

Sturbridge Finance Committee
Meeting Minutes
March 22, 2011
Town Hall
7:00 pm

Amended 3/29

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm with the following members present: Kevin Smith (KS); Larry Morrison (LM), Mary Redetzke (MR), Arnold Wilson (AW), Mike Serio (MS), Prescott (Scott) Arndt (SA), and Richard Volpe (RV).

Members absent: Patricia Affenito (PA) and Robert Williams (RW).

Motion to approve Wendy Lilly-Hansen as recording secretary was made by AW, seconded by LM, so voted 7-0-0 .

General discussion regarding town by-law 1.21. KS, with agreement from AW, states that members can serve on other boards; LM disagreed unless state or federally mandated. KS requests all members draft language to be ready for the March 24th meeting, discussion tabled until then.

General discussion regarding town by-law 1.23. KS suggested 90 days; AW suggested using number of meetings missed. The words, "except in case of illness" shall be stricken from the by-law. Motion made by AW, to change language from "three" to "six" consecutive regular meetings missed. This motion was seconded by MR, so voted 7-0-0.

General discussion regarding town by-law 1.25. KS suggested changing "town accountant" to "finance director". Motion made?

General discussion regarding town by-law 1.26. KS suggested changing "town accountant" to "Any elected or appointed office holder or Town employee." Motion made?

Line item budget discussion began with the Nursery School, page 5, line item 66. MS states a third door on the building is in need of repair; cost to repair is estimated at \$1800. KS states this is not approved yet, it may be part of the capital budget.

Line item budget discussion, Building Inspector, page 6, line items 82-83 were discussed with regards to changes in fee allocations.

Shaun Suhoski (SS) joined the meeting at 7:52 pm. Further discussion regarding Nursery School repairs; SS states nursery school is trying to get ahead of repairs, and he will coordinate requesting quotes for door repairs. MR states some recent repairs were not completed in a timely manner. KS states perhaps the Town should coordinate repairs/maintenance thereby encouraging timely completion of projects. MR makes point that some previous projects at the nursery school were undertaken and completed by nursery school staff (specifically from MS, about \$20,000 for painting and replacement of windows that took place over 5 years from 2004-2009). LM questions whether the Town is liable even if the Town did not know or authorize the work. SS answers yes. KS states an amendment to the existing MOU between the Town and the nursery school would be in order.

SS outlined his reasons for requesting pay raises for three employees: Principal Assessor, Conservation Agent, and Finance Director. For the Principal Assessor, a 6.5% increase is requested due to the support is given to other town depts., the fact that his salary falls in the middle of his pay grade and SS cites his title as a certified real estate appraiser. For the Conservation Agent, SS states that the pay grade again falls in the middle of the pay grade even as the agent has been employed between three and four years in the Town; the agent has strong GIS skills, has been instrumental in developing trails within town-owned land and also with the formulation of a forest cutting plan.

KS explained changes to language in by-laws of 1.21, 1.25, and 1.26 to SS.

SS left the meeting at 8:20 pm.

Line items approved:

Conservation Commission: line items 40-42 approved for \$57,248. Motion made by RV, seconded by MR. Vote 7-0-0.

Building Inspector: line items 80-81 approved for \$51,520. Motion made by RV, seconded by MR. Vote 7-0-0. Line items 82-84 approved for \$2,130. Motion made by RV, seconded by MR. Vote 7-0-0.

SS rejoined meeting at 8:27 pm.

SS states he and Barbara Barry (BB) discussed a new allocation of the fees collected by the electric and plumbing inspectors that will increase revenue to the general fund/local receipts.

SS left the meeting at 8:50 pm.

Line items approved:

Inspectors: Line items: 86-88 approved for \$27,125. Motion made by RV, seconded by MR. Vote 7-0-0.

Town Road Maintenance: line items 104-106 approved for \$360,100. Motion made by MS, seconded by AW. Vote 7-0-0.

Inspections and Testing: line items 120-124 approved for \$16,390. Motion made by PA, seconded by MR. Vote 7-0-0.

Unclassified line items:

Medicare Tax, line item 175, approved for \$152,000. Motion made by KS, seconded by MR. Vote 7-0-0.

Street lights, line item 176, approved for \$55,000. Motion made by KS, seconded by MR. Vote 7-0-0.

Tax title, line item 178, approved for \$25,000. Motion made by KS, seconded by MR. Vote 7-0-0.

Insurance Blanket, line item 181, approved for \$275,000. Motion made by KS, seconded by MR. Vote 7-0-0.

RV left meeting at 9:00 pm.

Motion to Adjourn at 9:03 pm by AW, seconded by MS.