

Minutes
STOW FINANCE COMMITTEE
September 26, 2006
Town Building

Call to Order

Charles Kern called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm. Present were David Walrath, Henry Hagopian, Stephen Pottle, James Salvie, William Nelson and Elizabeth Tobey, Secretary.

Joe Hogan arrived at 8:02 pm.

Pamela Glauner arrived at 8:04 pm.

Gary Bernklow arrived at 8:14 pm.

Correspondence

- Letter to Charles Kern regarding his appointment to the Master Plan Committee Liaison position.
- Copy of a letter of thanks from the First Parish Church to the COA regarding the refrigerator that was purchased by the COA.

Approval of Minutes

David Walrath moved to approve September 12, 2006 minutes as submitted. Henry Hagopian seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously. (Walrath, Kern, Hagopian)

Review of Reserve Fund Transfer Requests

There were no reserve fund transfer requests to review at this time.

Discussion of the Reserve Fund Transfer Request Forms

Dave explained that he made a couple minor changes to the forms and emailed them out to all of the members. He stated that he had sent it to Bill Wrigley and there were no comments from him. He suggested that the Finance Committee figure out a convenient way to post them for all the departments to look at on the web. He requested that unless anyone has any provisions they should be printed out and put in all the mailboxes.

Jim suggested that the 5th bullet needed to be reworded, changing the word earmark to prioritize.

All agreed that the RFTR are fine and Dave will email out the revised final version to all members.

Discussion of the Public Information Package

Charlie and Henry met with Dotty on September 14th at the Assessors office to corroborate what amount of land is either under exemption or pays a reduced tax rate. She confirmed that approximately 25% of the land in town is exempt from any kind of property tax. Almost another 25% is paying a reduced rate. For example; A property classified as agricultural is assessed at a normal value. This type of property would pay 10% of the normal assessed value.

1. An agricultural property would need to have at least 6.5 acres of land (with house) 5 acres (without house) and generate an income of at least \$500 per year to qualify for the reduced rate.
2. There is also Chapter 61-Forrestry, 61A Agricultural and 61B Open Space and/or Recreation. They are all discounted in different ways. If the land is developed it has to be offered to the town and there is a roll back tax that has to be paid.

Liaison Reports

Highway - Steve stated that the Highway Department is hoping that with the reduced prices for gasoline in fall/winter they will come under their budget for gasoline. Highway gets volume discounts for buying in bulk.

Municipal Relations Team – Jim stated that Bill Wrigley had contacted him regarding the Municipal Relations Team. They are having a kick off meeting a week from Thursday. This is essentially an attempt to have a conversation between the town side and the school side to avoid any problems.

Community Preservation Committee – Dave stated that the CPC may be paying for the first round of another round of treatments of chemicals to Lake Boone for weed control.

Nashoba Regional – A couple months ago they talked briefly about the proposed amendments to the part of the DOA regulations covering regional school districts. There is an 8 page proposed update that is in public comment period through October 27th. They are anticipating any final action on it on December 19th. Two issues that may or may not have impacted Nashoba are the changes in Excess and Deficiency and also changes to allow an alternative assessment methodology to be used if and only if all the towns in the district agree.

School Building Task Force – They are in the final stages of choosing an architect to create some designs. They hope to have that done in the next 2 weeks and have it down to 3 strong choices. There is a public forum scheduled for October 16th. The format is going to be a little different. It will be a conversation with the towns' people to find out what they want to see addressed.

Other Business

Bylaw Committee – It was stated that Kathleen Pavelchek, Chairman of the Bylaw Committee, requested that the Finance Committee submit any recommendations for changes in Bylaws to the Bylaw Review Committee before the end of the month.

Dave is creating a survey or poll of what the Finance committee should change that he will send out this week. Some of the items would be;

- Should we discuss how Finance committee members go into office? (Now appointed by moderator).
- Should we change the number of Associates and voting members? (Now 5 and 5).
- Should we have a provision to put a control on members belonging to other committees? (Can't be an official and an elective on another committee).
- Other towns require that if you are on the Finance committee you can be on Capitol Planning and Town Facilities committee, but nothing else.

Future Meetings

October 10, 2006

October 24, 2006

November 14, 2006

November 28, 2006

December 12, 2006

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Henry Hagopian at 9:00 pm. David Walrath seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously — (Walrath, Glauner, Kern and Hagopian)

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth A. Tobey,
Secretary