

**FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES  
FEBRUARY 8, 2011**

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM in the meeting room of Lower Town Hall. The following members were present: Ken Szajda, Jay Leary, Jim Crews, Tom Meehan, Gordon Johnson, Mark Schultz and Pam Zicko.

Jay Leary, seconded by Mark Schultz, made a MOTION to approve the minutes of the January 18, 2011 meeting. Passed 5-0-2(T. Meehan, P. Zicko, abs).

Jay Leary, seconded by Tom Meehan, made a MOTION to approve payment of a bill submitted by Faith Antonioli, for meetings and minutes for the month of January totaling 5.75 hrs. Passed 7-0-0.

David Nalchajian, the Town Accountant, presented his budget, which met the level funded guideline. He took away the part time clerical and moved some money to purchase services. He wants to purchase a MUNIS module that runs a revenue recognition program and to upgrade Microsoft Office from the 2003 version now being used. FinComm asked if he had spoken to Chuck Corman about this. With the level funded guideline, he has not been able to move forward with the following goals he had for his dept.: 1-more timely reporting of account info to the town by purchasing a requisition module from MUNIS. He would need about \$7000 for this - \$4500 for the MUNIS module, \$1375 for implementation and \$900 for annual support. 2 – a restructuring of the chart of accounts, as the town is not in compliance in certain areas. This is not feasible at this time because David would need more staff. Mark Schultz asked if the rest of the town uses the 2003 version of Microsoft and was told that they do. He also asked if the MUNIS project would be the same no matter who hosted it and was told that it would be. Gordon Johnson asked about the possibility of Enterprise Funds with the Water Dept. and the Ambulance and how it would impact his office. David said that the biggest change with Enterprise Accounting is that fixed assets become depreciable, which they aren't now, so there would need to be a reporting module that rolls out of MUNIS; and at the end of the fiscal year their free cash must be certified, as does the rest of the town's. He said that he could support Enterprise accounting under his existing budget. Jay Leary asked about the cost of upgrading Microsoft 2003 and would it be cheaper if done under the schools. Jay asked who would be responsible for reporting the over-sight of the Enterprise Funds and there seems to be no definitive answer at this time. Once the Enterprise Fund is approved, it's locked in for 3 years, but does not have to be implemented when voted in, however it must be implemented at the start of a fiscal year. Jay also asked David if he could share a part time clerical person. When asked what he needed to do the job the way he believed it should be done, David said that he would need additional staff 10-15 hrs. per week and would get the cost figures to Jay. Jim Crews asked how much time the Water Dept. had spent with him to discuss the impact on his office and David said that there had been several discussions. FinComm would like David to meet with the FinComm at a later date to answer some accounting questions and give quarterly reports on town depts.

Mary Bousquet presented the Treasurer/Collector's budget. Mary said that the budget met the guideline. The Assistant Treasurer has been cut back to 26 hrs. from 28. The extra clerical was eliminated. The communications line is down \$500. Professional development is up \$50. Pam Zicko asked about the reduction in hrs. for the Asst. Treasurer and Mary said that the position had started at 35 hrs. a week and has been decreasing with the budget. Pam asked what Mary would want if more money became available and she replied that she would want the Asst. Treasurer back to 28 hrs. a week (\$2600) and the part time clerical back, totaling \$4200 for both.

Mary Bousquet then presented the Debt Service budget, which does not include the \$850,000 for the new ladder truck. Gordon Johnson complemented Mary on this budget. Jay Leary asked her if she were on board with the Enterprise Fund and she said she has no idea how it will impact her office. Tom Meehan asked if there was anything coming up that could affect the town's bond rating and she said that she didn't know of anything. Debt should take a dip in 2021.

Mary Bousquet then presented the Benefits budget, explaining how she arrived at the various figures. She said that the health insurance rates won't be set until 2/17, but she used an 8% increase for her figures. Jim Crews asked whether they would need to set up a separate account outside of Middlesex County retirement. Tom Meehan asked how the town's insurance costs compare with the state plan and Mary said that there was about a \$200,000 difference – the town's was better. Gordon Johnson asked where the town falls with Workers' Comp.

Karen Sherman presented the Planning Board's budget. There are 2 employees – Karen, who works 30 hrs. a week and a part time clerical. They just hired a new part time clerk, who came in at grade 5; the prior clerk, who left, was a grade 8 – this created a savings. Karen said that there are some new mandates coming that will affect the board. There is a new bill that mandates master planning. She said that they have parts of a master plan, but may have to write one to cover other areas. Housing and Open Space have developed plans that can be integrated into the Master Plan. Water has some plans also. There is also a mandate coming from the EPA regarding storm water drainage which goes into effect July 1, 2011 and the town will then have 90 days to respond and file a permit. Karen asked if the new plan could be considered a capital project. Mark Schultz asked about the last master plan, which was written in 1999 and cost \$75,000. He asked if they can do incremental updates and was told yes.

Paul LeBeau presented the Motor Vehicle Fuels which is level funded. He is concerned that level funding will not cover the year because of the rising cost of fuel. Each 10 cent increase in fuel cost drives the budget up \$4400. They need to track the market. Also, the consumption of diesel fuel for January was twice that of December's. There are concerns with the FY11 budget. Paul said that he does not think that the budget is sufficient. It needs to be supplemented – if \$22,000 were added, it could withstand about \$3.00 per gallon.

Paul LeBeau presented the Snow & Ice budget. It is \$200,000, which it has been since FY05. The average annual expenditure from 2000-2010 has been \$290,000. \$50,000 has been transferred from the Reserves to Snow & Ice the last 10 years. FinComm is considering increasing it to \$250,000.

The Wastewater budget is level funded. Paul LeBeau said it will be close. There is some credit coming back from NStar because they billed the town at the wrong rate.

The Sealer's budget of \$1000 is level funded.

Animal Control's budget is all contracted services with Ashland.

The Public Buildings budget at level funding is ignoring the needs of the clubhouse at the golf course. It's 10 years old and has some maintenance issues. Much of the kitchen equipment needs to be replaced. Paul and the FinComm discussed the possibility of increasing the budget by \$10,000 - \$15,000.

FinComm briefly discussed the Enterprise Fund. It will take financial expertise to maintain and it needs to be determined whether this will come from the Town Accountant or someone in the Water Dept. FinComm wants more detailed answers to some of their question and wants to see a plan showing how responsibilities will be divided up.

At 10:50 PM. Pam Zicko, seconded by Mark Schultz, made a MOTION to adjourn the meeting. Passed 7-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,  
Faith Antonioli, Secretary

Date Approved: March 1, 2011