

Sturbridge Finance Committee
Meeting Minutes
February 21, 2012
Town Hall
7:00 pm

Meeting was called to order at 7:07 pm with the following members present: Kevin Smith (KS), Mike Serio (MS), Patti Affenito (PA), Joni Light (JL), Larry Morrison (LM), Mary Redetzke (MR), Prescott (Scott) Arndt (SA), and Arnold Wilson (AW).

Members absent: Richard Volpe (RV).

Minutes:

Motion to approve the January 3, 2012 minutes as written made by PA, seconded by MS. Vote 4-0-4.

FY 13 Budget:

KS outlines his concerns for this budget and questions the need for additional staff in various Town offices. He mentions that in the past there have been discussions about an assistant Town Administrator; this position is envisioned as handling the more administrative tasks of the Town. There is no request in the budget for either an IT Manager or a Facilities Manager; KS wants to ask why not. KS goes on to ask why the compensation plan is being revisited; MS asks if only personnel are being reviewed. KS wants an explanation for the \$120,000 being requested when the Master Plan Study cost \$99,000. He also asks a general question about how the FEMA reimbursements will be handled once received. KS also questions the FinCom purchase of services line item since it was reduced by \$500 from last fiscal year. A \$1400 increase in the Sturbridge Co-op Budget and what new management practices have been implemented in the Fire Dept. are also questioned by KS.

SA has the same concerns as KS.

MR has questions about discrepancies in the Police Dept. budget and the School Resource Officer. MS states that the current Superintendent will allow a SRO but will not fund the position. He goes on to say that a grant funded the position in the past.

AW has concerns about the Quinn Bill and would like to see negotiation regarding the funding; also, Post-Employment benefits with the possibility of a sub-committee to investigate this issue; and lastly, whether or not to offer dental insurance to Town employees.

LM would like to see a roads plan included; questions where the information about police detail compensation should be placed (in the Town Report or in the budget); and questions whether the percentage (10%) of detail work that is paid to the Town should be increased.

JL would like to see justification for the personnel increase in the Police Dept. budget and has some general expense questions.

KS would like to know if the increases in staff are a result of the decrease in the Tantasqua budget since the decrease will likely not be permanent.

PA questions the increased staff levels; wants to address the cost of full-day Kindergarten and the town contracts.

MS would like an explanation of the bolded items at the end of the report; wants details about the meals tax allocation and would like to know if increases in utility rates are covered in contracts and what is the term of these contracts.

MR questions whether the budget requests for staffing increases should be written into the Free Cash budget for now.

Motion to adjourn made by KS at 8:53 pm.