

## Minutes of Finance Committee-Final

**DATE:** November 29, 2007

**LOCATION:** Medway High School: Library  
155 Summer Street  
Medway, MA 02053

**PRESENT:** Frank Faist, Joy Smith Dahl, Phil Giangarra, Phyllis Cerel, Larry Ellsworth, Ned Myers, Rob Kenney

**ABSENT:** None

**GUESTS:** Suzanne Kennedy, Andy Rodenhiser, Dennis Crowley, Bob Parrella, Jack Robinson

**PURPOSE:** Review of Proposed Town Charter represented by Government Study Committee (GSC) Members, Fin Com Board Assignments

While awaiting a quorum; Suzanne Kennedy discussed the question regarding the total number of Finance Committee (Fin Com) members.

- She stated that per Barbara St. Andre, Medway's Town Counsel, the Town By-Law was **not** formally amended
- There was **not** a warrant article in the 1998 Special Town Meeting (STM) therefore, the By-Law was not formally amended

The one outstanding Fin Com Action Item was determined closed in the last meeting as all budget questions were addressed and Larry took possession and responsibility for the Fin Com budget as Clerk.

**Rob Kenney called the Finance Committee (Fin Com) meeting to order at 7:20pm.**

Andy Rodenhiser reviewed the Planning Boards (PB) Emergency Transfer Request (ETR):

- The purpose is to allow the PB to piggyback their Master Plan (MP) Update Survey with the mailing of the Town Census
- This will result in a cost savings
- There will be two modes for Town residents to complete this survey:
  - Via this mailing with the Town Census
    - The goal is to utilize the voting machine which would require a card be programmed to analyze these forms
  - Via a website
- They are looking for a high response secondary to insertion with the Town Census as this was also done for the last MP update and there was a 70% response rate.
- Ned suggested that the website responses be evaluated to see if the results would be statistically significant so the mailing would not be required
- Larry voiced concerns regarding usage of the voting machine and the amount "kicked out"
- Suzanne stated she felt there would be a significant risk on low response if only the web was utilized
- After much discussion it was determined that both the hard copy form and website would be utilized
- The cost savings to include this with the census was approximately \$1800
- All the Fin Com members agreed that it would be cost effective to include this as part of the census process

- The Fin Com members stated that defining this as a “True” Emergency was on the “fringe”

**Rob called for a motion on this ETR. Larry made a motion to approve this ETR which was seconded by Phil and approved by a majority of the quorum; 4 approved (Larry, Phil, Rob, Phyllis) 3 opposed (Ned, Frank, Joy).**

Suzanne presented the results of the Demolition of the Middle School Bleachers:

- The total cost was \$4100
  - \$1500 from the Park + Rec department
  - \$2602.73 from the Fin Com Reserve
- Since the Fin Com previously voted up to \$4500 from the Fin Com reserve; Suzanne presented a letter with appropriate wording acceptable by the Town Accountant for verification of Fin Com approval requiring signature by the Chairperson versus the creation of an additional ETR.
- She requested 2 separate specific votes prior to the Chairperson’s signature

**Joy made a motion to approve the signing of the letter as proof of Fin Com approval of the amended amount of the prior ETR. Frank seconded the motion and it was approved by all.**

**Frank made a motion to move \$2602.73 from the Fin Com Reserve to pay for the final actual costs of the Middle School Bleacher Demolition Project. Phil seconded the motion and it was approved by all.**

Bob Parrella and Jack Robinson then presented the main points of the GSC’s proposed Town Charter:

- Bob began by stating that this study occurred over 16 months, with 55-60 Open meetings with that many opportunities for Medway Residents to participate including the hearing and placement of these docs on the Town’s website, therefore there is **no** reason for any resident to be uninformed unless by choice
- Bob noted that a majority of these meetings were **not** well attended.
- The original Town Charter consisted of the Town-By-Laws, which when reviewed were discombobulated; therefore the GSC felt tearing down and building brand new was the most prudent approach
- Intent of the charter was to define systems and memorialize these and allow the people presently serving to continue with business as usual
- Continue with Open Town Meeting, Town Administrator, and Board of Selectmen etc.
- **Only change** to any Board/Committee was to the Board of Assessors (BOA) to be Appointed
- They felt this change (to appointed) was important because:
  - They determine the **strategic planning of the Town + new revenue growth that the entire Town Budget is based on**
  - With over 74% seats that run Unopposed they felt that this did not ensure that the most qualified people would be selected
  - They noted the lack of cooperation in the current BOA over the past many years as one of the main reasons for the Town’s Financial Situation
- Jack stated that the Charter is **Revenue Neutral, defines roles and the Town Structure, and increases the checks and balances within the Town Government**
- **The budget is the BOS’s not the Fin Coms**
  - The Town Administrator gives the BOS the budget recommendations
  - The BOS prepares the Estimated budget and total numbers
  - The FIN COM represents the Town Residents to ensure the budget is in their best interests

- The plan is to move the Budget Process forward so that all these decisions are being made on the most accurate budget data possible which has not been the case
- The **Fin Com's biggest concern** was lack of information and the ability to have each department present their budget numbers independently to the Fin Com separate from the BOS to ensure Fin Com is truly representing the people in the most un-biased manner
- The Proposed Town Charter does not change that nor the existing process but defines the existing process in the Charter as over time this has become misunderstood
- Clarification that the **Fin Com only needs to look at warrant articles that have a revenue impact was re-confirmed**
- The Town Charter/Town By-Laws/Mass General Laws all direct the function of the Town of Medway
- They hope to have a ballot vote in the May meeting
- If approved, the Town Charter would pre-empt the existing Town by-laws...if the by-law conflicts with the Charter, the Charter is the default
- If not approved by the Town Residents, the GSC hopes that the comments are incorporated into this document and presented again at the next Town Meeting

The GSC representatives stated that they would like to have a positive motion from the Fin Com at the Special Town Meeting scheduled for next Tuesday, December 4<sup>th</sup> at Medway High School.

**Rob requested a motion for the Fin Com to make a positive motion in favor of the Town Charter on the floor at next Tuesday's STM.**

**Phyllis made a motion for a positive motion in favor of the Town Charter. Phil seconded the motion and it was approved by all present.**

**Rob requested a motion to approve the voucher for \$550.98 in payment for the Fin Com Secretary for her time sheets for the FY08 calendar year to date. Ned made a motion to approve the payment of \$550.98 which was seconded by Phil and approved by all.**

Phil made a correction to the November 14<sup>th</sup> Fin Com meeting minutes on page 1 changing portion to plant for the water treatment plant on Oakland Street.

**Frank made a motion to approve the November 14<sup>th</sup> Fin Com meeting minutes as amended which was seconded by Phyllis and approved by all.**

**Joy made a motion to approve the information November 19<sup>th</sup> Fin Com minutes which was seconded by Phil and approved by all.**

Assignments for Fin Com liaison positions to other Boards and Committees was then completed. Please refer to the website for these assignments.

Andy Rodenhiser then presented the FY08 Planning Board action items to the Fin Com. Please refer to the Planning Board website for these documents.

**Rob requested a motion to end the Fin Com Meeting @ 9:45 pm. Larry made a motion to end the meeting which was seconded by Joy and approved by all present.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Liz Langley  
Finance Committee Secretary