

JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE AND BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
May 8, 2013

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Meeting Date: May 8, 2013

Called to Order: 6:00 PM

Location: 1 Avenue A, Turners Falls MA

Finance Committee Members Present: John Hanold, Michael Naughton and Sharon Kennaugh. Lynn Reynolds and Greg Garrison were absent.

Board of Selectmen Members Present: Christopher Boutwell and Patricia Allen. Mark Fairbrother was absent.

Others Present:

Town Administrator Frank Administrator, Town Accountant Carolyn Olsen

Minutes

Selectmen Moved:

To approve the minutes of April 17, 2013 as amended.

Vote: 1 In Favor 0 Opposed 1 Abstained

Selectmen Moved:

To approve the minutes of May 1, 2013.

Vote: 1 In Favor 0 Opposed 1 Abstained

Finance Committee Moved:

To approve the minutes of May 1, 2013.

Vote: 3 In Favor 0 Opposed Abstained

Town Meeting Follow Up

There seems to be a strong desire that the Finance Committee make one clear, comprehensive statement to the Gill-Montague Regional School District about what information we need. Mr. Hanold would like to invite the new Superintendent Michael Sullivan to a meeting.

Ms. Allen thought Ms. Phillips was pretty clear that she was open to providing more information. The biggest number that was missing was the number of school choice students going into and out of the district.

Community Preservation Act Update

Ms. Kennaugh followed up with the Town Planner about the possibility of the town adopting the Community Preservation Act.

- This is financed through the state by fees attached to property transfers. The state then allocates the money to towns that have adopted the program. There is also an additional assessment of between 1% and 3% on the tax levy for communities that adopt this, although many towns have exemptions for low income taxpayers.
- This program has been in existence for over ten years.
- Mr. Ramsey said he didn't think there was any enthusiasm in town for adopting this. The state match has ranged from 35% to 100% of the town's collections through real estate taxes.

- Ms. Allen thinks we should ask people again. Mr. Boutwell knows of one town that now wants to opt out because of the impact on the tax rate. Mr. Naughton is in favor of further research.
- Mr. Naughton would like a clearer idea of exactly what the available exemptions are.
- Ms. Olsen offered to look into the numbers and what the impact would be to different taxpayers.

Topics not Anticipated

Mr. Hanold said there's been talk about what our financial state is as a town and how we meet our savings goals.

- Mr. Hanold provided a draft Montague Financial Policies including a section on financial health and whether we meet proposed targets.
- Ms. Allen suggested a section on the Water Pollution Control Facility with a projected savings level for them as well.
- Ms. Allen also suggested it would be useful to know the budgets and reserves of the fire districts.

Summer Schedule –May 22, 2013

June 5, 2013

June 19, 2013

July 10, 2013 – last date for transfers for Fiscal Year 2013

August 7, 2013

August 28, 2013

September 11, 2013

Mr. Hanold encouraged members to consider anything to add to the budget process.

Meeting Adjourned at 6:44 PM

List of Documents and Exhibits

- Minutes May 1, 2013
- Handout from Community Preservation Coalition
- Handout from John Hanold – draft Montague Financial Policies

Next Meeting

May 22, 2013