

Finance Committee Meeting Tuesday October 8, 2013

Chairman John F. Doherty called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Members present were Theresa M. Manganelli, Victoria L. Ellsworth, Jonathan R. Eaton, Robert P. Palmer, Richard K. Hayden, Jordan Weiner, Bernard P. Nally Jr. Not present: William J. Wallace,

Also present were Jeffery Hull, Town Manager, Kendra Amaral, Assistant Town Manager, Michael Morris, Town Accountant

Motion to accept the minutes from March 5, 2013 made by Ms. Maganelli, seconded by Ms. Ellsworth.

Motion: Approved with no discussion.

Motion to accept the minutes from March 19, 2013 made by Ms. Ellsworth, seconded by Mr. Eaton.

Motion: Approved with no discussion.

Motion to accept the minutes from July 1, 2013 made by Mr. Eaton, seconded by Mr. Weiner.

Motion: Approved with no discussion.

Mr. Jeffrey Hull provided an update on the 2014 budget. The budget currently on track. The one budget we have being watched closely at this point is the fire overtime. Last year the Town transferred \$250,000 to the overtime account. At this point the expectation is that the amount in overtime is tracking close to what it was last year. Mr. Hull - Explained the domino effect from year to year of retirements and turnover. The lengthy process and restrictions on hiring civil service positions has contributed to the challenge. There are also three individuals out on medical or injury leave, making the department short staffed, and causing the overtime issue. The Town has hired 5 individuals who are EMT certified. The new hires can go out on medical calls, but can not go out on fire calls until they attend the fire academy.

Mr. Doherty – Asked how much notice did the personnel who left give? Mr. Hull - Explained that it varied. Notices were anywhere from one day notice, to weeks, to several months. Brief discussion on the process and decisions made regarding how and when to fill the open positions. This overtime issue will remain present for a period of time. Four additional employees are scheduled to retire over the next year.

Mr. Doherty - Asked if there is a difference between what is projected and what is actually coming in for new growth in the tax levy. Mr. Morris - Explained that new growth is up approximately \$150,000.

Mr. Hull - Provided a brief summary of the O’Rielly appeal of the High School project and the potential for future appeals if any. Aside from the fact of a year delay, the project is still on track for February 2015 to move students into the new building. That spring or shortly thereafter the current high school will be demolished. All site work is scheduled to be complete by fall 2015. The

budget is still on track as projected. Brief discussion of the possibility of addressing Mr. Lingenfelter's claims about the AUL.

Ms. Manganelli – Asked if the Town water runs down by Mr. O'Reilly's property. It does not. A brief discussion of where the water service is in that area.

Mr. Doherty – Inquired about Special Town meeting warrants. Mr. Hull - Explained there are three warrants.

The first article, is to purchase property adjacent to St. Dorothy's property. Property appraised value is between \$1,850,00 and \$1,900,000. The Selectmen signed a Purchase & Sales agreement with the Archdiocese. The Town is in the final stages of environmental assessment, to make sure there are not any issues. The one area there were some level of concern was at AAA Tire, across Main Street. Prior to AAA there was an auto repair garage. Five tanks were removed in the late 1980's and early 1990's. Nothing has come back, negative at this point.

Mr. Weiner – Inquired if there are there any plans for the current building which is on the property. Mr. Hull - Stated there are no immediate plans, but there are a number of possibilities.

Mr. Nally - Asked if there are any restrictions from the church on uses of the property. It cannot be used for an abortion clinic or religious purposes. Brief discussion on the current church and its property.

Mr. Nally - Asked what the purchase price is. \$1,725,000, which is expected to be taken from free cash. Closing will be scheduled for December 2013.

Mr. Hull described the second Article for the Special Town Meeting.

Mr. Nally – Asked if the property owner could develop the property now. They could but not for personal services use. There are a couple of easements for water and sewer that need to be signed off.

Mr. Hull - Described the third Article for the Special Town Meeting. The owners would like to change the parcel from residential to business use.

Mr. Doherty - Noted there were three potential articles submitted to the Town Clerk's office but did not come with signatures.

Mr. Hull - Explained that there were four submitted to the Clerk's Office without signatures. The Town has not heard from Mr. Nelson regarding possible petition articles for the Special Town Meeting.

Mr. Doherty - Asked if the format for the budget change. Mr. Hull - Explained some reports will stay the same, others will be changed and some reports which are not necessary will not be produced. The FY2015 budget package will include a five-year capital improvement program.

Mr. Doherty - Inquired if there are any plans for any other buildings. No, the Town's focus is on the high school and paying down the debt. There will be a broader look at various buildings, town hall, senior center, and others.

Mr. Hayden – Asked for an update on Yentile farm property. Brief discussion of the plan and process. The options may include athletic field, walking trails. The Yentile Farm Development Committee will then figure out how funds will be raised either by grant, donations, etc.

Mr. Doherty - Asked about the progress with establishing human resources. Ms. Amaral - Explained her position is both Assistant Town Manager and Director of Human Resources. Brief summary of current training, including mandatory customer service training for Town employees. The training program will continue every month until June. The training sessions have been received well by employees. Working on policies is ongoing.

Mr. Doherty – Asked if customer service training was mandatory? It was mandatory for managers and staff, in every department excepting Police and Fire which have more specific service requirements. Brief explanation of the Wellness Committee.

Mr. Doherty – Asked if employees are participating and enjoying the programs. Ms. Amaral - Explained that employees are providing positive feedback from these training classes.

Mr. Doherty - Asked if the school department was involved in the trainings. No, the school department is separate in terms of professional development. They have different needs and requirements established by the state.

Ms. Manganelli – Inquired how employees on the front lines that may not be projecting the image you want them to be identified. The Town is working on developing a customer feedback program, which will take approximately one year to get up and running.

Mr. Nally – Asked if the Town continues to plow churches. Mr. Hull - Stated that this year the intention is to plow. The Board of Selectmen do not want to see a change.

Mr. Doherty - Asked if the Town is requiring churches to provide coverage for the town and add them as additional insured. Brief discussion on insurance liability coverage, how it's handled. Naming the Town would be no cost to the church. Mr. Hull - Would like to confirm that there is no cost to the churches or if there is a cost, that would it be minimal before instituting such a requirement.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Ms. Manganelli, seconded by Mr. Nally, and by the affirmative vote of all, it was.

VOTED: That the Finance Committee adjourned 8:16 p.m.