

Sturbridge Finance Committee
Meeting Minutes
April 26, 2011
Town Hall
7:00 pm

Amended 4-28-2011

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm with the following members present: Kevin Smith (KS), Arnold Wilson (AW), (SA), Patricia Affenito (PA), Larry Morrison (LM) and Mike Serio (MS). Members Absent: Mary Redetzke (MR), Robert Williams (RW).

Motion to recess in Conference Room 2 and reconvene in Veteran's Memorial Hall made by AW, seconded by PA. Vote 5-0-0. Prescott (Scott) Arndt (SA) and Richard Volpe (RV) joined the meeting at 7:02 pm.

Invited Guests: BOS Members Tom Creamer (TC), Mary Dowling (MD), Mary Blanchard (MB), and Priscilla Gimás (PG); Barbara Barry (BB), Finance Director; Mike Caplette, Town Moderator; Shaun Suhoski (SS), Town Administrator.

Line Item Budget:

Finance Committee (pg. 1): KS wants a footnote added specifying that the secretary for the Fin. Comm. is the person receiving the salary, thereby making clear that Finance Committee members serve the town as unpaid appointed officials.

Town Clerk (pg. 3): KS says that line 32 has been voted. This amount is the change from Grade 7 to Grade 9. BOS motion made to approve \$30,475, vote 3-0-0.

Elections and Registration (pg. 3): line 39 changed to \$710 because the town clerk does not use the marriage software. BOS motion to accept this change, vote 4-0-0.

Center School Office (pg. 4): KS wants the heading changed to Center Office Building since that is the commonly used name.

Joshua Hyde Library (pg. 5): KS wants this heading changed to Joshua Hyde Library Building.

AW makes a motion to reconsider the Safety Complex, seconded by PA. Vote 7-0-0. Line 64 is now \$104,980, the chairs should be in supplies (line 65). Motion to approve line 64 made by AW, PA. Vote 7-0-0. Motion to approve line 65 for \$8380 made by AW, seconded by PA. Vote 7-0-0. BOS motion to approve lines 64 and 65 passes.

Police Department (pg. 5): BOS motion to approve passes.

Education (pg. 8): BOS motion to approve lines 104 and 106 passes.

Health Care (pg. 9): KS wants this heading changed to Community Health Care.

Joshua Hyde Library (pg. 11): Heading change to Joshua Hyde Library Operations.
BOS motion to approve line 146 passes.

Recreation (pg. 11): some discussion about the increase in the hours for the Recreation Director: there is disagreement with regards to the process of arriving at this decision; this discussion makes the point that the Fin. Comm. is an advisory committee. Motion to reconsider line 146 made by LM, seconded by MS. Vote 6-0-1. Motion to approve line 146 for \$44,850 made by LM, seconded by MS. General discussion: PA has concerns saying that the Fin. Comm. will defer to Planning on zoning issues where a plan is in place and has been voted. PA goes on to say that to base the increase in hours on just one finite project rather the fact that demands on a department's time have increased is problematic. LM states even without the fields project, growth in town and interest in recreation programs more than justifies the increase in hours. TC supports the increase; MS makes the point that the list of activities offered by the Recreation Department has increased two-fold. Vote to approve line 146 6-1-0.

Unclassified (pg. 12): motion to reconsider line 172 made by AW, seconded by MS. Vote 7-0-0. AW makes a motion to approve line 172 (Account # 19102-51700) for \$1,455,000. Vote 5-2-0. This change is in anticipation of the hiring of new teachers. BOS motion to approve passes.

Central Purchasing (pg. 13): bids are out for the cleaning of town buildings (line 187). BOS motion passes.

Unclassified (pg. 12): motion to approve line 182 for \$96,779 made by AW, seconded by MS. Vote 7-0-0.

Special Town Meeting Warrant (version 4-26-11):

Article 32-Snow and Ice Removal-Burgess School Roof: general discussion includes BB giving an outline of the process by which the snow came to be removed. BOS motion to place and support passes.

Article 33-Transfer of Funds-Recreational Trails Master Plan: KS says there is no legal conflict but there is a perception of conflict due to a sitting member having voted on this article. LM makes the point that there is no true conflict but this article was brought before the Fin. Comm. by the spouse of a sitting member of the Fin. Comm. LM makes motion to reconsider article 33, seconded by MS. Vote 7-0-0. LM makes a motion to approve Article 33 as written, seconded by MS. Vote 7-0-0.

At this point, MD states that she is interested in drafting a bylaw that addresses conflict of interest.

ATM Warrant (version 4-26-11):

Article 3-Town Budget: BOS motion to approve passes.

Article 6-Community Preservation-Recreational Fitness Life Trail: BOS motion to remove passes.

Article 5-**FORMERLY** Community Preservation-Sturbridge Trails Committee (version 4-14-11): BOS has voted to remove this article since additional information has been received with regards to the extent of the site contamination.

Article 9-Sewer Department: motion to reconsider made by MS, seconded by RV. Vote 7-0-0. Motion approve as amended made by MS, seconded by RV. Vote 7-0-0.

Article 14-Sturbridge Tourist Association: general discussion: the taking of no action sends a bad message to the public; KS agrees but expects to make a substitute motion at the ATM.

Article 15-Betterment Committee: general discussion about signage and how to budget for a new 'Welcome to Sturbridge' sign. BB is not comfortable with multi-year funding requests; these accounts lose their significance over time; it is difficult to hold money since the rationale for the request can get 'lost'. PA says that perhaps some funds should perhaps be added to departmental budgets rather than kept in the Betterment budget; she also questions what the \$5,000 for trails will pay for. MD would like Betterment to fund multi-year projects. Motion to approve as amended (re-allocating \$1300 from miscellaneous to sidewalk maintenance) made by MS, seconded by SA. Vote 6-0-1. BOS motion passes.

Article 36-Authorize Lease of Landfill Land –Solar Power Agreement: general discussion: Fin. Comm. voted to take no action but will reconsider; SS makes the points that three selectmen can vote against a proposal, this is limited to solar power, and that the Energy Advisory Committee (EAC) will need to weigh in. KS asks who appoints the EAC, answer is BOS. SS says there are many proposals available, that the town is eligible for large tax incentives. KS would like to amend the language to include a sunset clause (perhaps June 30, 2012). Motion to reconsider made by MS, seconded by RV. Vote 7-0-0. Motion to approve as amended made by MS, seconded by RV. Vote 7-0-0. BOS motion to amend passes.

Article 48-General Bylaw Amendment: motion to recommend no action made by AW, seconded by RV. Vote 7-0-0.

Motion to approve 4-14-11 minutes with amendments made by LM, seconded by RV. Vote 7-0-0. Motion to adjourn made by KS at 10:52 pm.