

FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES

APRIL 23, 2013

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 PM in the Selectmen's Meeting Room of Town Hall. The following members were present: Ken Szajda, Michelle Zeamer, Charles Kaslow and Dan Alfred. Michelle Johnson was absent from the meeting.

Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Dan Alfred, made a MOTION to approve payment of a bill submitted by Faith Antonioli for the minutes of 4/4/13, totaling 2 hrs. Passed 4-0-0.

Chairman Ken Szajda reported that he had received a letter from Kathleen White, stating that she was resigning from the Finance Committee effective April 23, 2013.

Town Clerk Elizabeth Greendale was at the meeting to present additional information on the part time clerical position which she is requesting to retain in her FY14 budget. She reported the figures for revenues brought in by fees collected from a backlog of work that the additional clerical was able to do - it has brought in an additional \$7000 the first 3 months of this year over last year. The additional revenue would more than support the position; but Ken Szajda asked how much of the revenue was from the backlog (i.e. \$1510.00 was from business certificates that Mrs. Greendale had not had the staff to go after the last few years). Ken Szajda also questioned the dog license processing, in regards to those who don't license their dogs. He also asked if this person is needed certain times of the year more than others, but the Town Clerk responded that there are always different issues throughout the year. The Town Clerk's office receives information from veterinarians regarding dogs that have received immunization for rabies and maintains this database to determine who has licensed dogs. Dan Alfred asked Mrs. Greendale if she had looked into the possibility of increasing the late fees for unlicensed dogs and she said she would poll the surrounding towns. The FinComm asked Mrs. Greendale to look at the figures as to how much revenue is generated because of the extra position, not the revenue from the backlog. They would like it before town meeting. She said she would get back to them with that information. Ken Szajda asked FinComm members what they wanted to do about this position for FY14 budget purposes - Charlie Kaslow and Ken Szajda think more information is needed before deciding; Dan Alfred thinks Mrs. Greendale showed the need for it for now, but it needs to be revisited next year to see if the need is still there. Up until a few years ago, there was a third person in the Town Clerk's office, working 20 - 24 hrs. a week with benefits; then it was cut to 18 hrs. with no benefits. Ken Szajda said that there will need to be data to justify the extra clerical hours next year. FinComm wants to see the figures for on-going additional revenues vs. one time catch up revenues. Michelle Zeamer asked about any catch-up money that is not repeating and was told that the businesses certificates are renewed every 4 years and dog licenses are yearly, but Mrs. Greendale cannot go after money from past years that dogs may not have been licensed, only the present year. Ken Szajda asked Mrs. Greendale to keep track of monthly processing.

Police Chief Moore came to the meeting to inform FinComm that a member of the Police Dept. has resigned and this will reduce the allocation in the personnel line of Personal Services by

\$78,939.41. Chief Moore said that he felt that the best way to fill the gap would be by hiring a 3rd and 4th dispatcher. He had already built the addition of a 3rd dispatcher into the FY14 budget, but had to decrease overtime. With that salary allocation, he could add a 4th dispatcher and put the remaining money into overtime. With the additional dispatcher, he would not have to fill any slots on any shifts if only one officer is out. Of the 21 shifts per week, there would be only 2 shifts that would not have a dispatcher - 2 weekend day shifts. The Chief would like to make one of the dispatchers the "head" dispatcher and this person would not work weekends. The Chief added that for FY14, he would like to increase Office Supplies by \$1000 Office and decrease Vehicles Repairs and Professional Development. Ken Szajda asked Chief Moore where he thinks FY13 will be regarding overtime and he said that to being about 82% into the fiscal year, he has expended about 84% of the overtime budget. Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Charlie Kaslow, made a MOTION to recommend the Police Dept. budget for FY14 in the amount of \$2,355,355. Passed 4-0-0.

With the Town Clerk's FY14 budget, there is data collection and analysis to be done to see if the position is justified; to make the position permanent, additional data is necessary for next year. Charlie Kaslow questioned whether it was a temporary or permanent position when voted in; it seems to be a maintenance position, not a catch-up one. Dan Alfred agreed that there needs to be more data, but that the case was made for the position for now as it brings in the revenue. He would like to fund it for at least another year and look at more data. Ken Szajda wants the data to show whether it is catch-up revenue or on-going revenue that has been generated with this position. He is leaning towards continuing it for the year, but not continuing it after that without the data. Charlie Kaslow feels that he doesn't have enough information to make a decision; the best he could do would be abstain. Ken Szajda said that the position clearly generated revenue, but has no idea how much, to know if it justifies the position. FinComm needs to know what level the position needs to be funded to keep current. Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Dan Alfred, made a MOTION to reconsider the recommendation for the FY14 Town Clerk's budget. Passed 4-0-0. Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Dan Alfred, made a Motion to recommend the Town Clerk budget for FY14 in the amount of \$131,063. Passed 3-0-1 (C. Kaslow abs.)

Charlie Kaslow then asked about the School Budget and if any compromises had been reached. If it didn't need to be as tight, it could make a difference with a different budget (Council on Aging) and he would perhaps ask that FinComm look at it again. Ken Szajda commented that the "getting to 0" being the maximum that could be given to the schools has to be taken in the context of available funds. From that "0", what's fair and what else does we fund.

The Water Dept. adjusted and reduced their FY14 budget and are now \$2507 below the guideline. There is only a \$300.00 deficit in the operating budget. FinComm needs to address a capital plan with Water. They discussed suggesting a water rate increase at the June rate hearing with them or cutting the allocation. FinComm could wait until the fall when there will be a new Water Superintendent and new Commissioner. FinComm decided to vote in the numbers and revisit the rates. Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Dan Alfred, made a MOTION to

recommend the Water Department budget for FY14 in the amount of \$2,507,730. Passed 4-0-0.

Ken Szajda said that there was an issue with the Board of Health FY14 budget. The amount voted on is over the guideline at \$127,405 because the money added to start up the Sharps disposal program was in FY13 budget and guideline added onto that, but it should not have been. The number should be \$125,084. Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Charlie Kaslow, made a MOTION to reconsider the recommendation for the FY14 Board of Health's budget. Passed 4-0-0. Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Dan Alfred, made a MOTION to recommend to recommend the Board of Health budget for FY14 in the amount of \$125,084. Passed 4-0-0. At this point, assuming the School's requested budget, there is a \$281,000 deficit in the budget.

The FinComm then voted on the following Warrant Articles:

Art. 2 - Dan Alfred, seconded by Michelle Zeamer, made a MOTION to recommend favorable action on Art. 2, the Report of the Finance Committee. Passed 4-0-0.

Art. 5 - Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Dan Alfred, made a MOTION to recommend favorable action on Art. 5, the town's Wage Table. Passed 4-0-0.

Art. 6 - Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Dan Alfred, made a MOTION to recommend that the town raise and appropriate \$12,548 to pay unpaid bills from prior fiscal years. Passed 4-0-0.

Art. 7- Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Charlie Kaslow, made a MOTION to recommend indefinite postponement of Art 7. Passed 4-0-0.

Art. 9- Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Dan Alfred, made a MOTION to recommend favorable action on Art. 9. This article relates to Chapter 90 state aid funds. Passed 4-0-0.

Art. 10 - Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Charlie Kaslow, made a MOTION to recommend favorable action on Art. 10. This article relates to the revolving accounts. Passed 4-0-0.

Art. 14 - Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Dan Alfred, made a MOTION to recommend favorable action Art. 14, on a trash fee not to exceed \$80.00. Passed 4-0-0,

Art. 15 - Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Charlie Kaslow, made a MOTION to recommend favorable action on Art. 15, the Omnibus budget. Passed 4-0-0.

Art. 16- Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Dan Alfred, made a MOTION to make a recommendation at Town Meeting on Art. 16

Art. 17 - Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Charlie Kaslow, made a MOTION to recommend favorable action on Art. 17, that the town appropriate \$13,000 from the Community Preservation fund for Civil War memorial and Civil War era graves and appropriate \$100,000 from the Community Preservation fund for acquisition of land of Meadowbrook Lane. Passed 4-0-0.

Art 18 - Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Dan Alfred, made a MOTION to recommend that the town raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,500,000 for the purposes stated in Art. 18. Passed 4-0-0.

Art. 19 - Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Charlie Kaslow, made a MOTION to recommend that the town raise and appropriate the sum of \$550,000 for the purposes stated in Art. 19. Passed 4-0-0.

Art. 20 - Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Charlie Kaslow, made a MOTION to recommend indefinite postponement of Art. 20. Passed 4-0-0.

Art. 21 - Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Dan Alfred, made a MOTION to make a recommendation at Town Meeting on Art. 21. This article relates to an impact study regarding the Milford Casino. Passed 4-0-0.

Art. 22- Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Dan Alfred, made a MOTION to recommend that the town appropriate the sum of \$272,335 from FY12 Highway Dept. encumbered account for road repairs. Passed 4-0-0.

Art. 23 - Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Dan Alfred, made a MOTION to recommend that the town raise and appropriate \$40,000 for the purposes stated in Art. 23. Passed 4-0-0.

Art. 24 - Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Charlie Kaslow, made a MOTION that the town appropriate a sum of \$250,000 from the Open Space fund for the purchase of land described in Art. 24. Passed 4-0-0.

Art. 29 - Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Charlie Kaslow, made a MOTION to make a recommendation at Town Meeting on Art. 29. Passed 4-0-0.

FinComm members discussed the Schools. Charlie Kaslow asked if there had been any input from the School Committee and was told the budget subcommittee would be meeting again. Dan Alfred asked if the Schools would rather have more money in their operating budget or in the capital. At the next meeting, FinComm will look at school budget adjustments and work on the message for the Finance report.

At 10:30 PM, Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Charlie Kaslow, made a MOTION to adjourn the meeting. Passed 4-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Faith Antonioli, Secretary

Date Approved: May 14, 2013