

Draft  
**Minutes**  
**STOW FINANCE COMMITTEE**  
**November 22, 2005**  
**Town Building**

**Call to Order**

Patricia Heron called the meeting to order at 8:00 pm. Present were Pam Glauner, David Walrath, Charles Kern, Gary Bernklow, Henry Hagopian and Elizabeth Tobey, Secretary.  
Jason Robart arrived at 8:30 pm.

Also present were guests Lucy Jen and Jim Salvy.

**Approval of Minutes**

David Walrath moved that September 27, 2005 Public Hearing minutes be approved as amended. Charles Kern seconded the motion.  
The motion carried unanimously.

David Walrath moved that September 27, 2005 minutes be approved as amended.  
Charles Kern seconded the motion.  
The motion carried unanimously.

David Walrath moved that October 11, 2005 minutes be approved as amended. Charles Kern seconded the motion.  
The motion carried unanimously.

David Walrath moved that October 20, 2005 minutes be approved as amended. Charles Kern seconded the motion.  
The motion carried unanimously.

Pamela Glauner moved that October 24, 2005 minutes be approved as amended. Charles Kern seconded the motion.  
The motion carried unanimously.

**Review of Correspondence**

- Letter from the Town Administrator regarding FY-06 budget message.
- Letter from the Town Clerk regarding the true copy of actions taken at the Special Town Meeting on October 24, 2005.
- Council on Aging November 2005 Newsletter.
- Town Meeting Article summary.
- Finance Committee open vacancy posting.
- Letter from the Town of Stow regarding preparation for the Special Town Meeting on December 12, 2005.

- Community News advertising bill for posting of hearings.
- Copy of letter to Tom Ryan from The Trust for Public Land.
- Massachusetts Municipal Association fall regional update meetings.
- Association of Town Finance Committees Newsletter October 2005
- Guide to Human Services Newsletter.
- Town of Stow Planning Board minutes, 10/4/05, 9/13 and 9/27/05.
- The Beacon Newsletter, November 2005.
- Information Technology Advisory Committee memorandum regarding computer request for FY-07.
- Town of Stow, Stow Building Committee, 6/2/05 minutes.
- Town of Stow holiday pay schedule.
- Town of Stow Board of Health letter regarding the Flu Clinic.
- Town of Stow Planning Board legal notice regarding the Public Hearing.

### **Introduction of guests**

Jason Robart introduced the two guests, Lucy Jen and Jim Salvy, as interested residents of a possible Finance Committee Associate position.

Jason explained the Finance Committees responsibilities and upcoming meetings and hearings.

### **Discussion of Reserve Fund Transfer Requests**

There were no Reserve Fund Transfers to be reviewed at this time.

### **Liaison Reports**

*Pamela Glauner regarding Nashoba Regional School District*

Pam stated that the new Assistant Superintendent of Schools starts December 5, 2005.

Jason asked when his previous position as Framingham Town Administrator had been released from contract.

Pam stated that he was released from contract as of November 2, 2005.

Pam stated that they are going to unveil the budget overview and they are having an all day workshop on Saturday December 4, 2005 from 2-4:00 pm.

Pam also stated that the FY-05 audit estimated \$822,000.00. E & D number is not certified.

Audit of the High School Construction Project is under way.

Pam commented that the NRSD is concerned about the electric rate, as they are not locked in.

### **Discussion of the Public Hearing**

Jason stated that the purpose of the Public Hearing is to hear public input on Warrant Articles – not to express our opinions.

There will be a Finance Committee meeting after the Public Hearing and will take votes.

Jason requested thoughts on the structure of the Public Hearing.

Patti suggested that it would be useful to break down each article, i.e.: If you vote yes on Article 2, this is how much it will be on your taxes. Clarify what is already being seen on their current tax bills. The current bills have estimates.

Jason stated that the Town Meeting did not have an impact on FY-06. Cushing taxes will not hit until FY-07. Tell them what they will be seeing in October of 06 for FY-07 taxes.

Pam stated that we need to know the anticipated time of bonding before we can tell them what to expect.

Jason stated that the information will not be available by the Public Meeting.

Pam suggested that it is stated that we “Assume” this is what it will be.

Patti stated that any kind of development or commitment we have, we should present a conservative case. i.e.: Cost - 1.1 mil = bonding.

Pam suggested that there is no need to do a presentation on the Minuteman property; the article sponsors are responsible for that.

Patti questioned if the responsible parties should be invited, to be available to answer questions.

Jason suggested having a handout and using a PowerPoint projection.

### **Preliminary discussion of the Warrant Articles**

#### ***Article 1 – Purchase of Two-Classroom Modular Unit***

Pam questioned what school and where it would be on the property.

Gary stated that it is for Pompositticut.

Pam asked if it would be the same as what they have now for Modules.

Gary stated, yes.

Pam stated that Steve Dungan had asked at a Selectmen's meeting if there had been any discussion regarding leasing instead of buying. She questioned if there is a market for used modular units and if we should look into buy used units as apposed to new.

She stated that she would email Michael Wood regarding where you could find the information and if used purchases were considered.

Article 2 – Purchase of Minuteman Property

Patricia Heron recused herself from this discussion.

Pam stated that she would like the same information that we had for the Cushing Property. A site plan – with a general idea of the area for the school and what plans if there are any, for mixed use of remaining land.

Jason questioned if we should be spending 4.2mil.

Pam stated that she wants to see the information just as a general reference. Is there anything we can do to bring back revenue into the town?

Dave suggested they review the reference to be sure we get as much out of the land as possible.

Jason stated that he spoke with someone today regarding whether or not we need to buy all the land or just the amount we need for a school.

Gary stated that Steve Dungan has spoken to the developers regarding this issue of splitting the land. There is a very preliminary plot plan that was viewed at SBC meeting. The mixed use is 44 low income condo units at market rate (mid range), ½ affordable housing rate and 5 market value rate house lots.

Gary stated that from Stow Building Committees view regarding the land called the Meadow, the seller is not interested in selling us just that land. The original plan for the school is for 25 acres.

Pam suggested that in order for us to decide what we think about this article we need more information. Do we have enough information to decide if this new school is indeed necessary?

Charlie questioned if we have had enough meetings with Chris Way that we have an unambiguous opinion. Do we as a committee have enough information to form an opinion for a decision?

Jason asked if there is additional information that you need to make and informed opinion.

Members Pam, Dave, Charlie, Henry and Gary all say “yes”.

After reading the Stow Building Committees report, it is certainly clear where their decision is.

Jason stated regarding the 1<sup>st</sup> question on page 20 (SBS). A question regarding enrollment – of 63 students it has increased, do we know if this is regarding full day enrollment.

Pam stated the students must attend whether they are in a full day or ½ day session.

Jason asked if the student is full day kindergarten right now, are they counted at 2 students or 1.

Pam responded that she thinks the count is on actual body count.

Jason asked how many are full day.

Pam estimated that it is 40 percent. The program is self supportive because the parents must pay for the full day classes. There are also 18 pre-k students.

Jason questioned, when we look at different properties (page 25, SBC), if the Corzine property is flawed as a school site, why would we continue to consider it.

Gary stated that SBC examined the land and had preliminary discussions with the builders. It probably isn't a good site for a school.

Jason stated that SBC should make that clear.

Jason was surprised at the continued preferences in SBC's report regarding the students not getting the education they should be. Presumably students are getting a good education at the lower levels to get them to the higher level of education.

Charlie stated that the top performing students are doing well and will continue to. This is more attention needed for the students that are not excelling. The numbers of students in Pompositticut is approximately the same as it was 20 years ago. It is not changes in enrollment but in curriculum.

Gary stated that enrollment has gone up an average of 16 students per year over the last 3 years.

#### Article 3 – Purchase of PreK-5 Elementary School Design Plans

Henry asked what the plans are for, the design of what prek-5 site?

Jason asked how they got to this number, \$2,027,000.00.

Gary stated that thru bidding process to get the design. It will be enough to get the details to a town meeting, but not sure what one.

Jason stated that he is in the process of contacting a former superintendent who built a Prek-5 school.

Charlie questioned whether Greg Jones had information on a similar school built in Lunenburg for ½ the estimated cost of Stows.

Gary stated that SBC shot for the highest number for the estimate, to not be blind sided.

Henry asked when the construction will be.

Gary stated that they are estimating completion by September 2008. SBA funding is not on line until 2007.

Jason asked if there is any consideration from SBC to put an upper limit on cost, “not to exceed”. To put in the design that the total construction will not cost more than “X” amount of dollars.

Pam stated that she is not sure if that is possible, not knowing when the construction will start.

Jason’s concern is we will commit to pay \$6 mil when everyone has 30-35 mil range in mind. If it comes in over the estimate, are we willing to lose 6 million? Not having the correct language in the article could cost us millions of dollars in the long run. Cost 35 million, not to exceed 40 million, (a 20% increase). We should build it into the estimate now. The concern is that we are writing a blank check.

Dave stated that even if he was supporting it, he would not feel comfortable approving it without the wording change with a minimum and a maximum.

Jason requested that Gary raise the issue with the SBC.

Charlie expressed the one thing he is not happy about on the Minuteman property; there is only one really good spot. Both the developer and SBC want the same spot.

Gary stated that it is the prime section of the real estate on the whole lot.

Article 4 – Improvement and Construction at Existing School Sites

Pam invited a petitioner to come to tonight’s meeting. He said nothing is available as of tonight.

Jason would need the same level of information as we need for Minuteman.

Pam suggested we be sure it can be done for that amount of money.

Jason stated that SBC says they can upgrade and repair Pompositicut and Center Schools without expansion for 10 million. It does not address enrollment issues.

This article is contingent on Article 2.

Patricia Heron rejoins the meeting.

Article 5 – Purchase of Crescent Street Property

Jason stated that Ed Newman gave additional information on this.

Pam stated that the property for \$199,000 will create 18 parking spots with gravel parking.

Charlie stated that there is not much space for the price. It is the wrong side of route 117, creating the dangers of crossing.

Patti commented that someone from Planning should come in to discuss the issues.

Article 6 – Adoption of a Right-to-Farm Bylaw

Patti stated that realtors would have to supply buyers with the farming information. She will invite the Planning Board for December 6<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Jason asked if we should have an abbreviated meeting next Tuesday night.

Members agreed “no”.

Patti suggested that the Planning Board be at the Public hearing on the 6<sup>th</sup> and stay for FinCom’s meeting after.

Article 11 – Town Election

Jason suggested that it is straight forward and he would get together the information for the hand out.

**Other Business**

Pam suggested advertising the Public meeting to other associated constituent groups.

Dave suggested posting notices in the Community Calendar section of The Beacon Villager and the Stow Paper. Also post it to the Stow TV.

A motion to adjourn was made by Charles Kern and seconded by Patricia Heron at 9:55 pm. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth A. Tobey,  
Secretary