

TOWN OF WEST BOYLSTON
JOINT MEETING OF THE
FINANCE COMMITTEE
and the
CAPITAL INVESTMENT BOARD

Minutes of Meeting held September 17, 2007

Upon notice duly given and quorum present, a joint meeting of the Finance Committee and the Capital Investment Board was convened at 6:45 p.m. on September 17, 2007. Members in attendance: Ray Bricault, Chris Berglund, Ellen Dunlap, Patrick Crowley, Paul Bohannon and Patricia Altomare.

The first order of business was a review of the minutes of the previous meeting. Upon discussion and upon motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously **VOTED**: To approve the minutes of the Finance Committee's Meeting of June 29, 2007.

The Chair then advised the Committees that the primary purpose of tonight's meeting was to begin the budget process for the Fall Town Meeting. Mr. Bricault updated the Committees on the town finances indicating that the Police Department received a small grant of money and thus they can now pay for their cruiser lease and re-instate other items which were previously set aside due to budget constraints. This grant does not represent income to the Town but does elevate the Town's burden somewhat. Mr. Bricault also advised the Committees that it appears our free cash sum will be approximately \$300,000. However, the sum of money that was anticipated from National Grid has decreased by approximately \$100,000 - \$150,000. In all, including \$172,000 in the Capital Investment Fund and \$45,000 from the Sewer Fund, it appears that we will have approximately \$350,000 to address the Town's capital needs. Unfortunately those needs total approximately \$600,000.

The next order of business was to review the draft Town Warrant. The Committees then proceeded to address each warrant item with discussion regarding the following:

Article 4 – Authorization to Modify the Fiscal Year 2008 Appropriations etc. – It was noted that this is a standard article and that Leon Gaummond is getting a list of modifications together.

Article 5 – Authorization to Appropriate Funds for the Library FY08 Budget – The Committee members questioned the Library waiver status and whether the Library's receiving the fund requested would adversely affect our getting a waiver. Likewise, what happens if we do not fund the Library and they do not get their waiver? Mr. Bricault volunteered to talk to the Town's Librarian for more information.

Articles 7 and 8 – Mr. Crowley advised the Committees these articles were included on the Warrant in hopeful anticipation that the Town would receive a grant to fund the construction of new playing fields. It is not known whether we will receive the grant monies yet but the Parks Facilities Committee wanted to have the Town's permission to use the funds should they come our way. The Parks Facilities Committee is looking into co-coordinating funding with the CPA. The playing fields would be behind the Middle/High School (but not near the old growth forest) on the other side of the parking lot.

Article 9 – Authorization to Appropriate Funds for Parks and Related Safety and Repair Items – It was noted that this is the same article as was previously submitted by the Parks Department. Mr. Bricault believes they are looking for \$30,000.

Article 10 – Authorization to Appropriate Funds for the Replacement of Ambulance2 – Mr. Bricault noted that he and Patrick Crowley inspected Ambulance2 last year in response to the Fire Departments comments that this ambulance was rusted. This year the argument is that this ambulance is having engine/electrical problems.

Article 11 – Authorization to Appropriate Funds to the School Department Budget – Mr. Bricault advised the Committees that this request was due to unexpected special needs costs. The Committees questioned whether the previous town had to pay for these special needs. Mr. Bricault agreed to make further inquiries.

Article 12 – Authorization to Appropriate Funds to the Community Preservation Committee – It was noted that the CPC has no money with which to start running. Any appropriated funds will be reimbursed to the Town once the CPC gets up and running.

Articles 22, 23, 24 and 25 – Articles regarding the Tivnan Drive Project.

Article 26 – Authorization to Enter into a Long-term Lease for Trash Disposal Services – The Town needs trash services to cover the gap between the expiration of our current lease and the starting of the Tivnan Drive services.

Article 27 – Authorization to Rescind Previously Voted Debt Authorities – These were past votes which allowed the spending of a sum “up to” a certain amount and that amount was not reached. Thus, the votes need to be rescinded.

Article 28 – Authorization to Transfer Money from the Sewer Enterprise – It is anticipated that this sum will be \$40,000 - \$50,000.

Article 29 – Petitioned Article to Authorization to Study (sic) Alternative Methods of Funding and/or Organizing Our School System – Mr. Bricault indicated that this was a citizens’ petition.

Mr. Bricault noted that the School Department has not yet submitted their Warrant Articles and thus we can anticipate more requests.

The Committees next discussed the budget process in general. It was noted that it appears our forecasts will be accurate and that the Town will have a \$1 million dollar shortfall. It was generally agreed that educating the Town’s citizens as to what a \$1 million dollar shortfall looks like and what we will lose is critical this year and that that education process begin much earlier than last year. It was agreed that the Board of Selectmen, School Department and Finance Committee should meet to form a joint documentation of the facts and present a coherent consensus to the Town.

There being no further business for the Finance Committee to discuss, and upon motion duly made by Ray Bricault and seconded by Ellen Dunlap, the Finance Committee meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

The Capital Investment Board continued with their meeting and discussed the Summary of Needs Revised presented by Mr. Bricault. It was noted that the Town’s average capital requests equal approximately \$500,000.

Further, it was noted that it appears the Building Committee is leaning towards recommending that the Mixter Building be torn down and a new Town Hall be built on the same site.

There being no further business for the Finance Committee to discuss, and upon motion duly made by Pat Crowley and seconded by Patricia Altomare, the Capital Investment Board meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Patricia Altomare, Clerk
Finance Committee
Capital Investment Board