating to the use of the Council on Aging by non-Dartmouth residents, specifically how many non-Dartmouth residents were being served.

Dave Ferreira suggested that an update be given about the litigation with Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School, during the next Executive Session.

There was a discussion about meeting with Steve Mello to get an update on the Waterways Committee.

Patrick Roth volunteered to serve as the Finance Committee representative to the Agriculture Preservation Trust Fund Council.

MOTION

Melissa Haskell moved that Patrick Roth be appointed at the Finance Committee's representative to the Agricultural Preservation Trust Fund Council. Shannon Jenkins seconded the motion.

Vote 8-0-0

MOTION

Melissa Haskell moved and Shannon Jenkins seconded that the meeting be adjourned.

Vote 8-0-0

Meeting adjourned at 8:21 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Melissa Haskell

Clerk