

**TOWN OF HARVARD**  
**Finance Committee**  
**Minutes**

**Meeting Date:** Saturday, March 3, 2012

**Meeting Place:** Town Hall Meeting Room

**Members Present:** Marie Fagan (chair), Steve Colwell, Heidi Frank, Alan Frazer (assoc.),  
Alice von Loesecke, George McKenna, Rudy Minar, Bob Thurston,  
Laura Vilain (assoc.)

**Members Not Present:**

**Others Present:** Tim Bragan - Town Administrator, Lorraine Leonard - Finance Director;  
Mark00 Mandozzi, chair, Park & Recreation

**Meeting Time: 9:05 a.m.      Adjournment Time: 11:35 a.m.**

**Discussion and Actions**

- Marie Fagan opened the meeting at 9:05 a.m.
- No public comment
- Parks & Recreation Committee's budget presentation

Mark Mandozzi, chair of the Parks & Recreation Committee presented the Parks & Recreation budget. The Beach and Commons are at level-service funding. The waterfront director is a grade 4, step 1. The Committee suggested the possibility of doing a reserve fund transfer (RFT) for this re-calibration of a salaried position.

The situation with the ballfields was explained. The fields have returned to needing \$8,000 of funding because of neglect. In the out-years, the funding need will potentially be reduced to \$4,000, assuming regular maintenance. Volunteer effort is always appreciated. There was a question about the private sector funding the fields.

With the budget of \$120,000 -- other questions to Mark included: Who is your user population? What are your other expenses. What is your fee structure?

User population includes beach goers (beach stickers), people interested in tennis, swimming, boating lessons, boating storage, transport for the ski and track programs, dock replacement.

The fee structure is that fees are collected through the website from lessons, storage, and parking stickers, and put into a revolving account to pay for lifeguards, walkie talkies, suits, and dock replacement. Only the waterfront director's salary is a line-item on the budget.

Parks & Recreation will be moving to the Unipay system.

- Minutes for February 25, were reviewed, and approved with changes.  
**A motion was made to accept the Minutes for February 25, 2012.**  
**The vote was 6:0 in favor, 1 abstention. Bob abstained because he was not present.**

- Parks & Recreation (continued)

Parks & Recreation has been asked to provide an official submission of their budget. It was noted by the Town Administrator that Parks & Recreation had been sent information about their budget submission back in November, and as yet had not done this.

**A motion was made to recommend for approval the Parks & Recreation budget of \$57,981.** Discussion included the Committee determining that this total was level-service funding; and that the position of waterfront director would stay as a grade 4, step 1 position of \$8,175.

**The vote was 6:1 in favor. Marie opposed.**

- Discussion of the School Committee's budget

Discussion by the Committee determined that the School Committee receives bottom-line funding. And if they, the School Committee, decide to fund items differently than recommended by the Finance Committee, they can do this. Note: Keith Cheveralls sent a letter to the Committee requesting an additional \$20,000 for the World Language program. The Finance Committee has decided to not add \$20,000 to the budget, mostly because the World Language program is already incorporated in the budget.

- Warrant Articles Discussion

Tim drafted twelve warrant articles; and will be writing up more shortly.

Prior to the Warrant Articles' discussion, and relevant to their being discussed, Alan presented data and a hand-out on the Galeota report. The report is now on-line. Laura also passed around a hand-out.

The question posed to Tim from the Committee is can Finance Committee sponsor/propose a warrant article for the purpose of addressing issues in the Galeota report? Yes. So, in conclusion of this discussion, Tim has been directed by the Committee to create a separate warrant article which includes building maintenance issues based the Galeota report's findings, and tackle a cost to include in the warrant.

#### Other Discussion and Motions regarding the Drafted Warrant Articles

> FY11 Certified Free Cash [Inserted by Finance Committee](the final Free Cash number is to be determined);

**A motion was made to recommend the transfer of the balance of Free Cash as certified by the State as of July 2, 2011, for the amount, to go to the Capital Stabilization and Investment Fund (CSIF).** The Committee considered in this vote, first, are we behind in covering costs for anything; second, will the Stabilization Fund stay at least 5% - i.e., that there are no surprises that might need funding.

**The vote was 7:0 in favor.**

> Omnibus Budget [Inserted by Finance Committee] (the final article will be written by the Finance Committee);

- > Reserve Fund - FY13 [Inserted by Finance Committee] (this article will also be written by the Finance Committee);

**A motion was made to recommend that the Reserve Fund Account to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds, the sum of \$350,000.** The discussion included that fact that this account is under the control of the Finance Committee, to cover unforeseen and extraordinary expenses not anticipated at Annual Town Meeting.  
**The vote was 7:0 in favor.**

- > Fire Department - Fire Gear Lockers [Inserted by Fire Department]  
This was already approved and recommended by the Finance Committee;
- > Fire Department - Thermal Imaging Cameras [Inserted by Fire Department]  
This was already approved and recommended by the Finance Committee;
- > Fire Department - SAFE Program [Inserted by Ron Ricci]  
This was already recommended to deny by the Finance Committee;
- > Fire Department - Fire Permit Revolving Fund [Inserted by Fire Department]

**A motion was made to recommend a Fire Permit Revolving Fund Account.** The discussion was that the SAFE program would be funded with revenue coming from the annual burning permits, to not exceed \$15,000 in FY13.  
**The vote was 7:0 in favor.**

*George McKenna had to leave.*

- > Update of Master Plan [Inserted by Planning Board]  
This was already approved and recommended by the Finance Committee;
- > Economic Development Committee [Inserted by Economic Development Comm.]  
This was already approved and recommended by the Finance Committee;
- > Energy Audits [Inserted by Harvard Energy Advisory Committee]

**A motion was made to recommend Energy Audits for \$12,000.** The discussion was that the Energy Audits have been impressive, on-target 90% of the time, and helpful in identifying funding possibilities. The audits are overseen by HEAC, who are more than aware of the Galeota report, thus not likely to waste money or duplicate efforts.  
**The vote was 6:0 in favor.**

- > Facilities Manager [Inserted by the Board of Selectmen]

**A motion was made to recommend a Facilities Manager to hire and/or contract as written in the proposed article, to match the grant rate of \$55,630.** The discussion was that more information may be needed, and that the Committee anticipated clarification on the Floor of the Town Meeting. There is the issue of sustainability of this position; but

since it may come in as a grant, sustaining the Facilities Manager's salary will be part of FY14's budget.

**The vote was 6:0 in favor.**

> Cemetery Roof [Inserted by the Cemetery Commissioners]

**A motion was made to defer recommendation of a cemetery building roof, and the possibility of a RFT, until the Committee understands the issue better.**

**The vote was 6:0 in favor of deferring the decision.**

Discussion of the Planner as an Warrant Article has been tabled.

- Four Additional, Possible Warrant Articles

Tim presented the following additional, possible Warrant Articles including The Harvard Tree Fund, the Massachusetts' Office of Geographic Information (MassGIS) project, the Personal Property Exemption as requested by the Board of Assessors.

> Harvard Tree Fund (HTF) [Submitted by the HCT Tree Fund and the Elm Commission] The explanation given by Tim was that the the HTF was looking for a revolving fund to create a line item in the Omnibus Budget, but that this could be better managed as gift account. No motion was brought forward.

> MassGIS project funding [Submitted by the Finance Department] Lorraine described this as a much needed service, with gains in costs of efficiency, standardization, and accuracy. Currently, there are no cost estimates, but there is a one-time, set-up fee that may turn into a warrant article, and an on-going, annual hosting fee that may be a reserve fund transfer. No motion was brought forward - lacking cost information.

> Personal Property Exemption [Submitted by the Board of Assessors] The warrant article would increase the personal property exemption from \$2,500 to \$5,000; this is supported by the Lorraine, the Finance Director. There would be savings in paperwork, and efficiency. No motion was made.

> Elderly Tax Plan, now the Senior Real Estate Tax Exemption Program [BOA, BOS] This special legislation would provide tax exemptions for elders to stay in their homes. The question most concerning the Committee is can this "hole" in the budget be sustained. The Finance Committee decided not to fund this request.

*Heidi Frank had to leave.*

- Revisiting of the MART Position; Funds Provided to Finance Department to accommodate the moving of the MART dispatcher to the Council on Aging offices

**A motion was made to increase the Finance Department's budget by adding \$10,000 in anticipation of the offset of the MART dispatcher's costs that will be used by the Council on Aging for \$10,000.** The discussion was that the Finance Department needs

\$10,000 to backfill its budget now that the MART dispatch will be located at the Council on Aging offices. In part the justification lies in restoring 9C impacts to the Finance Department. Also, a new, MART-certified person will be salaried at a lower rate of pay. **The vote was 4:1 in favor. Steve opposed.**

- Increasing the Community Preservation Funds to its maximum of 3%

**A motion was made in favor of the Finance Committee passing on to the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) our strong recommendation for them to do the work to increase the Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds to 3%.**

**A second, friendly amendment was made recommending that the funds be directed toward the Municipal Building Committee's (MBC) projects within legal limits, adding in exemptions, to the first \$100,000 of each property, specifically for low income for any person, and low and moderate income for seniors.** The discussion was that the CPC was now at 1.1% and could increase to the maximum of 3%. This will allow more State money to be available for the Town Hall project, and future projects. Overall, this will cost Harvard's taxpayers less. **The vote was 5:0 in favor.**

- Relocation Cost for the Town Hall move -  
Cost for relocation of Town Hall while the building is being renovated may be upwards to \$60,000. It was noted that these costs should not be forgotten.
- Next meeting – Wednesday, March 7, 2012, 7:00 p.m., Town Hall meeting room  
– Town Meeting, April 28, 2012

Meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Laura Vilain