



# Town of Wayland Massachusetts

## Finance Committee

Paul Grasso  
Thomas Greenaway  
David J. Gutschenritter  
Cherry C. Karlson (Chair)  
Sam H. Peper  
Richard M. Stack  
Bill Steinberg

### Finance Committee Meeting Minutes December 13, 2010

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 pm in the Selectmen's Conference Room at the Wayland Town Building.

**Attendance:** P. Grasso, C. Karlson, B. Steinberg, R. Stack (arrived at 8:10 PM), S. Peper, T. Greenaway.

**Absent:** D. Gutschenritter.

**Public Comment:** Molly Upton stated that she feels the Department of Public Works needs to do a better job of setting their priorities on public projects. Her example was the change in priorities by the DPW where water pipes should first be cleaned/maintained. It was pointed out by the Committee that the revised analysis by the DPW was probably in the best interest of the Town and was an example that the DPW was actually working to constantly analyze and refine its work.

**Discussion Of The Initial Submittals By Town Departments For The Capital Budget:** First, the Committee had a general discussion of the Capital Budget process. It was agreed by the Members that the Finance Committee would not be posting on-line initial submissions of the Capital Budget for review by the Finance Committee, as these submissions are not necessarily the final submissions to be made by any of the Town's departments. If they were to be posted on-line, they could be misconstrued as the Capital Budget requests to be debated and voted upon by the Town.

Committee Members would like Town departments/boards to provide to the Finance Committee written (on paper or via email) confirmation that the budgets submitted have been approved by the departments/boards. They would also like an analysis of any impacts that capital projects will have on the operations of the departments, whether they increase costs, decrease costs or are cost neutral, with some back-up documentation to support such estimates.

It was pointed out to the Members that the Capital Budget from general funds needs to be in the range of \$4.5 million in order to provide a tax neutral budget to voters.

Next, the Board had a discussion of the specific budget requests by the various boards and departments (an email from Cherry Karlson to Fred Turkington on December 14, 2010 at approximately 6:24 AM is attached to these minutes, as it contains some of the specific discussion items with regard to specific items). There was a general consensus with regard to the overall capital budget program that sufficient detail was lacking on many items that would allow the Members to understand why requests were being made for funding and how the departments/boards had arrived at the timing for repairs and replacements of facilities and equipment.

Town Facilities –One area of concern for new buildings is the fact that the planning and design fees requested for new facilities and refurbished facilities are requested separately from the remainder of the development/construction funds for such projects; therefore these costs become operating costs, while the remainder of the facility costs are capital

and can be amortized over the life of the projects. We need to provide the planning and design fees in a manner such that they are also amortized over the lives of these projects. A similar concern was raised with regard to the proposed parking lot improvement at the Town Building that might be part of the budget for all building improvements, thereby allowing for amortization over 10 years vs. 5 years. The Committee is requesting more detail in the request for the repairs to the Public Safety building. Other projects requiring additional information include the proposed DPW facility, the proposed library in 2013, the improvements to Fire Station #2 and the location of the water tank replacement. Members would like to know if there have been public hearings to discuss the proposed Happy Hollow Treatment facility, as the Committee feels that such hearing should occur before the funding occurs for this proposed project.

Capital Projects – The same concerns were made on these items as on the proposed Town Facilities items; there is not sufficient information on many of these items to allow for a meaningful discussion and vote of support by the Finance Committee.

One item that was questioned for other reasons is the proposed land acquisition by the conservation commission. The question was whether this should be included in the capital budget given that funding would likely come from the Community Preservation Funds.

There was a consistent question with regard to vehicles: justification of timing; can vehicles be used by other departments; why do we not see the savings on cost reimbursement to employees who will use Town vehicles in lieu of personal vehicles? In addition, there was a question with regard to sharing certain types of vehicles (particularly heavy equipment) with neighboring towns.

There were questions regarding the field renovations regarding the potential savings from sinking wells to irrigate the fields and whether such a practice was consistent with Town concerns about homeowners who sink wells into the Town's aquifer's for the irrigation of residential lawns.

With regard to the Hannah Williams playground, it was pointed out that this had received some private funding in the past; but it was also pointed out that this facility is a significant Town resource and that it might be reasonable for the Town to incur the cost of maintaining it for the long term.

Expenses incurred at the North Cemetery and the Lakeview Cemetery were noted to have a potential revenue producing benefit that might be greater than the costs of the projects; however these revenue prospects were not included in the budgets.

There was a consensus that the Town is not yet at a point of moving forward with regard to playing fields or other facilities at the former Dow site, or that sufficient information has not yet been provided to the Committee that would allow it to provide a recommendation with regard to the funding of that project at this time.

School projects had similar concerns for Members regarding the amount of information provided being insufficient for the Committee to render a recommendation. There was a question raised asking why the school committee would request at truck that would not be part of the DPW budget/inventory. With regard to technology requests, the Committee wants to better understand the benefits of the technology on the educational program and the cost savings that might eventually accrue to the budget from such technology.

**Executive Session:** At 9:09 PM a motion was made by C. Karlson and seconded to enter executive session as permitted by M.G.L. Chapter 30A, Section 21 (a)(3), for the purpose of discussing strategies with respect to collective bargaining because a discussion of these matters in open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Town. The Finance Committee will return to regular session at approximately 9:30 PM for the purpose of meeting with the School Committee. A roll call vote was taken.

Grasso:	Yes
Greenaway:	Yes
Karlson:	Yes
Peper:	Yes
Stack:	Yes
Steinberg:	Yes

John Sehchshyn, Assistant Town Administrator, joined the Finance Committee in Executive Session.

At 9:23 PM the Finance Committee returned to regular session and the Committee was present at the School Committee ("SC") meeting on the second floor of the Town Building at 9:30 PM.

**Meeting with the School Committee:** The SC answered questions from Finance Committee Members regarding the technology budget being submitted by the SC. One comment by Committee Members was that the SC presentation ought to explain to the Town why the investment in technology would be an investment worth supporting (benefits of the program and cost savings). The new Wayland High School will incorporate some of the hardware required to implement programs to take advantage of new technologies. Most of the technology needs in the near term are for the Middle School and Elementary Schools; however there are still needs at the High School. There was a discussion regarding the costs of licenses for operating costs and software and the benefits of future cost savings through access to "Cloud Computing" (access to networks over the internet).

There was a discussion of the Pilot program currently running in the schools under the technology program. There are five teachers involved in this Pilot program that is part of the math and science programs at Wayland High School. It is an interactive program that allows teachers to provide unique lesson plans for each student. The Pilot program allows students to access the curriculum 24/7 and to share learning with one another at all times. It uses Google documents (Cloud Computing).

**Adjourn:** At 10:16 PM a motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

William Steinberg