

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

August 22, 2012

Page 1 of 4

Meeting Date: August 22, 2012

Called to Order: 6:03 PM

Location: 1 Avenue A, Turners Falls MA

Finance Committee Members Present: John Hanold, Michael Naughton, Roy Rosenblatt, Lynn Reynolds and Greg Garrison

Others Present: Frank Abbondanzio (Town Administrator), Carolyn Olsen (Town Accountant), Walter Ramsey (Director of Planning & Community Development) and Charles Dodge (Acting Chief of Police)

Minutes

Finance Committee Moved:

To approve the minutes of August 15, 2012.

Vote: 5 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Special Town Meeting

Article #9 Appropriate \$35,000 to demolish, abate and remove collapsed former Strathmore Mill Building #10. This is eligible for a low-interest loan through the Brownfields grant, but we are not required to borrow the funds.

Mr. Ramsey gave a brief overview about this article. The original estimated cost was lower than the lowest bid received. The original estimate came from Tighe and Bond; there was discussion about how confident the town might be in employing them in a similar capacity in the future. It was noted that this and other experiences would likely influence that decision.

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend appropriating \$35,000 to demolish, abate and remove collapsed former Strathmore Mill Building #10, to be funded from taxation.

Vote: 5 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Article #10 Appropriate \$1,500 to purchase Board of Directors Insurance for the Montague Economic Development and Industrial Corporation. Mr. Rosenblatt and Ms. Reynolds recused themselves.

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend appropriating \$1,500 to purchase Board of Directors Insurance for the Montague Economic Development and Industrial Corporation, to be funded from taxation.

Vote: 3 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Article #1 Appropriate \$160,000 to reduce sewer rates.

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

August 22, 2012

Page 2 of 4

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend using \$160,000 to reduce the Fiscal Year 2013 sewer rates, to be funded from Sewer Retained Earnings.

Vote: 5 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Article #2 Change funding source of #12 5/5/12 (4th Dewatering Zone) from Sewer Borrowing to Sewer Retained Earnings. It was noted that even after these two articles, Sewer Retained Earnings has a higher balance than it has had in recent years.

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend changing the funding source of #12 5/5/12 (4th Dewatering Zone) from Sewer Borrowing to Sewer Retained Earnings.

Vote: 5 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Article #3 Rescind remaining \$849,500 of borrowing authority for #6 6/9/05 (CSO Project).

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend rescinding the remaining \$849,500 of borrowing authority for Article #6 6/9/05 (CSO Project).

Vote: 5 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Article #4 Ratify agreement with First Light on valuations.

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend ratifying the agreement with First Light for valuations.

Vote: 5 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Article #5 Appropriate \$4,500 to modify backstop at Unity Park. The Finance Committee decided to pass over this article as there was not enough information available to make a decision.

Article #8 Appropriate \$6,600 to fund the Police Chief Assessment Center.

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend appropriating \$6,600 to fund the Police Chief Assessment Center, to be funded from taxation.

Vote: 5 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Article #14 Establish a revolving fund for receipts related to the Town's recycling program through the Franklin County Solid Waste Management District. This was prompted by the state Department of Revenue's determination that the town should receive payments directly from the recycling facility, rather than having them channeled through the FRCOG. A revolving fund is one way of doing this.

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

August 22, 2012

Page 3 of 4

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend establishing a revolving fund for receipts related to the Town's recycling program through the Franklin County Solid Waste Management District, with a limit of \$15,000 per year in expenditures.

Vote: 5 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Article #11 Amend Town Bylaw Article II Section 2 by replacing "consisting of 9 residents" with "consisting of at least 5 residents" in the first sentence and inserting "A quorum of this committee shall be a majority of the current appointees" after the second sentence. It was noted that the two sections of this article were previously voted on separately, and that the majority votes were made by different individuals in each case.

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend amending the Town Bylaw Article II Section 2 by replacing "consisting of 9 residents" with "consisting of at least 5 residents" in the first sentence and inserting "A quorum of this committee shall be a majority of the current appointees" after the second sentence.

Vote: 4 In Favor 1 Opposed 0 Abstained

Article #6 Appropriate \$2,190 to increase Fiscal Year 2013 Dispatch budget. Turners Falls Fire District will reimburse town for \$0.50/hour stipend for dispatchers to handle district calls beginning January 1, 2013. This has been discussed for some time, but an agreement with the Turners Falls Fire District was only recently reached. There was discussion about how the \$0.50/hour figure was arrived at; Chief Dodge noted that it was his suggestion, and that he hoped to raise it at next year's negotiations in March. The committee recommended that efforts be made to assess the impact of the additional workload on the dispatchers, in order to determine a fair compensation. The committee also endorsed the idea of using compensation from the fire district to make the dispatchers' pay more competitive.

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend appropriating \$2,190 as a supplemental appropriation to the Fiscal Year 2013 Dispatch Budget, to be funded from taxation.

Vote: 5 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Article #7 Appropriate \$15,000 to purchase the current Police Chief's cruiser. The current vehicle has many problems and may not be road-worthy even with significant repairs. Chief Dodge would like to get a SUV if possible, but will work within the allotted amount. Mr. Hanold will talk to the Moderator to see what latitude will be given in raising the dollar amount on town meeting floor, as the committee would like to see the Chief have sufficient funds for a decent vehicle.

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
August 22, 2012

Page 4 of 4

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend appropriating \$15,000 to purchase a vehicle for the Police Chief,
to be funded from taxation.

Vote: 5 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Unanticipated items: none

Meeting Adjourned at 7:30 PM

List of Documents and Exhibits –

- Minutes of August 15, 2012
- Special Town Meeting Warrant

Next Meetings

- September 12th (Ms. Olsen will not be at the September 12th meeting)
- September 26th
- October 10th
- October 24th