

Finance Committee Meeting Minutes
November 12, 2003
Town Building
Approved

The meeting came to order at 7:08 p.m. In attendance are Tom Ryan, Mary Kerr, Patti Heron, Pam Glauner, Charlie Kern, Steve Dungan, and Jason Robart.

Minutes

-Review of 10/28/03 meeting minutes- Patti moves that the 10/28 minutes be approved as amended, Tom seconds the motion. The motion passes unanimously.

Past Action Items

-Steve and Tom to talk with the Board of Assessors to more accurately determine the impact of future spending on the average tax bills.

-Jason to discuss the 3/15/04 deadline for submitting the NRSD budget with the School Committee. Michael Wood suggests changing the deadline from 3/1 to 3/15 per request from the School Committee so they have time to review the budget at their first meeting in March (Bill Wrigley agrees with this request).

-Patti to send recommendations for articles 1-3 for the 10/25 special town meeting to Steve.

Correspondence

-Open Meeting Law notes prepared by David.

-E-mail between Janet and Steve.

-E-mail between Steve and Pam.

-E-mail from Ross Perry Re: Tri-Town meeting to be held in December.

-Recommendations from the May 2003 Annual Town Meeting.

Liaison Reports

-Charlie reports that the Minuteman High School district towns are unhappy with the state calculations of town assessments. A formula is now used to calculate the assessments, which contains errors and mistakes in the calculation. Charlie states that the formula is very hard to change since it requires a unanimous vote

-Patti states that the Planning Board is finalizing their decision on the Bose property, and she expects favorable results.

-Steve states that the School Building Committee will make a presentation to the Board of Selectmen that will show different cost options for future school renovations or new buildings. The committee, in conjunction with land appraisers, is evaluating land values for parcels of land in town that may be suitable for municipal purposes.

-Jason states that he sent an e-mail to the School Committee members and the superintendents regarding a strong footing for the FY '05 NRSD budget. He also mentioned a collaborative zero based budget approach. Pam questions what the goal of this approach will be. Patti suggests that the town and the School Committee will compare notes and set ground rules instead of applying priorities.

Standard Operating Procedure Manual Review

The SOP Manual is reviewed and edits are made from pages 30 to the end.

FY '05 Budget Process

Patti suggests that like last year, the major groups come and discuss their budget with the Fincom. The minor groups are not required to attend a Fincom meeting to explain their budget but they are welcome to if they request it.

Project Reports

Steve is upset that the projects are not necessarily given their due attention. Tom believes that projects such as the Dawes review are ongoing, and the deadline is not necessarily important.

-Budget Process

Pam suggests that the Fincom send a memo to all departments to express our intentions for budget reports. Pam distributes a draft of the memo that she wrote. Pam volunteers to review the initial departmental budget requests before the whole Fincom sees them.

Bolton Fair

Mary states that the NRSD is closed for a day due to the Bolton Fair, and asks the Fincom if the fair should contribute funds to the NRSD. Steve states that the Fair already contributes to the Student Activities Fund, and the point is moot since the fair will be held in Lancaster next year.

Focus on the Future

Mary states that there will be a meeting in December at Boston University to discuss shared interest, spending, and growth for a 12 town region of which Stow is a part.

Action Items

- Mitch to update the Tri-Town Officials List.
- Jason to ask the School Committee what they believe a collaborative approach on Zero Based Budgeting would entail.
- Tom to send his edits on section 3.8.1 of the SOP manual to Steve and Steve to distribute a final draft to the Fincom.
- Pam to edit distribute memo on the budget process to all departments.
- Mary to read the Stow Housing Plan and report back to the Fincom.
- Pam, Tom, and Charlie to develop the Fincom Annual Report for the 2003 Town Report.
- Jason to develop the FY '05 Fincom budget.
- Patti to check if a 125 acre parcel of land near Walcott St. is in Chapter 61.

Tom moves to adjourn the meeting, Patti seconds the motion. The motion passes unanimously. The meeting is adjourned at 9:00.

Respectfully submitted by Mitchell Samson.