

TOWN OF HARVARD

Finance Committee

Minutes

Meeting Date: August 15th, 2012

Meeting Place: Town Hall

Members Present: Marie Fagan-Chair, George McKenna, Heidi Frank, Steve Colwell, Rudy Minar, Alice von Loesecke, Associate Alan Frazer

Members Absent: Bob Thurston, Associate Laura Villaine

Others Present: Tim Bragan-Town Administrator

Meeting Time: 7:00 pm

Adjournment Time: 8:50 pm

Discussion and Actions

- No minutes to review
- Public Commentary – Marty Green spoke as a library trustee, but not for the trustees as a group. She stated that near the end of Fiscal 2012, the library director asked for a Reserve Fund Transfer to cover the costs of maternity leave for a library staff member. They understood from the town administrator that this was the correct way of handling this type of request. She went on to state that we, the Finance Committee, turned down their request and authorized them to withdraw from the library's state aid account. The amount that was withdrawn from the state aid account was roughly \$8200.00 which is more than a full year's worth of state aid. The library has financial long term goals and this is why their state aid account has built up in available funds. Marty concluded by asking for a request that these funds be restored to the library by whatever means are fiscally appropriate and hoped that communication will improve so that this type of misunderstanding does not occur in the future.

We clarified that we did not authorize a withdrawal from the library's state aid account; we can only recommend. The Trustees of the library have the authority to move funds.

Marie stated that it is too late to change an RFT request.

Rudy had discussed with Mary that we, FinCom, felt like the library had the funds available through their state aid account. Mary stated that the \$6400.00 new state aid had been used to upgrade computers. The Book Fund was used to purchase more books. They are saving for a new generator because they were turned down by Capital Committee. George speaks for the Capital Committee and states that

the format needed for the request was not followed by the library for this new generator. There is also still the possibility of purchasing a used generator at a very good price. Other funds are already earmarked by the library Trustees for other miscellaneous items.

We will re evaluate our handout on the budget process and will outline what we expect for Reserve Fund Transfer requests at our next meeting on September 5th.

- Special Town Meeting warrants discussed:
Article 1 Amend Chapter 125 Protective Bylaw – 125-23 Permitted uses in C Districts. This is for photovoltaic facilities.

Article 2 Amend Chapter 125 Protective Bylaw – 125-53 Large-Scale Ground-Mounted Solar Photovoltaic Facilities Overlay District. This consists of the following areas(1)an area of approximately 10.18 acres, parcel 14, with frontage of 110 feet along Harvard Depot Road, and (2) an area within Commercial C District, Parcels 25 and 27 located along Ayer Road. The financial risks to the Town were discussed and the overall opinion was that there is no financial risk.

Article 3 Abandon And Discontinue Portion Of Elm Street

Article 4 Authorize The Board Of Selectmen To Lease Property. Our only recommendation is to make this a convenient location and attend to costs.

Article 5 Authorize The Board Of Selectmen To Rent Or Lease The Old Library We felt that Article 5 has a financial impact to the Town. We unanimously supported and recommended 7-0 Article 5 with the wording amended to lease in “as is condition”.

- Town Administrator Report (Tim Bragan)
Tim discussed the status of Town Hall Project. There is a zoning issue with the Town Hall currently defined as a pre existing nonconforming structure with the new proposed addition being more nonconforming. Either a variance or special permit will need to be in place and the Town’s attorney is looking into this. A special permit would require a vote from The Zoning Board of Appeals. A variance would require a Special Town Meeting vote to change the current zoning bylaws. Tim discussed that the criteria for proving hardship for a variance will have to be researched further. A possible redesign in plans may also need to occur.
Tim stated that Annual Town Meeting is set for March 30th.
Tim discussed the sewer project; DEP soft test passed with the sewage treatment plant.

- Liaison Reports:

Steve discussed schools and attended the School Committee Meeting where Devens Contract discussed. The technology project will be funded by the \$134,000 they will receive from Devens Contract. \$80,000-\$85,000 of new money from eight more new kids from Devens this fall.

A new liaison is needed from FinCom for the Hildreth House Improvement Committee.

- The quorum change is now in effect. Alan would like to review this policy and it has been added to next meeting's agenda.
- New officers to be elected next meeting.
- Meeting adjourned at 8:50pm.