

Upton Finance Committee (Fincom) Minutes
June 8, 2011 at Upton Fire Station

Members Present: Five

Members Absent: Three

Joan Shanahan(JS)

Steve Bern (SB)

Jonathan Calianos (JC)

Herman Meisner (HM)

Paul Flaherty (PF)

Jonathan Graves (JG)

Karen Glowacki (KG) arrived at 7:40 PM

John O'Sullivan (JO)

Others present: Blythe Robinson, Town Manager (BR)

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 when a quorum was reached.

The committee reviewed the warrant for the upcoming adjourned town meeting. Selectmen are realistic and have taken some important items off until fall. The school has cut its budget but the Selectmen are waiting to see what happens in Mendon, to see if a joint town meeting will be necessary. They are delaying articles 43, 45, 47, 50, 51, and 52.

Attachment 1: FY12 Preliminary Budget Mendon Upton Regional School

Attachment 2: FY End of Year Transfers document date 06-06-11

Motion by PF, second by KG to approve all transfers on document 06-06-11. Unanimous approval.

Attachment 3: Letter to BR from Police Chief, Michael J. Bradley, JR. to transfer \$1,500.00 from the Police Wages Account #01-210-5100-5100 to Cruiser Maintenance Account. The Board of Selectmen approved this on May 17, 2011. **A motion was made by PF with a second by KG to approve the transfer. Unanimous.**

The computer in the police station cellblock failed. They have a loaner right now and are getting quotes. This will, most likely, be handled, as a transfer within the department budget.

JC questioned the difference that is coming out of school stabilization. Why is money being taken out of school that is not being used for school? We should only be taking \$6000 out to balance the school budget. They should not be using \$418,000. It is not appropriate to be taking \$5000 out of school stabilization for other purposes. JC feels this is a bad precedent. JO asked, what are the rules for school stabilization? What are the boundaries? JC-Selectman made commitment to have a plan to resolve school issues by 2012. Why are we taking \$50,000 out of school for other purposes? Can the selectmen resolve this before town meeting?

BR stated that the selectmen are not meeting until 5PM on June 16, before the town meeting. They will be signing papers for Sweetwilliam Farm.

BR left at 8:00PM.

PF stated that a town meeting vote can take money out of stabilization. JC stated this is a contradictory message. We should not touch school stabilization.

Attachment 3: Upton Finance Committee FY12 Budget Recommendation Articles
Line items were discussed.

Attachment 4: Background on article 15 for schematic design.

JS and Pf have concerns about \$600,000 for schematic design on Hartford Av/Hopkinton Rd project. We don't need a sidewalk. Instead of spending \$600,000 for schematic design we should take \$200,000 a year and spend it on repair of the road. We should not be spending \$600,000 so other Blackstone Valley residents can ride through Upton. There is a bottleneck in Hopkinton and there is talk about a light a School St near the water tank. If we vote for the \$600,000 schematic design now it shows a commitment so that when a state grant becomes available we will be able to do the work. It will not pay for water or sewer. There was concern about increased truck traffic. Hopkinton has made their end of the road a scenic road. This is the tip of an iceberg.

PF made a motion, with a second by JC to recommend unfavorable action on Article 15. After discussion, JC said he would prefer to wait until the Capitol Budget Committee meets on June 15 before voting. PF withdrew the motion until June 15. We can vote prior to the Town Meeting on June 16.

There was continued discussion on School Stabilization. The schools are decimated. Next year a major override could be proposed. The town ration is changing. How do we recover what is lost? We may need to decide what kind of town we want. Do we want to raise taxes and force the middle and lower income people out? Why are the selectmen trying to take \$55,000 out of the school stabilization for other purposes? We need to invite them to come and discuss this. We need more information before we vote. We should also invite the Capitol Budget Committee. They should only take \$6000 or 4000 out for school expense the rest is for other expenses. Should we vote to give an unfavorable recommendation? Can we vote on this just before the town meeting? JS will speak to the chair of the Board of Selectmen and advise him of our thoughts.

There was a discussion about Article 46 for \$55,000. The purpose of the article is to address drainage issues near 45 School St. There is no pipe under the driveway. How many drainage issues are there? Where is it? Will this be contracted out?
There was a discussion of debt. The debt compiles even with a good rate. The debt service comes out of the levy limit. Action was deferred on this matter pending more information.

Article 53: JC made a motion for favorable action, with a second by PF. Unanimous.

Article 48: A motion was made by PF, with a second by JC, for favorable action. Unanimous.

Article 25 for the GIS system: A motion was made by PF, with a second by JC for favorable action. Unanimous.

Article 17: The Capitol Budget committee is ok with this. It is subject to reimbursement. Comment that it should be 50/50 with 50% out of Enterprise Fund and 50% from taxpayers. A motion was made by JC for favorable action, with a second by PF, for favorable action. Unanimous.

Article 18: Storm water management is an unfunded DEP mandate. JC made a motion for favorable action with a second by PF. Unanimous.

Article 24: PF made a motion for favorable action with a second by JC. Unanimous.

Article 42: This is for a sidewalk plow. What is the mileage on the present plow? There was discussion of why it is needed, since this is for a similar, second plow. As the plows age there are repair issues that come up. Because they are too wide for our sidewalks, they have to be driven with one wheel off the sidewalk causing wear. What is the Capitol Budget position?

Attachment 5: Capitol Budget Committee (CBC) Report.

The CBC meets on June 15. They will discuss and JC will report to us. What basis does the CBC look at if we stay within the capacity of borrowing?

We need to make appointments for members to the CBC.

Motion to appoint JC to continue for one more year made by PF with a second by KG. Unanimous.

Motion to appoint Frank Aniello to a four year term made by PF with a second by JC. Unanimous.

A member advised that HM is closing papers on the sale of his house soon and will be leaving town. Has he sent his letter of resignation? JS has not heard from HM, and will contact him.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 upon a motion by PF.

Respectfully Submitted, Ellen Arnold

Attachments:

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Attachment 4: Background on article 15 for schematic design.

Attachment 5: Capitol Budget Committee (CBC) Report.