

Sturbridge Finance Committee
Meeting Minutes
April 5, 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), Joni Light (JL), Larry Morrison (LM), Mary Redetzke (MR), Prescott (Scott) Arndt (SA), and Arnold Wilson (AW). Members absent: Richard Volpe (RV) and Patti Affenito (PA).

Motion to approve March 15 minutes as amended made by MR, MS seconds. Vote 6-0-1.

Motion to approve March 27 minutes as amended made by MR, MS seconds. Vote 7-0-0.

Line Item Budget:

Board of Assessors (pg. 2): KS makes a motion to approve line 21 for \$34,892, MR seconds. Vote 6-1-0.

Police Department (pg. 7): MR makes some comments about the correspondence from the Police Chief: the SRO is an expansion of the department, but the officer will not be forced on the schools. MR adds that the Chief says this position will not reduce overtime in the department and will also not reduce the number of calls to which the department responds at the schools. KS makes a motion to approve line 72 for \$54,945, AW seconds. Vote 7-0-0.

Tree Warden (pg. 8): SA makes a motion to approve lines 89-92 for \$12,870, MS seconds. Vote 7-0-0.

Debt Service Interest (pg. 13): JL relates that the Finance Director would like \$5,000 added to line 159 for storm-related expenses. JL makes a motion to approve lines 158-166 for \$677,851, MR seconds. Vote 7-0-0.

Finance Committee (pg. 2): KS makes a motion to reconsider line 12, MS seconds. Vote 7-0-0. LM makes a motion to approve line 12 for \$2,411, MS seconds. Vote 7-0-0.

Unclassified (pg. 14): JL is comfortable with the figure of \$1,500,000 for line 167 (Group Insurance). JL makes a motion to approve line 167 for \$1,500,000, MR seconds. Vote 7-0-0.

Central Purchasing (pg. 14): AW makes a motion to reconsider line 179 (Gasoline), JL seconds. Vote 7-0-0. JL makes a motion to approve line 179 for \$175,000, AW seconds. Vote 7-0-0.

Annual Town Meeting Warrant (version 2-March 30, 2012):

Article 1 Town Reports: MR makes a motion to approve as written, MS seconds. Vote 7-0-0.

Article 2 Community Preservation Committee Report: LM makes the point that the language of this article cannot contradict the Citizen Petition for Article 29.

Article 3 Town Budget: MR makes a motion to approve as written, MS seconds. Vote 7-0-0.

Article 7 Sewer Project Debt: MR makes a motion to approve as written, MS seconds. Vote 7-0-0.

Article 9 Revolving Funds: MR makes a motion to approve as written, MS seconds. Vote 7-0-0.

Article 14 Capital Raise Article-DPW: Dump Truck with Plow: MS makes a motion to approve as written, MR seconds. Vote 7-0-0.

Article 15 Ambulance Stabilization Fund: KS relates a discussion about the ambulance replacement procedures and possible replacement vehicles. In talking with the DPW Director, it seems that there are a few roads in town that are inaccessible to the ambulances. There are smaller vehicles that may allow rescue/emergency vehicle access to all town roads. No decisions were made, but this will be revisited. MR makes a motion to approve as written, MS seconds. Vote 7-0-0.

Article 16 OPEB Trust Fund: MR makes a motion to approve as written, MS seconds. Vote 7-0-0.

Article 23 Acceptance of MGL c.41, §81U: MR makes a motion to approve as written, MS seconds. Vote 7-0-0.

Article 24 Re-Authorize Lease of Landfill Land-Solar Power Agreement: MR makes a motion to approve as written, MS seconds. Vote 7-0-0.

Article 25 Amend Regional School District Agreement: KS states that he cannot support this article. He feels strongly that the representatives elected by Sturbridge voters are expected to represent the Town of Sturbridge to the Regional School Committee, not represent the interests of the Regional School Committee to the voters of Sturbridge. KS sees this as ceding authority to the Regional Committee. A question is asked about how the last vacancy was filled. KS reports that there was one applicant, and that the Regional Committee refused to accept the applicant because a larger pool of applicants was desired. AW makes notes of the timing of this process; it was just after the tornado. He adds that the decision in the past was made by the BOS. AW makes a motion to approve as written, MS seconds. Vote 4-3-0. More discussion: MR thinks there were two applicants but one applicant dropped out, and the committee wanted a larger pool of candidates from which to choose. LM notes that AW is correct. JL asks how this will change the process going forward? KS says that both the BOS and remaining committee members will vote rather than just the BOS. Various anecdotes are shared about the change in

the funding formula for the Tantasqua district. LM makes a motion to take no action, JL seconds.
Vote 5-2-0.

Article 29 Citizen Petition FY 13 Budget: AW makes a motion to take no action, SA seconds.
Vote 7-0-0.

Article 31 Citizen Petition-Purchase of 310 Main St.: KS states the need to recuse himself based on the fact that he had a conversation about the proper language of a warrant article; the language of this article mirrors that conversation. SA makes a motion to take no action, MR seconds. Vote 5-0-2.

New Business:

The Community Preservation Committee will be here on April 17.

Old Business:

The Reserve Fund Transfer for the clerk needs to be completed.

MS asks about the 'green card program' and where the funds collected are put. He goes to say that the balance is not known, and asks if this is a program that the Town could self-fund rather than raise funds through a voluntary donation process? An additional comment is made about the 2 ½ % levy limit and whether this is something that might be a good idea to put money toward if Town finances allow. There is agreement that this is a good idea and KS will propose it for next year.

Next Tuesday's meeting has been cancelled.

Motion to adjourn at 9:15 pm.