

TOWN OF WEST BOYLSTON

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Minutes of Meeting held July 22, 2009

Upon notice duly posted, the Finance Committee of the Town of West Boylston met on July 22, 2009 immediately after the Town Informational Meeting relative to the possible purchase of a new town hall. Committee members present were Ray Bricault, Chris Berglund, Mychelle Phillips, Pat Crowley, Julie Doherty and Patricia Altomare. Guest: Leon Gaumond.

The Chairman, Chris Berglund called the meeting to order and opened the discussion to thoughts about the Informational meeting and the purchase of a new town hall. The members questioned whether the expected cost projections were accurate in that it was believed that the space we are looking at is now empty and thus, we do not have a cost analysis based on an occupied building. Likewise, the members questioned the value of the purchase price and whether we could obtain the building for less than \$2.2 million. It was estimated that the purchase would mean a 2% or \$400,000 increase in the town budget annually, although this figure would not directly affect the town budget due to the fact that this would be financed via a debt exclusion. It was estimated that the debt exclusion would cost the average home owner in town (average home cost being \$250,000) \$140 per year. The Finance Committee also raised the issue of the town's poor history of maintaining their buildings i.e. the Mixter Building and noted that we needed to factor in the cost of owning versus having a landlord to make repairs on our behalf.

Ray Bricault raised the question as to the role the Finance Committee needs to take in this process. Should we independently look at the numbers and not rely on the numbers being presented? The Chairman noted that Greg Zakarian is preparing a detailed financial analysis and that it should be ready next week.

Julie Doherty noted that the location was not ideal for a town hall but, from a financial perspective, honed the issues to two questions: 1. Is the price a good value? And 2. Can we afford it? Pat Crowley responded that the value is a question for a broker and that we can afford whatever the town's people want to pull out of their pockets.

Leon Gaumond advised the Finance Committee that it is realistic to expect that we will get some grant funds, as much as \$800,000, for the senior center portion of the new town hall. Mr. Gaumond also noted that he was hopeful we could buy the property for less than the \$2.2 million asking price.

The Chairman concluded the meeting by indicating that he would present to the town the cost of such a purchase but that there were several other factors to consider, such as the location, that were not financial in nature and thus, not possible for us, as a Committee, to

make a recommendation regarding the purchase. Fiscally, the bottom line is that it will be an additional cost to the town.

There be no further business to discuss, upon motion duly made and seconded the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Patricia Altomare
Clerk of Finance Committee