

**Finance Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**February 8, 2005**  
**Town Building**  
**Approved July 26, 2005**

The meeting was brought to order at 7:10 p.m. In attendance: Tom Ryan, Patti Heron, Steve Dungan, Henry Hagopian and Pam Glauner. David Walrath arrived at 7:30.

**Approval of Minutes:** The minutes of Jan. 25, 2005 were approved as written. The motion to approve was made by Steve Dungan, seconded by Tom Ryan, with a unanimous vote.

**Correspondence:**

- Update to Recreation Commission FY06 budget request, dated 2/7/05
- Central Mass. Mosquito Control project report
- Board of Health memo re: rabies clinic
- Memo from Board of Selectmen re: Joint Boards meeting, 7pm 2/16/05
- February issue of *The Beacon*
- Memo from Board of Selectmen re: appointments to Bylaw Review Committee
- Memo from Town Clerk re: Public Records Mgmt. Seminar, 10am 2/23/05
- Update to Council on Aging budget and related memo from Steve Dungan, dated 2/8/05 (further discussed below)
- Article titled "State of the Town Improves Connections and Decision-Making", from the *Municipal Advocate*, Vol. 21, No. 1.

**Reserve Fund Transfers:** None

**Liaison Reports:**

**Salary Review Committee (Henry Hagopian):**

- The committee continues working on the project. Results may be available in a few weeks.
- The committee is looking at the hours worked in other towns, as well as the pay scale.

**Nashoba Regional (Pam Glauner):**

- The Superintendent's recommended FY06 NRSD budget request has been released. The total request is \$35,321,981, an increase of \$2,986,908 (9.24%) over FY05.
- Stow's assessment would be \$11,251,883, an increase of \$1,123,965 (11.1%) over FY05.
- Total FTE headcount is proposed to increase from 450 to 471 in the FY06 budget, with headcount increases spread among many areas.
- Supt. Wood presented the proposed budget at the last school committee meeting, but there was little discussion of it. Budget workshops are scheduled for the next several weeks, to go in-depth by department.

- \$150,000 of money from the school district's E&D (Excess & Deficiency) account is included in proposed FY06 revenue, the same as in FY05.
- Budget documents are available on-line at [www.NRSD.net](http://www.NRSD.net).

**ITAC (David Walrath):**

- ITAC's chairperson, Donna Jacobs, has resigned. The new chairperson has not yet been decided.

**Snow & Ice Removal:** The snow and ice removal account has virtually no money left in it. An affirmative vote from both the Selectmen and the Finance Committee is needed to authorize deficit spending, and the item is also on the Selectmen's agenda for their 2/8/05 meeting. There was discussion over how the balance would be cleared (via a Reserve Fund transfer, Town Meeting vote, etc.) with the consensus being that we should wait to see how large the deficit becomes before deciding. There was also discussion over a recent state law change allowing towns to move money between departments late in the fiscal year.

A motion was made by Steve Dungan to authorize deficit spending to pay for snow and ice removal for the balance of FY05, pursuant to MGL Ch. 44, Sect. 31(d). The motion was seconded by Tom Ryan, and carried unanimously.

**Council on Aging Budget:** Jim Sauta, Chairman of the Council on Aging (COA), was also present.

Jim discussed the COA's request that the town fund 1 day per week salary for the Outreach Coordinator as well as a \$5,000 budget item for COA van repair/maintenance. These items are currently paid for by the Friends of the Council on Aging (FCOA), and would involve no change in services, only a change in their funding source. He stated that funding these items is difficult for the FCOA, and if the town cannot fund these items, the COA may have to cut back on van services.

In the COA's opinion, the services of the Outreach Coordinator are vital because of the possibility of elder abuse, malnutrition, and other concerns amongst senior citizens. There are currently 3 vans, with 2 in use 2-3 days per week. The vans have a growing need for repairs as they age.

Jim stated that Stow is the fastest-growing community in the state in terms of senior citizens (defined as those 60 or older). The COA consistently serves approximately 200 seniors, with higher numbers for special events. Stow has around 1075 seniors in total, and this number will rise when more AAN's are built. Jim noted that neither Meetinghouse nor the upcoming AAN (O'Grady/Pulte) will provide van service for their residents. This burden will fall to the COA.

**Warrant Articles:** The committee discussed a sponsoring a warrant article designed to put money into the Stabilization Fund. There was discussion around how to accomplish this—Raise & Appropriate, transfer from Free Cash, sponsor a one-time override, etc.

Steve Dungan suggested that we should first determine how much savings we need—the minimum levels, taking into account items such as bond ratings. Tom Ryan questioned how we could propose saving money while facing a large override. Steve Dungan recalled a proposal from several years ago to determine the minimum town savings levels, and to spend only the amount that is replenished annually (or the amount that exceeds the minimum.)

There was general agreement that we will request a placeholder on the warrant for an article of this type. The exact mechanics and dollar value will be discussed at a future meeting.

**Special Projects:** No updates.

**Other Business:**

2004 Finance Committee Annual Report: Charlie Kern and Pam Glauner have drafted the Fin Com's report. It will be emailed to committee members, with requests for comments and corrections.

The newly formed Public Safety Committee has requested a member from the Finance Committee. No members present at the meeting volunteered, so members who were not present will be asked.

The Finance Committee Public Hearing on the Town Meeting warrant is scheduled for April 14.

Steve Dungan distributed an article about the Town of Lincoln's annual "State of the Town" meeting (see **Correspondence**), and requested that the committee read the article to determine any possible interest in sponsoring a similar program in Stow.

A motion to adjourn was made by Steve Dungan and seconded by Tom Ryan at 8:33pm. The motion carried unanimously.

**Minutes respectfully submitted by Pamela Glauner.**

**Feb. 10, 2005**

**Action Items:**

- **Continue reviewing the departments assigned at the last meeting; be ready to present recommendations if further review is needed by Feb 22.**
- **Pam Glauner will invite NRSD reps. to the March 22 FinCom meeting.**
- **Jason Robart will schedule a meeting with the Capital Planning committee.**

**Next FinCom meeting: Tues, Feb. 22**