

MINUTES OF MEETING OF WAREHAM FINANCE COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: October 2, 2013

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:38 P.M.

II. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Larry McDonald, Chairman
 Marilyn Donahue, Vice Chairman
 Bonnie Cottuli, Clerk
 Tom Worthen
 David Heard
 Marilyn Jordan
 Joan Fontes

Member Absent: Dominic Cammarano

Also Present: Derek Sullivan, Town Administrator

III. CITIZENS PARTICIPATION

No-one came forward for Citizens Participation.

IV. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

A. State budget.

Mr. Sullivan gave an update on the State budget. He explained that the cherry sheets were updated & there is an increase in revenue overall for the Town. He stated school aid was reduced \$4,450.00. Town aid was increased \$38,786.00. County/State assessments were reduced \$43,917.00. Thus, there is a surplus in the Town's budget of \$78,253.00.

B. Meals Tax/Hotel/Motel Tax.

Mr. Sullivan stated the Town received its meals tax disbursement on 9/13/13 in the amount of \$128,101.00. He stated this amount is almost the same as last year. He stated the hotel/motel tax brought in \$19,541.00 which is an increase from last year (which as \$15,166.00). He noted that the hotel/motel tax, historically, has been volatile. He gave amounts received for the hotel/motel tax going back to 2009. He stated these amounts fluctuate.

Mr. McDonald stated he would have expected the meals tax revenue to be higher due to the two new restaurants that opened in Town.

Ms. Jordan asked why there is no meals tax on pre-packaged meals in Stop & Shop. Mr. Sullivan explained the DOR offers guidelines as to what can be included in the meals tax & what is not. He stated this was a decision that was made. Ms. Jordan noted that Market Basket also charges meals tax on pre-packaged meals.

C. Chapter 90 aid.

Mr. Sullivan explained the State will not be releasing the full amount of Chapter 90 aid. He stated the Town will not be receiving \$243,287.00 from its portion of Chapter 90. He stated this is a loss for the Town.

Ms. Donahue asked what will be done about this. Mr. Sullivan stated less projects will be done in Town. He stated there is pressure on the Governor to release the rest of this money.

D. Government shutdown impacts.

Mr. Sullivan stated as far as aid to the Town, there is no immediate impact. He stated Federal grants the Town receives may be affected.

E. GASB 45.

Mr. Sullivan stated the Town has two options relative to GASB 45. They are as follows:

1. Pay as you go.
2. Fully fund the liability.

Mr. Sullivan stated the Town pays as it goes as do a majority of other communities. He stated liabilities keep increasing. He stated the Town doesn't have the ability to come up w/ another \$2 million per year as needed. He stated there is an OPED article being put together for Town Meeting to establish a trust fund. He noted that \$4.7 million per year is actuarial & the Town is funding \$2.7 million per year.

Ms. Donahue feels the article is the first step in recognizing the issue by setting up a trust fund.

Mr. Sullivan explained the Plymouth County Retirement Board is facing an assessment of 32% for FY2015. This percentage represents increases if full funding was kept until 2030. He stated they are looking to push out to 2034 & by then new figures will be out. He discussed issues of large assessments that vary year to year. He doesn't feel pushing things out to 20134 will help much. He is waiting to hear what will be done.

Ms. Jordan stated she saw the job posting for the Town Planner's position. She noticed that the salary was commensurate w/ the Steelworker's Union agreement. She asked since this is a managerial position, can the Town not have this position in the Steelworker's Union. Mr. Sullivan stated this position is in the union & discussed that most department heads are in the union. He discussed what would happen if management were taken out of the union & he stated it would be very costly.

V. BUSINESS

A. Fall Town Meeting Warrant.

1. Review & vote Town Meeting Warrant articles.

Article 6 – Line Painting Fund

Mr. Sullivan stated this article will be withdrawn.

Article 7 – Purchase Vacuum Truck

Mr. Sullivan stated this article will be withdrawn. Ms. Cottuli asked why. Mr. Sullivan explained the funding source for the truck would have been through the WPCF Reserve Fund (retained earnings). He explained in order to utilize these funds, the Sewer Commissioners & Town Meeting need to transfer this money out. He stated money has already been appropriated in the WPCF capital line item to purchase the truck instead. He noted if the truck was new, it would need Town Meeting approval, but the truck will not be new.

Brief discussion ensued re: if the FinCom should give an explanation for the withdrawal or not.

MOTION: Ms. Donahue moved No Action on Article 6 of the 2013 Fall Town Meeting Warrant. Ms. Cottuli seconded.

VOTE: Unanimous (7-0-0)

MOTION: Ms. Donahue moved No Action on Article 7 of the 2013 Fall Town Meeting Warrant. Ms. Cottuli seconded.

VOTE: Unanimous (7-0-0)

Article 12 – FY2013 Unpaid Bills

Mr. Sullivan stated there are no unpaid bills.

MOTION: Ms. Cottuli moved No Action on Article 12 of the 2013 Fall Town Meeting Warrant. Ms. Donahue seconded.

VOTE: Unanimous (7-0-0)

Article 13 – Wareham HS Roof Replacement Project Feasibility Study

Mr. McDonald feels this article still needs to be tabled at this time. Mr. Sullivan explained the School Committee will be taking some sort of action this evening re: this matter. He stated there is a need to wait to see what the outcome of this action is.

Mr. Worthen stated last year there was a discussion as to who is responsible for school buildings. Mr. McDonald stated the issue is not maintaining the building(s), but capital. He stated the money being sought in the article is for a study. Mr. Worthen feels the Town & School Dept. maintenance department should be “holding the ball” on these issues. Mr. Sullivan noted Town Counsel’s differing opinion. Mr. McDonald noted that this article is not a capital issue, but a study.

Article 14 – Appropriation Transfers

Mr. Sullivan stated the only transfer he has at this moment is to fund the Town Planner position (a full-time position). He will be looking for \$25,000.00. He stated this amount will go along with an amount that was already budgeted for a part-time Planner.

Mr. Sullivan added that fixed costs in debt service principle after the January 1st payment will have \$32,000.00 extra in the account. He is proposing the \$25,000.00 come from this excess money in this account. He noted the value of having a full-time Planner.

Ms. Donahue expressed the importance of having key positions filled & the value of expertise. Brief discussion ensued.

Mr. McDonald stated this article will be tabled until next week.

Article 15 – Fund Ratified Union Contracts

Mr. Sullivan stated the Steelworker’s Union contract was ratified. The union was provided w/ a Step 6. He stated a sixth step is worth 3% & only after 10 years of service.

Mr. Sullivan explained that w/in the budget line, other budget articles from FY2012, there is \$104,000.00 for collective bargaining matters. He stated money can be moved out of this line through Town Meeting.

Mr. Sullivan will update the FinCom next week on any other developments. He noted the cost of the Steelworker’s Union contracts will be \$9,000.00 for the lower unit & \$10,000.00 for the upper unit.

Article 16 – Create Bylaw – Civil Fingerprinting of Vendors

Mr. McDonald stated the FinCom voted on this article, but now this article will be withdrawn. Mr. Sullivan explained that other communities have attempted to implement this law & bring it to their Town Meeting. This hasn't gone so well in these other communities. He stated there is an attempt to review what the issues are w/ this law in the other communities. He stated further review is needed & this article will be brought forward in the spring.

Discussion ensued re: whether the FinCom should reconsider its vote on this article or not & whether to re-vote or leave the vote as is.

Discussion ensued re: having better information in explaining this article.

MOTION: Ms. Donahue moved to reconsider Article 16 of the 2013 Fall Town Meeting Warrant. Ms. Cottuli seconded.

VOTE: (2-3-2)

It was stated that the vote previously made by the FinCom on Article 16 will stand.

Brief discussion ensued re: how to word this recommendation.

Article 17 – Amend Demolition-Delay Bylaw: Historically Significant Buildings

Mr. McDonald stated the Historic Committee has not come together to vote on this article as of yet. He stated this article doesn't have a financial impact on the Town. He stated this article can be tabled until next week.

Ms. Cottuli stated whether things have a financial impact directly or indirectly to the Town, there is an impact. She asked if this article has gone to print in the newspaper yet. Mr. McDonald stated he believes so. Ms. Cottuli stated if a date is put in the article vs. years, it changes the article. Discussion ensued.

Article 18 – Amend Waterways Bylaw

Mr. McDonald stated this article doesn't have a financial impact, but it could with enforcement issues.

MOTION: Ms. Cottuli moved Favorable Action on Article 17 of the 2013 Fall Town Meeting Warrant. Mr. Worthen seconded.

VOTE: Unanimous (7-0-0)

NOTE: Mr. Sullivan departed at this time.

Article 20 – Transfer Development Rights

Article 22 – Establish Zoning Bylaw – Medical Marijuana Treatment Centers

Article 23 – Sign Regulations

Present before the FinCom: Selectman Alan Slavin, BOS Liaison

Mr. McDonald explained that the Planning Board public hearings on Articles 20,22, & 23 will not be heard until 10/21/13.

Ms. Donahue stated she is not in favor of voting on articles w/out all the information. She expressed concern re: public hearings being held one week before Town Meeting that deal with articles that are on the Warrant. She stated this issue needs to change. She stated she does not want to vote on anything that hasn't had a public hearing yet because possible changes could be made at that public hearing.

Article 21 – Amend Flood Plain Bylaw

Selectman Slavin discussed the article.

Article 19 – Accept Layout of Cranberry Lane

Selectman Slavin discussed the article.

Ms. Donahue expressed concern re: several articles being on the Warrant that don't seem ready.

Article 20 – Transfer Development Rights

Selectman Slavin discussed the article. He discussed simplifying the article & changes that may be made. He spoke re: having handouts available at Town Meeting for Articles 20, 22, & 23 vs. having the information in the Warrant.

Mr. Heard asked what the impact is of not voting on these articles now. Selectman Slavin discussed the issue w/ not voting on Article 23, for example.

Ms. Donahue feels the subject matter of zoning articles is an issue because of the importance of these articles. She feels there is an issue because the FinCom is being asked to vote on these articles without knowing what the final versions of the articles will be.

Mr. McDonald suggested tabling these articles for the time being. He is not comfortable voting on these articles right now. Mr. Heard concurred.

Ms. Cottuli stated re: Article 23, she doesn't have the original vs. final version & she is not comfortable voting on this article.

Ms. Donahue feels the FinCom should not vote on Articles 20,22, & 23. She stated the FinCom can vote on these articles after the Planning Board's public hearings if needed. The other FinCom members concurred.

Article 21 – Amend Flood Plain Bylaw

MOTION: Ms. Donahue moved Favorable Action on Article 21 of the 2013 Fall Town Meeting Warrant. Ms. Cottuli seconded.

Selectman Slavin discussed what could happen if this article is not voted upon. He stated to accept or reject this article; both have negative effects. Mr. Heard asked if any other town has rejected the new flood plain maps. Selectman Slavin stated not that he knows of.

VOTE: (5-2-0)

Article 24 – Amend Zoning Bylaw – Use Tables

Selectman Slavin stated he is unsure if this article will be withdrawn or not by the Planning Board.

Mr. McDonald stated this article will be tabled until next week.

Mr. McDonald assigned the following article recommendations to the following FinCom members:

Article 17 – Mr. Heard
Article 18 – Mr. McDonald
Article 21 – Ms. Donahue

2. **Town Meeting dates to remember:**
 - a. **October 9, 2013 – Last day for FinCom to vote on articles.**
 - b. **October 11, 2013 – Last day for FinCom to submit information to Kelly for Warrant.**
 - c. **Town Meeting – October 28, 2013**

VI. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. McDonald stated a public hearing on the Warrant will be held on 10/16/13.

VII. LIAISON REPORTS

Mr. Worthen stated he is attempting to get the labor contracts for the Police Dept. & EMS. Mr. McDonald stated Mr. Worthen should go through the FinCom Chairman for this & he will speak to Mr. Sullivan about this.

VIII. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES: SEPTEMBER 25, 2013

MOTION: Ms. Cottuli moved to approve the meeting minutes of September 25, 2013. Ms. Donahue seconded.

VOTE: (6-0-1)
Mr. Worthen abstained

IX. NEXT MEETING DATE & TIME

The next meetings of the FinCom will be held on 10/9/13 & 10/16/13 at 6:30 P.M.

X. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Mr. Worthen moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:31 P.M. Mr. Heard seconded.

VOTE: Unanimous (7-0-0)

Respectfully submitted,

Kelly Barrasso
Kelly Barrasso, Transcriptionist

Date signed: 10/10/13

Attest: Bonnie Cottuli (KB)
Bonnie Cottuli, Clerk
WAREHAM FINANCE COMMITTEE

Date copy sent to Town Clerk: 10/10/13