

Town of Fairhaven

Finance Committee

Minutes of the meeting for <April 24, 2014>at the BPW Administration Building, Arsene St., Fairhaven, MA

Members in attendance:

Chairman-John Roderiques, Robert A. Furtado, Scott Fernandes, Padraic Elliott, Kathi Carter, Therese Szala, Lisa Plante, John Mota

Town of Fairhaven:

Jeffery Osuch- Executive secretary

Meeting was covered by government access television. Member of the press was not present.

Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Announced that the meeting was being recorded by government access TV. Chairman has to be notified if anyone else present is recording the meeting by video or audio.

Motion made by Scott to accept the minutes from April17, 2014. Seconded by Terry.

Vote: Unanimous

- Mr. Osuch passes out a sheet for the STM and a sheet for the ATM, with items he hasn't gotten the committee's votes on yet. Mr. Osuch also passes out copies of the Mattapoissett WWTP Contract.

- Chairman starts to run through the Annual Town Meeting missing votes:
- Article 4- #26 Fire Salaries & Wages:
 - Committee still has not obtained a copy of the Fire Contract

- Article 12-Mattapoissett WWTP Contract
 - Mattapoissett wants to purchase, a phased in increase of 6 percent more capacity, of the waste water treatment plant.
 - The existing plant does have the capacity.
 - We were given the draft contract. Mattapoissett council is still reviewing agreement.
 - Chairman states it is not this committee's job to rewrite the contract.

- Chairman advises committee to review contract for next meeting.
- Article 14-Handicap Parking
 - Discussion again about the cumbersome accounting needed.
 - Chairman again suggests adding money to Commission on Disabilities budget to cover a curb cut, if needed.
 - Terry motions to recommend Indefinite Postponement. Seconded by Scott.
Vote: Unanimous.
- Article 25-IT Advisory Committee
 - Discussion again about too large a committee.
 - Already voted last week to IP.
- Moving on to the STM:
- Article 1- Veteran's Department- Purchase of Services
 - Article is for \$ 30,000, with \$ 15,000 being transferred from Other Charges/Expenses, and \$ 15,000 from Surplus Revenue.
 - Discussion of money needed for Veteran's Services.
 - Discussion of money being appropriated at passed STM's and then being turned back in.
 - Scott motions to transfer \$ 15,000 from FY2014 Other Charges/Expenses to Purchase of Services, and appropriate \$ 5,000 from Surplus Revenue.. Seconded by Terry. Vote: Unanimous
 - Committee is in agreement that any shortfall, after TM, will be made up from the Reserve Fund.
 - Chairman brings up speaking with our State Representative about the share that Fairhaven pays for Veterans, as opposed to some cities.
 - Discussion of this being covered on a State level.
- While on the subject of the Reserve Fund, Chairman states he has received a preemptive email from Vincent Furtado- BPW Superintendent.
Mr. Furtado states their vehicle lift needs a \$ 3,800 repair.
If it cannot be covered in their budget, they will be submitting a Reserve Fund Transfer request.
- Article 16-Union Wharf Land Exchange
 - Mr. Osuch explains this Article concerns exchanging a privately owned parcel of land consisting of 900 sq. ft. shown at Town of Fairhaven Assessor's Map 7 Lot 7 with a 2,158 sq. ft. lot shown at Town of Fairhaven Assessor's Map 7 Lot 9.

- The smaller lot is contained within the building the Town owns at Union Wharf.
 - The larger lot is at the east end of the parking lot.
 - Terry asks if the building can still be torn down with that parcel of land privately owned.
 - Chairman states that there are legal obligations on both sides, but it would be costly to pursue in court.
 - The grant to tear down the building also has a time limit on it.
 - Pat asks if they are simply "slicing of a piece" to obtain the 2,158 sq. ft. lot.
 - Mr. Osuch states yes.
 - Lisa asks if it is simply a swap of parcels.
 - Chairman states that both lots will have to be appraised, and the Town has to be made whole for any difference in value.
 - John M. asks the size of Lot 8 now.
 - Mr. Osuch states that Lot 8 is now 3335 sq. ft.
 - Mr. Osuch states he doesn't know if the appraisals will be done in time for Town Meeting.
 - Chairman states we will hold off on taking a vote as long as we can.
- Back to discussion of the ATM
 - Chairman asks Mr. Osuch if he has received a signed Memorandum of Understanding from the Fire Union yet.
 - Mr. Osuch states no.
 - Article 12-Mattapoisett WWTP Contract
 - Chairman advises committee to look over contract.
 - Mr. Osuch states that the current agreement has expired.
 - Chairman clarifies that the Capital Improvements shared with Mattapoisett, apply only to the WWTP itself.
 - Chairman again states the agreement will benefit the Fairhaven rate payers.
 - Article 26- Capital Planning
 - Chairman states there have been some revisions.
 - We will discuss this more next week.
 - Chairman states this Committee could be worked on as time goes on.
 - The Town needs to start somewhere.
 - Chairman states he feels the TGSC should have focused on Capital Planning instead of IT.
 - Article 27- Hastings Floor Restoration
 - Chairman states the floors will have to be addressed sooner rather than later.

- Mr. Osuch states if we did all 3 sections of this phase, the total amount would be \$ 157,351.

7:47 PM. Chairman calls recess to make copies of information. Back in session @ 7:55 PM.

- Chairman presents a bill from Monaghan Printing Company, Inc., in the amount of \$ 1,664, for typesetting and printing of the Town Warrant & Fin Com Report.
 - Scott motions to pay \$ 1,664 from Acct. # 001-131-00-5422-00-201 Fin. Com.- Preprinted Forms. Seconded by Terry. Vote: Unanimous
- Chairman states that we will need to meet next Thursday.
- Chairman asks Mr. Osuch to have hard copies of the Fire Union Agreement for the Precinct Meetings, if at all possible.
- Back to Article 27
 - Terry asks how many phases would be required to complete the whole school.
 - Chairman states 3 or 4 phases.
 - Lisa feels we should do the whole project.
 - Chairman wants to be clear, when we state the entire project we mean just this entire phase of the project. This would not be the entire building.
 - Pat asks if there is money for this.
 - Chairman states yes.
 - Pat supports the entire phase of the project.
 - Chairman asks Mr. Osuch why the Selectmen voted no.
 - Mr. Osuch states they were going with a lower figure of spending.
 - Discussion of the difference in votes between the Fin. Com. and Select Board.
 - Chairman can't see spending for the fire alarm at the EMA building.
 - Discussion of Rogers School Assessment.
 - Kathi asks if the building doesn't sell, what would happen to the money.
 - Chairman states the money would be locked to the Article for 2 years.
 - Discussion of the Personnel Study.
 - Chairman states that this work should be done by the Town Administrator.
 - Discussion of writing job descriptions.
 - Chairman states that job descriptions can be obtained from the MMA.
 - Discussion of the DOR report.
 - Back to Article 27

- All committee members individually voice their support for doing the entire phase of the project.
 - Terry motions for \$ 157,351. Seconded by Lisa. Vote: Unanimous

- Article 15- TGSC- Town Administrator Position
 - Chairman states that 1 Selectman wants a residency requirement.
 - Chairman states he is against the requirement.
 - Chairman asks if any other employee has a residency requirement.
 - Mr. Osuch states no. Fire and Police personnel must live within a 10 mile radius, and have 9 months to comply.
 - No other employees have requirements.
 - Terry states she would rather see the TA not live in Town, to avoid the politics.
 - Scott motions to go on record as opposing a residency requirement as a condition of the TA position. Seconded by Terry. Vote: Unanimous
 - Chairman asks Mr. Osuch if he has an opinion, as to the requirement.
 - Mr. Osuch states he doesn't see any benefit to it.
 - Lisa has a problem with the Selectmen's approval of everything. Feels the TA should have more authority.
 - Chairman states it is no longer a strong TA position.
 - Chairman states the TGSC should have followed the Plymouth template more.
 - Pat asks about Mr. Osuch's retirement.
 - Mr. Osuch states he hasn't officially picked a date yet.
 - Pat states he would have preferred a stronger TA.
 - Chairman states he feels the weaker TA was driven by the discussion with the Town departments.
 - Chairman asks Mr. Osuch how he feels about the Article.
 - Mr. Osuch states that something has to change from what we are doing now.
 - States you have to crawl before you walk, and walk before you run.
 - Chairman states it is no different from what we have now.
 - Chairman states there will be turf battles with the BPW control.
 - Terry states we will pay for a TA but get an Executive Secretary.
 - Chairman uses the example of the School Superintendent authority as the control the TA should have relative to the Select Board.
 - Chairman states this is not what the DOR report recommended.
 - Chairman questions if this were passed, would the TGSC tweak it any as time goes on.
 - Chairman asks Mr. Osuch if he thinks this position would attract highly qualified candidates.

- Mr. Osuch states that there are many TA retirements coming in the area, and all the Town can do is choose the best candidate.
 - Bob states that one of the reasons given for the change to TA was that a qualified candidate wouldn't want the job of Executive Secretary, with its lack of sole authority. Also questions, if this Article fails, will the TGSC take that to mean that the Town wants a stronger TA.
 - Chairman states he is getting a sense from the towns people, where they stand on the BPW.
 - Discussion of the continuation of the TGSC.
 - Chairman reads from the DOR report.
 - Scott states he could support the Article because the Town needs the TA. Questions whether it is in the best financial interest of the Town.
 - John M. asks if the TGSC survey results were ever published or released. States they never looked at a 5 member Select Board.
 - Chairman states he doesn't feel a 5 member board would have any advantage.
 - Chairman states that any new system will have growing pains.
 - Scott motions to recommend Indefinite Postponement. Seconded by Terry.
 - Chairman states that if the BPW doesn't get changed, we will have issues if this passes.
 - Vote: Unanimous
- Chairman states if TM chooses to pass this, it would be OK.
 - Discussion again about a strong TA.
 - Discussion about the ability to rewrite the Article.
 - Discussion of the rental of Town buildings.
 - STM Article 12- TGSC- Continuation for FY15
 - Scott states we need information as to what they will be working on, cost breakdown.
 - Discussion of Charter Commission.
 - Pat states the TGSC has done a lot of work. If we IP this, how will they continue.
 - Chairman states the money they have spent thus far has been well spent.
 - Terry states she appreciates the TGSC work, but can't financially support more money for it.
 - Chairman states he doesn't want to see the committee die if the Articles are all shot down.
 - Scott asks if there is no fall STM, how would they get any more money.
 - Lisa asks if the TGSC has specific goals for next year.

- Terry motions to recommend Indefinite Postponement. Seconded by Kathy. Vote: Tied with Kathi, Scott, John M., & Terry in favor and John R., Bob, Pat, & Lisa opposed.
- Pat motions to Recommend Adoption. Seconded by John R. Vote: Tied with John R., Bob, Pat, and Lisa in favor and Kathi, Scott, John M., & Terry opposed.
- John M. asks, when he asks about the survey results, can he ask if they have any goals.
 - Chairman states yes.
- Terry states they need to work on the TA Article.
- Lisa asks if the Selectmen can disband the TGSC.
 - Chairman states it is a Town Meeting committee, and only they can disband it.

- Chairman motions to adjourn @ 9:34 PM. Seconded by Pat. Vote: Unanimous

Respectfully submitted by:

Robert A. Furtado
Finance Committee Secretary

(accepted 5-1-2014)