



Finance Committee
Town of Halifax
499 Plymouth St.
Halifax, MA 02338

Meeting Minutes
Monday, May 7, 2012

Board Members in attendance: Peter Beals, Nikki Newton, Gordon Andrews, Peg Fitzgerald, Nikki Newton and Paul Weckbacher.

Others in Attendance: Sandy Nolan, Town Accountant; Charlie Seelig, Town Administrator; Mike Schlieff, Selectmen.

Meeting called to order at 7:03pm
Meeting Adjourned at 10:08pm

Mail

A Transfer of Appropriation Request was received from the Chief of Police for 500.00 from acct 01-214-5120 Police Station Maintenance – Electricity to the Wage Account. Gordon Andrews made a motion to approve. Seconded by Nikki Newton. Motion passed unanimously.

A transfer of Appropriation request was received from the Chief of Police for 5000.00 from the Dog Officer Salary account to the Wage Account. Gordon Andrews made a motion to approve. Seconded by Nikki Newton. Motion passed unanimously.

Kendra to post meetings for next week on Monday 5/15 and Tuesday 5/16 both at 6:30pm at the Halifax Elementary School in the Kindergarten Classroom.

Annual Town Meeting Warrant Articles

2 – Peg really feels we should support it as Wage and Personnel has gone through it thoroughly and has made a well informed and researched decision. Peter agrees about the hard work that the board has done. He believes a 2% increase doesn't fit with the level funding that the Committee has requested. The Library Assistant Position also does not sit well with him. Peg feels that 2% is reasonable. When you factor in inflation you are not talking that much of an increase. Peter said that historically he has supported the wage increase. He feels that Peg is correct with her statement however he really feels we are in fact broke and can't afford the increase. Paul agrees that 2% is inappropriate. His concern is for the taxpayers that are having trouble making ends meet now. He also has trouble with the merit increase included in this article. Dick said that when we don't treat union and non union the same it is going to cause the non union to want to become union. Paul said that there is always a threat of unionization and there is always going to be two

sides to think about. Mike said that if you are looking to give a raise let's split it with the taxpayer and give a 1% raise. Peg Fitzgerald made a motion to recommend the Article as printed. Seconded by Dick Wright. Vote was 3-3. An undetermined vote to recommend as printed so each part of the Article will be voted on separately as follows:

- (1) Gordon Andrews made a motion to recommend. Seconded by Nikki Newton. 3-3 Vote. Motion did not pass.
- (2) Paul Weckbacher made a motion to recommend. Seconded by Nikki Newton. 3-3 vote. Motion did not pass.
- (3) Already voted on.
- (4) Peter Beals made a motion to recommend. Seconded by Paul Weckbacher. 5 yes, 1 no. Motion passed.
- (5) Gordon Andrews made a motion to recommend. Seconded by Dick Wright. 5 yes, Paul abstained. Motion passed.
- (6) Peg is against the merit concept in public service as is Paul. It does not read that there is a maximum. The wording is included in Paragraph C for the "cap" on the merit as 5% but it doesn't say it can't happen again next year. Paul Weckbacher made a motion to recommend. Seconded by Gordon Andrews. Motion passed unanimously.
- (7) Gordon Andrews made a motion to recommend. Seconded by Nikki Newton. Motion passed unanimously.
- (8) Nikki Newton made a motion to recommend. Seconded by Gordon Andrews. Motion passed unanimously.
- (9) Dick Wright made a motion to recommend. Seconded by Paul Weckbacher. Motion passed unanimously.
- (10) Gordon Andrews made a motion to recommend. Seconded by Paul Weckbacher. Motion passed unanimously.
- (11) Gordon Andrews made a motion to recommend. Seconded by Nikki Newton. Peter Beals abstained. Motion passed.
- (12) Peter Beals made a motion to recommend. Seconded by Paul Weckbacher. Motion passed unanimously.
- (13) Paul Weckbacher made a motion to recommend. Seconded by Gordon Andrews. Motion passed unanimously.
- (14) Peg Fitzgerald made a motion to recommend. Seconded by Peter Beals. Gordon Andrews abstained. Motion passed.
- (15) Peter Beals made a motion to recommend. Seconded by Nikki Newton. Motion passed unanimously.
- (16) Peter Beals made a motion to recommend. Seconded by Dick Wright. Motion passed unanimously.
- (17) Peter Beals made a motion to recommend. Seconded by Paul Weckbacher. 2 yes, 4 no. Motion does not pass.

3 – If the 2% Wage increase passes on the floor at Town Meeting the Committee may want to reconsider their no vote on Article 3 so that the elected positions also receive the same increase.

4 – Line 37 – Gordon Andrews made a motion to fund 5230.00 for the Conservation Agent from the Wetlands Account. Seconded by Nikki Newton. Motion passed unanimously.

4 – Line 69 & 70 – Sandy said that there is not going to be enough in that account to fund wages and the expenses for the Dog Fund. She would like to fund only wages out of this account. Peter Beals made a motion to approve as discussed. Seconded by Nikki Newton. Motion passed unanimously.

16 – This will be amended to 65,000.00 on the Town Meeting floor to be funded from Free Cash. Gordon Andrews made a motion to recommend. Seconded by Dick Wright. 5-yes, 1-no. Motion passed.

18 – Funding is 100,000.00 from MBTE, 700,000.00 from a bond, 300,000.00 from System Development Fund. Dick said we can run into an ecoli issue if we do not do the repairs and birds get in there. A new tower is 1.9 million. The Consultant said that the current tower is sound and will be good for many years after the painting and repair currently needed. Peg Fitzgerald made a motion to recommend funding stated above. Seconded by Nikki Newton. Motion passed unanimously.

20 – Gordon Andrews made a motion to recommend funding from System Development. Seconded by Paul Weckbacher. Motion passed unanimously.

24 – Paul had a meeting with the mechanic regarding the Police Cars. Dave does not agree with replacing 3 cruisers at this time. 2 have minor issues that he has not been able to fix due to the lack of cooperation. Why are these issues not being fixed? There should be a Reserve Fund Transfer as they have used their entire maintenance budget. Peg feels that it is a safety issue as the cars are at 100,000 miles now and will likely be around 150,000 with more mechanical issues next year. The Committee should look into adding a maintenance line into the Capital Plan and decrease the need for large purchases. Peg Fitzgerald made a motion to recommend 112,000.00 for 3 new cruisers. No second to the motion. Gordon Andrews made a motion to recommend 77,000.00 from Overlay Surplus to fund 1 marked and 1 unmarked cruiser. Seconded by Peter Beals. 5 – yes, 1 no. Motion passed.

30 – The Committee does not expect a request for money on this Article.

38 – Peg Fitzgerald made a motion to recommend passing over this Article. Seconded by Dick Wright. Hold per Mike Schlieff. Will discuss at the meeting right before Town Meeting on 5/14.

39 – Article will be passed over.

47 – Small rediscussion – State law would not require that Girl Scouts or any other organization like that have a Commercial license as they aren't making a living from what they are selling. This Article would not pertain to them. Committee members said they would have been more inclined to vote for it if it was Pawn Shop specific. It is just too broad as currently written.

48 – Peter feels that this is too broad. Peg feels we should only deal with financial requests. The Committee has been asked for an opinion on it and it is a non-financial recommendation. Gordon Andrews made a motion to not recommend. Seconded by Paul Weckbacher. 3-yes, 3-abstain. Hung jury. Motion does not pass.

Special Town Meeting Articles

8 – Gordon Andrews made a motion to not recommend. Seconded by Dick Wright. Motion passed unanimously. Gordon Andrews made a motion to reconsider.

Seconded by Nikki Newton. Motion passed unanimously. Gordon Andrews made a motion to recommend as printed. Seconded by Peter Beals. 4-yes, 2-no Motion passed.

9 – Hold

10 – Hold

COA

Nikki asked to discuss the Van Driver hours again for the COA as she was able to compile some helpful data. Nikki proposes that we increase the driver's hours by 1 hour per week. Barbara agreed but if she runs over those hours she will be coming for a Reserve fund transfer. It would mean an increase of 786.00 for the year. Nikki feels that if we don't recommend it Barbara is going to ask for even more hours and who know what is going to happen on Town Meeting floor. Peter wanted to know if this is truly an increase in demand or is the demand increase because of such a low cost that more people are choosing to use it. Before he would support it he needs to see the relationship between the projected and the actual numbers that Nikki provided in her handout. It also does not fit into the level service request. Paul feels that it is not managed well and he struggles to increase anything after the lack of management he has seen. No data provided, no split shifts, no effort to make the budget work. Peg is against changing a vote to prevent Barbara from asking for more. We should look at her job description before asking too much of her. Mike said that if you have to submit a budget as part of your job description, you have to know your costs even though it is not spelled out in your specific job description. Paul agrees. Nikki would like to encourage Barbara to start collecting this info. We can't fix this problem in the one week between now and Town Meeting. Nikki Newton made a motion to increase the van driver budget by 786.00. Peter Beals seconded. 2-yes, 4-no. Motion does not pass.

Gordon Andrews made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Dick Wright. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 10:08pm

Richard Wright
Corresponding Clerk