

Finance Committee Meeting Minutes
November 25, 2003
Town Building
APPROVED

The meeting is brought to order at 7:08 p.m. In attendance are Tom Ryan, Patti Heron, Pam Glauner, Charlie Kern, Steve Dungan, Laura Rome, and David Walrath. Mary Kerr arrives at 7:30 and Jason Robart arrives at 7:50.

Minutes

Review of 11/12/03 meeting minutes- Tom moves that the 11/12 minutes be approved as amended, Patti seconds the motion. The motion passes unanimously.

Past Action Items

- Jason has informed the School Committee that the deadline for submitting the NRSD budget is 3/15/04.
- Patti states that most of the parcel of land on Walcott St. will probably be in Chapter 61.

Correspondence

- MMA Municipal *Advocate*.
- Memo from the Fincom to all departments Re: FY '05 budget process.
- Reserve Fund Transfer Request from the Board of Health.
- Memo from the Minuteman School District Re: FY '05 budget calculations.
- Memo from the Minuteman School District to the Department of Education Re: Results of the 16 member town meeting.
- Memo from Steve to Bill Re: Zero Based Budgeting.
- Memo from Capital Planning Re: Capital requests for FY '05 and long range plans.
- Memo from Bill to all departments Re: developing FY '05 budget.
- Memo from Alice Deluca Re: Possible state cuts to education funding.
- Spreadsheet developed by Charlie Re: Minuteman Assessments for member towns.
- Report developed by Charlie Re: Financial effects of 40B developments.

Reserve Fund Transfer Request Selectmen Advertising

The request is for \$614.14 to cover the advertising fees in three classified ads for a new Administrative Assistant to the Board of Selectmen. This was an unforeseen expense, and no funds were budgeted for this purpose. David moves to grant the transfer of \$614.14, Tom seconds the motion. The motion passes unanimously. Tom adds that it is inappropriate to encumber funds if adequate funds are not already available in the account unless the transfer is approved first.

Zero Based Budgeting

Bill suggested that the Fincom develop a zero based budget for Stow. Steve and Pam believe that the Fincom does have all the information to make these decisions and a budget developed by the Fincom would not be beneficial. Tom asserts that since Bill already meets with all town departments, he has already started the zero based budgeting process. David adds that documentation to this effect would be helpful. David believes that zero based budgeting is

important since it shows where savings are and also whether the town is spending too much. Steve suggests that the Fincom can facilitate this process by asking questions relating to zero based budgeting when the Fincom meets with certain departments to review their budget. David agrees that this will be a more independent approach than collaborating with the Board of Selectmen. Pam suggests that each department submit job descriptions for all positions. Mary adds that an organizational chart of town workers would also be helpful. Jason suggests adding justification for all or some line items in the submitted budget.

Letter to the Board of Selectmen

Mary states that there were two errors in the letter submitted to the Board of Selectmen. Edits were made to the letter.

Stow Housing Plan Review

This review is tabled until the next meeting.

Liaison Reports

-Pam states that there is a Financial Advisory Board Meeting on 12/2/03 at 3 p.m. on the '04 and '05 budgets. The final audit made by Powers and Sullivan was submitted to the School Committee. A presentation will be made at the 12/4 meeting. Jason adds that the School Committee is considering buying routing software to make new bus routes in the future. The SC is also considering hiring a Food Services Director in the hope that the food service program will eventually become self-sufficient.

-Patti states that the Planning Board signed the permits for the Bose property additions.

-David states that the Community Preservation Committee has hired the Housing Consultant that the Planning Board uses to evaluate rules and laws and deal with legal issues on affordable housing.

Town Meeting Suggestions

Steve states that he would still like to see the Fincom seated on the stage along with the Town Clerk and the Board of Selectmen. Tom states that it would be easier to add a card table to the end of the current table so that all members have a place at the table.

Project Reports

Charlie describes the report he compiled on the effects of 40B developments. He describes the variables that affect the cost and projections for outer years. Mary suggests a letter to the Board of Selectmen asserting that companies should contribute to outside public services and projects when a 40B development is built.

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.

-Steve to send a soft copy of the SOP manual to Tom. Tom to send his edits of the SOP manual to the Fincom.

-Mary to read the Stow Housing Plan and report back to the Fincom.

-Jason to develop the FY '05 Fincom budget.

- Steve and Tom to talk with the Board of Assessors to more accurately determine the impact of future spending on tax bills.
- Steve to discuss with the Town Administrator the sharing of his documentation on zero based budgeting.

Tom moves to adjourn the meeting, David seconds the motion. The motion passes unanimously.

The meeting is adjourned at 9:05.

Respectfully submitted by Mitchell Samson.