

Town of Fairhaven

Finance Committee

Minutes of the meeting for <January 29, 2015>at the BPW Administration Building,
5 Arsene St., Fairhaven, MA

Members in attendance:

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

Member late:

Scott Fernandes: in @ 8:26 PM.

Member absent:

Therese Szala

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 7:07 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 Pat to accept the minutes from January 22, 2015. Seconded by John M.. Vote: Unanimous

Meeting started several minutes late to allow Mr. Osuch to distribute paperwork.

- Mr. Osuch distributes copies information from the Selectmen to prepare for the joint meeting on February 12th. That information includes a draft of the Town Of Fairhaven General Fund History & Projections, a draft of the Selectmen's Financial Management Policies & Guidelines, a copy of the November 2012 DOR Town of Fairhaven Financial Management Review, a copy of the January 22, 2013 UniBank Bond Rating Discussion, and a 5 year projection of Capital Needs.

- As part of regular business, Mr. Osuch also distributes copies of 2 resident petitions for bylaw amendments, updated Revenue Projection spreadsheet, updated gasoline & utilities spreadsheet, roadwork Article for FY16, back-up information for the PERAC FY16 appropriation, draft of the Annual Town Meeting warrant, and updated Article 4 spreadsheet.
- Chairman advises members to review the Selectmen's paperwork before the February 12th meeting.
- Chairman states he has spoken to the Chairman of the Capital Planning Committee, and at this point is looking for a meeting at the end of February.
- Mr. Osuch makes several points, as to the Article 4 spreadsheet:
 - The current version includes the numbers for gasoline & utilities.
 - All Capital Outlay items that meet the criteria of the Capital Planning Committee have been moved to their own Article.
 - The Capital Outlay under BPW for \$11,000 falls under the Capital Planning threshold.
- Chairman states that the citizen petitioned Articles are Zoning Articles and generally the Fin Com does not get involved with Zoning.
- Committee starts to review ATM Warrant:

Note: At the present time, all Articles other than #1 thru 4 remain unnumbered until the Selectmen pick them.

 - Article 1- Measurer of Wood and Bark
 - John M. motions Recommend Adoption. Seconded by Pat. Vote: Unanimous
 - Article 2- Town Report
 - John M. motions Recommend Adoption. Seconded by Pat. Vote: Unanimous
 - Article 3- Setting Salaries of Town Officers
 - Mr. Osuch states that the Town Clerk and the Tree Warden include a 1% increase, the rest are the same as last year.
 - Propagation of Shellfish
 - Chairman asks Mr. Osuch why they seem to be building a balance?
 - Mr. Osuch states they have been carrying money over from year to year.
 - Chairman states they will need to explain why the money isn't used on a yearly basis.

- Community Preservation Program Appropriations
 - Chairman questions why the Town is subsidizing the Housing Authority.
 - Mr. Osuch states that no money was expended for Housing last year.
 - Discussion of work at the Powder Bunker at Fort Phoenix.

- FEMA Grant for Ladder 1
 - Discussion of how this money was voted at last year's TM and this would be a transfer.

- State Aid to Highways
 - Discussion of the use of Chapter 90 money and TM options.

- Wind Turbine Electricity Purchase FY16
 - Mr. Osuch states that this has been increased from last year, but this is simply a bookkeeping pass thru for the turbine money.

- Cultural Council Funding
 - Last year they received \$ 1,000. They are requesting \$2,500.

- Historical Commission
 - Seeks more money in the Academy Building and Fort Phoenix categories than they got last year.
 - Chairman states that this group should be in Article 4 like every other department. This is a yearly operating budget.

- BPW Door Replacements
 - Mr. Osuch states that this is for 2 doors that were not replaced with the ones done last year.

- Discussion of the FY16 General Fund Capital Plan and the Water and Sewer Enterprise Capital Plans
 - Chairman questions why studies in the Sewer Capital Plan qualify as Capital expenses.
 - Mr. Osuch states that the belief was because they are required for construction, they qualify.

- Capital Stabilization Fund

- Chairman states he is in favor of this.
- It would make sure money is used for the intended purpose and it requires a 2/3 vote at TM to use the money.

- Ambulance Stabilization
 - This would make sure that money is set aside to replace the ambulances.
 - Mr. Osuch states that the fund would start this year with \$150,000 because this is the 3rd year into replacing an ambulance.
 - More discussion again about a true cost accounting of the ambulance service.

- FEMA- 5% Match for New Fire Equipment
 - This is the same type transfer as with the ladder truck.

- CPR Revolving Account
 - This Article is for a Revolving Account petitioned by the Fire Chief.
 - Committee will need information.

- Wellness Program-Employees
 - This would create a Wellness Program for Town employees, spearheaded by Mr. Espindola.
 - Chairman states that the whole meeting on Feb. 12th will be devoted to the Selectmen's joint meeting and their Articles.
 - Chairman states that this should be funded out of the Insurance Trust Fund, but it is illegal with the self-insurance laws.
 - Mr. Osuch states that one thing the \$18,000 would be used for is to fund "Fit Bits" for employees.
 - Chairman states that this could be a good thing for a private company, but the Town is not a private company.
 - Discussion of starting new programs while trying to cut from the budget.

- Union Wharf LED Lights
 - Mr. Osuch states that the Harbormaster wants to replace the lights at Union Wharf with LED lights and add lights at the Lobster Basin.
 - Article will be funded from the Waterways Account.
 - Chairman suggests, to Mr. Osuch, that all the utilities should be upgrade at the wharf, and then there would be no excuse for not raising the dockage fee.

- FEMA Port Security Grant Match

- This Article is petitioned by the Harbormaster, as part of a matching grant.
- Chairman does not want to discuss it until he finds out if it is tied to the Harbor Development Commission, as he may have a conflict.

- Information Technology Assessment
 - This is petitioned by the Town Government Study Committee for the Board of Selectmen.
 - Discussion of why there are blanks in the Article and no money amount.

- Finance Committee Restructuring
 - Chairman states that because this Article could have an effect on the finances of the Town, we will review and take a vote on it.
 - Discussion of difficulty of filling vacancies on the committee.
 - Lisa states this isn't a worded Article.
 - Chairman states, that like the previous Article, it is a placeholder and it will continue to happen until the Selectmen stop allowing it.

8:04 PM. Chairman calls a recess. Back in session @8:08 PM.

- Discussion of Road Work
 - Discussion of resident petitions.
 - Pat asks if the road rating from last year has been updated.
States he can't see doing dirt roads that only service a small number of houses if we have paved roads in bad condition.
 - Chairman states that there are no money amounts tied to the petitioned streets.
 - Chairman states we may hold off on the recommended roads from the BPW until after the April election. After the BPW vote.

- Chairman advises members to review the DOR report again as it pertains to the Selectmen's recommendations.
 - Chairman states that the Open Meeting laws allows members to email questions back & forth. You just cannot express an opinion.

- Mr. Osuch states his recommended spending number is \$46,750,000.
- Discussion of \$19,999 Capital Outlay for the EMA.
- Chairman states he will try to provide members with the Excel version of the Article 4 spreadsheet.

8:26 PM. Scott joins the meeting.

- Discussion of the meeting with the Selectmen.
Revenue Projections.
Melanson & Heath study
Selectmen can have goals, but must be flexible.

- Pat starts discussion of the Capital Planning sheets.
 - Chairman states that the Selectmen are using \$1,000,000 as a number this year because they state that is what was done last year.
 - Chairman states that the Fin Com was the one that pushed for Capital Improvements last year.

8:43 PM. Pat motions to adjourn. Seconded by Lisa. Vote: Unanimous

Respectfully submitted by:

Robert A. Furtado
Finance Committee Secretary
(accepted 2-5-2015)