

Upton Finance Committee (Fincom) Minutes DRAFT  
June 15, 2011 at Upton Fire Station

Members Present: Seven

Members Absent: Zero

Joan Shanahan (JS)  
Steve Bern (SB) arrived at 7:25  
Jonathan Calianos (JC) arrived at 7:43  
Paul Flaherty (PF)  
Karen Glowacki (KG)  
Jonathan Graves (JG)  
John O'Sullivan (JO)

Others Present:

Blythe Robinson (BR), Town Manager  
Ken Picard (KP), Selectmen  
Ken Glowacki, Capital Budget Committee

Chairman, Joan Shanahan, called the meeting to order at 7:19, with a quorum.

Attachment 1: FY11 End of Year Transfers

There was a discussion of end of year transfers. Numbers 1, 5, 6 and 7 are the equivalent of a days pay. Last year there was an adjustment of eight days, for pay, that should have been nine days. There were ninety-three more fire calls this year, which is why the wages went up. The water/waste water account had a shortfall due to water main breaks. Number 16, which is police wages to building maintenance, is the computer that had to be replaced for the cell block. Transfers out of departments are ok as explained in an email memo from the Town Accountant last week.

Attachment 2: Email from Fred Aponte to department heads, cc Blythe Robinson,  
Subject: Year-End Transfers.

**A motion by PF, with a second by KG, to recommend favorable action on Transfers 1-15, received unanimous approval.**

**The minutes for April 20 were accepted, as corrected, upon a motion by PF, with a second by KG.**

**The minutes for April 27 were accepted, upon a motion by KG, with a second by JO.**

**The minutes for June 8 were accepted, upon a motion by PF, with a second by KG.**

JS invited Mr. Glowacki, Chairman of the Capitol Budget Committee (CBC), to advise the Fincom on the recommendations of the CBC. He indicated that the CBC voted to

recommend favorable action on all but \$25,000 for Engineering for a DPW garage. This article is being passed over at the Town Meeting. Upon a question by JO Mr. Glowacki said the CBC felt that this was too preliminary and is the leading edge of an expensive project.

Attachment 3: Motion Cards for May 5, 2011 adjourned Town Meeting (June 16)

There was a discussion of Article 14 regarding \$75,000 to be raised and appropriated for town roads. This is for work on Hopkinton Rd, High St and Hartford Av. More is needed, but this is the minimal amount that we can realistically spend considering the overall budget situation. The Chapter 90 money will be used for Fiske Mill, Grafton Rd and East St. The work on Hopkinton Rd is just to grind and repave. It does not address drainage or other issues.

**A motion by PF, with a second by JG for a favorable recommendation to Article 14 received unanimous approval.**

There were questions and a discussion regarding Article 15 to spend \$600,000 for design of roadway, and other traffic improvements to Hopkinton Rd, High St and Hartford Av North. A favorable vote to do this will show town support, which will give us standing for a TIP grant to do the work. The work will most likely be done in phases because of the ultimate cost. Our portion is 10% of the current estimated cost of \$6 million. This will not go up even if the eventual cost of the project is more. There may be other associated costs during actual construction involving permits. That could be up to an estimate of \$100,000. There might be a light at the Pratt Pond/Westborough Rd intersection. This work is planned from the intersection at Rt 140 and Hartford Av North to Hopkinton. JS mentioned that they should look at both ends of Maple Av to consider widening the intersections as a safety issue. If we do the design, the probably funding will be available in F& 12, 15 and 16. Any water or sewer work done at the same time will be at the town's expense. JO asked that if we were not able to fund the water/sewer work by the time the grant is available can we choose to step back in line. BR said that is possible. Comment that this work is being done because of the large amount of traffic at certain times of day from other parts of the Blackstone River Valley.

**A motion made by JC to recommend favorable action on Article 15, with a second by JO, passed by a majority vote.**

There was a discussion on Article 28 to fund a new ambulance. The CBC supported this as a necessity. The present ambulance does not have good brakes. The old one will be either traded or auctioned depending on what will give us the most return. The old one will be stripped of anything that can be used in the new one.

**A motion was made by KG, with a second by JO, for favorable action to borrow \$145,000. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.**

There was a discussion regarding Article 42 to borrow \$145,000 for a trackless sidewalk plow. The plan is to keep the current one as a back up. We need the new one because the one we are using now overheats and breaks down frequently. Trade in on it would be minimal. SB is concerned that if we keep the old one, we will continue to spend money on maintenance and wages while repairing it. We have four to six miles of sidewalk to plow and on days when school is going to open, we would be able to clear the sidewalks faster. The only attachment we will purchase with the new one is a snow blower. It is expected to have a ten year life span. It is a short life span because our sidewalks are so narrow it has to be run with one wheel off the sidewalk.

**A motion was made by KG, with a second by JO, to give a favorable recommendation to borrow \$145,000 for the sidewalk plow. The motion passed by a majority.**

There was a discussion on Article 44 to borrow \$185,000 to purchase and equip one 5 ton dump truck for the DPW. Number 26 has a cracked frame and is not safe to be used. We have been lucky and have a good mechanic so it has lasted this long. JC asked if we could lease seasonally. It was explained that leases are usually for smaller construction equipment and that this type of equipment is not usually available for lease. It is geared very low because we need to plow uphill which requires power, not speed. The truck would be housed.

**A motion was made by JC, with a second by KG, to give a favorable recommendation to Article 44 to borrow \$185,000 for a new 5 ton dump truck for the DPW. The vote was a tie with three in favor and three opposed. The chairman broke the tie with an unfavorable vote so the motion failed.**

#### Attachment 4: Drainage Report and Recommendations

There was a discussion of Article 46 to transfer \$55,000 from General Stabilization for drainage work. There are a number of places, throughout the town, that have drainage issues that need to be addressed. It will be an ongoing issue as new situations arise. When the drainage is not taken care of properly it affects the roadway. These issues are partly due to homes built without consideration for drainage issues. In the past, the Planning Board approved some projects without adequate drainage plans. BR and the DPW Consultant met with Planning Board and asked them to be more cognizant of this in the future. There are many older streets, and homes that also have this issue. Storm water management is a much larger consideration now. DEP not only requires that you take the water away, but that it be clean and solids contained. We will need a bylaw to address this in future. If not we may be fined by DEP.

**A motion was made by JC, with a second by SB, to recommend favorable action on Article 46. The motion passed unanimously.**

There was a discussion of Article 3 regarding the school budget. JC reported on the meeting of the School Committee. They voted to recertify the budget at the lower number.

JS mentioned that this was explained in a note from Heather Applegate from the School Committee.

Attachment 5: Email from Heather Applegate to JS.

Concerns were expressed that next year we will have to do a major override. There may be issues regarding accreditation. There may be a joint town meeting as early as the beginning of August. It is unclear what Mendon is doing on July 28. Next year the school may ask for the actual need for approximately \$30 million. Concern was expressed about the credibility of the School Committee repeatedly saying they need more and accepting less. If a joint town meeting votes in excess of \$27 million, we will have to use the reserve. BVT is giving a good education so many students are choosing to go there. JG expressed support of the concerns mentioned last week that we should not take money out of school stabilization for other expenses.

**There was a motion by JC, with a second by PF to recommend favorable action on Article 3 for the recertified school budget for \$9,203,723.00. The motion passed unanimously.**

Attachment 6: Letter from the Town Clerk notifying JS that Herman Meisner is resigning from Fincom because he is moving out of town.

**The meeting was adjourned at 8:25, upon a motion by PF, with a second by JO.**

Respectfully submitted

Ellen Arnold

Attachments:

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