

JOINT BOARD OF SELECTMEN AND FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
7/14/10

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Meeting Date: July 14, 2010

Called to Order: 6:02 PM

Finance Committee Members Present: Andrew Killeen, Lynn Reynolds and Michael Naughton

Board of Selectmen Members Present: Pat Allen, Chris Boutwell and Mark Fairbrother

Others Present: Frank Abbondanzio (Town Administrator) and Carolyn Olsen (Town Accountant)

Minutes

Board of Selectmen Moved:

To approve the minutes of May 5, 2010.

Vote: 2 In Favor 0 Opposed 1 Abstained

Finance Committee Moved:

To approve the minutes of June 23, 2010.

Vote: 3 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Special Town Meeting Warrant

Board of Selectmen Moved:

To set the date for a Special Town Meeting as August 5, 2010 at 7:00 PM in the High School Theater.

Vote: 3 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Board of Selectmen Moved:

To place the following article on the Special Town Meeting Warrant:

“To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, borrow or otherwise provide the sum of \$386,316, or any other amount, for the purpose of supplementing the appropriation made under Article 11 of the June 5, 2010 annual town meeting for Montague’s share of the assessment for the yearly operation of the Gill Montague Regional School District. Said additional sum being necessary to fund the Gill Montague Regional School District assessment of \$7,616,643 as voted by the Gill Montague Regional School District Committee on June 22, 2010 or pass any vote or votes in relation thereto.”

Vote: 3 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Other Selectboard Business

Board of Selectmen Moved:

To recognize that Ernie Brown, as Chair of the Zoning Board of Appeals, is a Special Municipal Employee and therefore he does not have a conflict of interest regarding the letter of July 14, 2010.

Vote: 2 In Favor 1 Opposed 0 Abstained

Mr. Fairbrother feels it would be simpler for Mr. Brown to recuse himself from the discussion.

Sewer Costs

The Erving Selectmen notified Montague that they recently voted to increase Montague's cost for the treatment of Millers Falls' wastewater at the Erving facility by approximately \$230,000 per year beginning in Fiscal Y2012. The increased cost reflects a portion of the debt service for Erving's recent \$6 million improvement project at their facility. It might be more cost effective for Montague to build a pump station to divert the flow from Millers Falls to our own facility.

Impact of Final State Budget on Montague

The final local aid figures in the approved state budget are slightly higher than the numbers used in preparing Montague's Fiscal Year 2011 budget. Estimate local receipts are being adjusted slightly downward for a zero net effect.

Gill-Montague Regional School District Budget Update

Pending final agreement between the Gill-Montague Regional School District and both towns on a Fiscal Year 2011 budget for the District, the state's Division of Elementary and Secondary Education has set a 1/12th budget for the Gill-Montague Regional School District that is equal to the School Committee's requested budget. The requested assessment to Montague is \$386,316 more than the current town appropriation.

Ms. Allen feels that some members of the School Committee may have voted to maintain their current budget request in order to keep the state involved.

Mr. Naughton reported that the Technical Committee met with State Representatives in June. The committee impressed on them that the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education should be more proactive in helping the district work on their problems. The Representatives agreed, met with the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, and told them to work with the District and present something by November 1st.

The Technical Committee does not see that coming up with more money this year for a compromise budget will help, but will only prolong the agony. Their recommendation is for Town Meeting to turn down the School Committee's requested budget in order to keep the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education as involved as possible.

A lengthy discussion ensued about pros and cons of whether a compromise proposal would be better or worse than a simple no vote on the special article. The compromise was discussed and it did receive some support which is to be revisited at the next meeting on July 28th.

Mr. Naughton suggested that a vote for a recommendation on the Special Article be postponed to July 28th when one more Finance Committee member will be present.

Target for Reserve Use for FY2012 Budget has been postponed pending vote on recommended FY11 GMRSD Assessment.

General FY2012 Budget

Suggestions and questions regarding consolidation or re-design tasks were due by July 14th. None have been received, and the deadline has been extended by two weeks.

Reorganization of the Finance Committee has been postponed.

Listing of Documents and Exhibits

- Stabilization balance estimates for funding various amounts for the Fiscal Year 2011 Gill-Montague Assessment and a summary of Stabilization funds used for Fiscal Year 2011.

Next Meetings:

July 28, August 11, August 25, September 8

Adjourned at 7:15 PM

Respectfully Submitted,
Carolyn Olsen