



TOWN OF DARTMOUTH MASSACHUSETTS

Finance Committee
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Shannon Jenkins, Madam Chairman
Mary Louise-Nunes, Madam Vice-Chairman
Stephen Mitchell, Clerk

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 joint meeting of the Finance Committee and Select Board was held on Thursday, December 17th, 2009 at 6:30P.M. at Dartmouth Town Hall, Room 315.

Members Present - Barry Walker, Peter Friedman, Greg Lyman, David Ferreira, Stephen Mitchell, Shannon Jenkins, Patrick Roth
Absent: Mary Louise-Nunes, Jason Wentworth

6:30PM – Pledge of allegiance and meeting called to order.

6:34PM - Village Zoning By-Laws

Presentation made by Donald Perry, Town Planner and Mr. Richard Rheume, member of Padanaram Business District Review Committee

Mr. Perry provided some basic history about the committee and why it was formed. The committee was formed and started several years ago as a way to ask residents of Padanaram and Padanaram Business owners their thoughts about development and the needs of the Padanaram Business District. Meetings have always been very well attended. The committee has worked toward defining the purpose of the district as it relates to development. It was agreed that they wanted to be small business friendly while maintaining the character of the village.

The discussion continued citing various zoning by-laws that were created and changed through the years. Examples provided today included; parking requirements imposed 1990's; Restaurant having a 50 seat maximum without parking requirement; During a rolling 10 year period renovations to structures can not exceed 50% of the value of the property to name a few.

Peter Friedman asked for clarification if this proposal had at one time did not pass. He commented further by stating he believed that there was an attempt to make it an historic district. He further stated that there is a Marine District currently in place in this location. Mr. Perry confirmed YES to all questions and comments.

Patrick Roth commented on the Zoning By-laws listed in the warrant which includes all types of buildings and businesses. Patrick cites that auto-sales are not included in the language. Mr. Perry responded by stating that the committee felt it important to provide flexibility to the district in terms of scope of businesses that would be allowed. Mr. Perry stated that the mix use capability would allow small and first time businesses to be attracted to the village. For example, newly graduated art students from UMASS would be able to open third floor studio space to conduct business if the warrant passed and the new zoning took affect.

Greg Lyman asked how many business people were involved and what are the impediments to small businesses currently? Mr. Rheume states space and parking are the two biggest obstacles. Mr. Richard Rheume said that the focus of the committee is taking any impediment away.

Shannon Jenkins asked about the timing she stressed the importance in her opinion to get a FinCom recommendation so they could get on the Special Town Meeting in January. The Finance Committee discussed its schedule citing we will be meeting next week. If this does go during the Special Town Meeting and it's placed on the Spring Town Meeting schedule there would be a significant impact to several business this summer since action would not take place until next December.

7:00PM – Reserve Funds Transfers

\$35,000 Tax & Title Expense – requested by Edward Icaponi, Budget & Finance Director

Mr., Icaponi stated that there were many more properties that the Town required to place liens on.

Motion made by Peter Friedman

2nd by David Ferreira

Vote 7-0-0

Buzzard Bay Action Committee – Association Dues

Discussion of the value - Rationale given: This gives Dartmouth a seat at the table for voting and access to grant money with in regard to conservation issues relative to Buzzards Bay where policy decisions are made.

\$992.50

Motion made by Peter Friedman

2nd by Greg Lyman

Vote 6-1-0

Wind Turbine

\$7,500 Relocation of turbines due to additional wetlands

Motion made by Peter Friedman

2nd by Barry Walker

Vote 7-0-0

7:20PM – Warrant Article Review of Healthcare By-Law

An overview provided by David Cressman, Town Administrator - Have the town accept state law MA GEN 30B Sec 18 which has been in-force for 15 years. Mr. Cressman explains that there is a group of town employees that have not contributed to Medicare and therefore have no credits. Section 18 of law states anyone 65 or older are required to move to Medicare. Dartmouth By-Laws has not accepted Section 18 of the State Law. Currently there are 38 employees in carve out healthcare plans. He is not sure why there are 17 employees are there since they do have Medicare credits. He further explains that there are 21 employees in Carve out A . These 21 have Medicare A coverage but never applied for Medicare B coverage. Mr., Cressman states that these are the obvious cases. There are others out there such as retirees in these plans which Section 18 legally forces them onto Medicare. If not there is a penalty of 10% of the premium per year that the town will have to pay. An auditor pulled out 14 months of claims - the 38 employees in the carve out plan have an average cost of \$5,800 per year. The total is \$220,000. The 12 months medics group 236 costs \$4,100. This is an average cost difference of \$1,700. As cost go up the town has no protection as it would with Medicare coverage.

Peter Friedman asked if town meeting accepts this by-law then does it go to collective bargaining. David Cressman answered in the matter of retirees no because they do not have a seat in negotiations so they are required have to accept. Current employees however could result in collective bargaining process.

Motion made by Greg to recommend Article 3 for Special Town meeting
2nd by Patrick Roth
VOTE 7-0-0

7:40PM - Dave Cressman will work on an develop a schedule for Special Town Meeting and the Spring Town Budget process. Further discussion about FinCom meeting schedule. Shannon states FinCom next meeting is January 7th 2010 - The completed warrant needs to be to Lynn January 8th so she can post January 11th and send the warrant to Town Meeting members.

7:50PM - Greg Lyman asked David Cressman to share his personal views on what he envisions for this town in the near future and what is his general sense about where we are today. Mr. Cressman offered the following highlights. The 2010 Town Charter Review will begin shortly. This will drive and impact the town in the coming years. Mr. Cressman also stated that considering the relatively low tax base that the Town of Dartmouth has he is very pleased and impressed with the services and quality of life the town provided to its residents. He does forecast and offer insight that inevitably, the cost for services are going to far exceed the revenue sources in this town. Even after restructuring and Town Charter commission is done and consolidations of departments - that a future override about the 2 ½ is in his opinion inevitable.

8:10PM - The 5 Year Plan template and working resource

The Finance Committee sated to Mr. Cressman that our collective goal as a committee is to be able to manipulate the numbers and forecast various scenarios so we can simulate financial “WHAT Ifs”. For example if we want to anticipate state aid getting cut by a certain percentage how does that impact our Town’s budget. Greg discussed the puzzle analogy. We need to be able to pull back the cloak and see the big level. Mr. Cressman has this is a take-away item to review to see how we can partner on this.

8:20 PM - Wind Turbines

Peter Friedman state that assuming no legal issues with net metering that this is a financial winner for the town even at the most conservative estimates. Will look to Select Board meeting next week

8:30PM - Motion made by Peter Friedman to Adjourn
2nd by Shannon Jenkins
Vote: 7- 0 - 0

Stephen Mitchell
Clerk