

Finance Committee Meeting
February 5, 2015
Minutes

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

Also Present: Kendra Amaral, Assistant Town Manager

Planning & Conservation

PRESENT IN INTEREST: Valerie Gingrich, Director of Planning & Conservation

Ms. Amaral – Introduced new Planning Director Valerie Gingrich. Due to her being just hired and not involved in the development of the FY16 budget, Ms. Amaral will present it.

The department budget up overall \$4,000. Advertising and Printing when up due a plan to work on map of trails. This came up as a key item from the surveys and public workshops conducted for Yentile Farm project. Training and conference is also increased to cover staff training; specifically around writing defensible decisions, understanding how to run a public hearing, understanding all legal requirements around the authority of the land use boards. Hope to get someone in or have employee's go out for more training.

Mr. Doherty – Asked what the new Director's take on the job and goals. The Town has great people. Will be looking at updates to zoning and bylaws to reflect today's usage of properties, conduct some housekeeping with zoning. Is working hard to have strategies for housing which may be accomplished through zoning changes. Will focus on new development and redevelopment. Coming up there is new development in front of the Planning Board, which consist of new restaurants, Dog Day Care, Osram moving into 200 Ballardvale.

Mr. Eaton – Asked what the affordable housing numbers up to. The Town is at approximately 10%. There is not a lot of land zones that would accommodate affordable; this will be a challenge going forward.

Mr. Nally - Asked what the Director's background is. Explained that she came directly from Coastal Zone Management at the State, where she was a Regional Manager. She worked at Boston Redevelopment Authority, and prior to that the City of Salem. She worked on North River Canal corridor district, waterfront planning and South Boston rezoning. She has experience in planning at different levels.

Ms. Manganelli – Asked if anyone is looking into Staples space. Savers Discount store is looking into. Brief discussion on thrift stores and Town reaching out to attract companies it wants in Town. Brief Discussion on residential projects in Town.

Building Inspector & Board of Appeals

PRESENT IN INTEREST: Al Spaulding, Inspector or Building & Zoning Enforcement Officer

Mr. Doherty – There appears to be a change from stipend to part-time employees. The Gas/Plumbing inspector and the Electrical inspector were. They were classified as contractors however the state is cracking down on employees being classified as contractors. They work 16 hours per week and are not eligible for retirement or health insurance. They are covered in terms of unemployment and workers comp.

Mr. Spaulding – Large houses are being built, there are a lot of teardown and rebuilds. Brief discussion on new developments in Town. Brief discussion on technology, on-line permits etc. and processing fees.

Mr. Doherty – Asked how are the Town's fee's compared to other towns. Comparable to other Towns. An evaluation was conducted about one yr ago, and showed the Town was middle of the road.

Board of Health

PRESENT IN INTEREST: Shelly Newhouse, Health Director

Ms. Newhouse – Standard budget. Requested money for a new position for mental health that was not funded this year. The Manager is going a different route; a more unified approach.

Mr. Doherty – Asked how the drug and wellness program with police department worked out. It did come out, but there is so much work that needs to be done, more than she can do on her own. Background not in social services. She is working with Police Chief and the Fire department, to get the the calls that they were going on and what these people need as far as resources. Brief discussion on the needs for people who are in need of help with drugs and mental health. When Lahey comes to her for our community needs assessment she is going to put mental health on the top of the list.

Ms. Amaral – Shelly proposed the need for a social worker but one person can't provide services for all departments that need it. A team went to Reading to learn about their approach on substance abuse. However their overdose numbers have gone up. Brief discussion on the challenges and what needs to be done, how it needs to be done, and what grants there are for public outreach.

Mr. Doherty – Asked how much is being done with the schools. Brought a program in that is a screening tool, started with 7th graders, this year it will be done with 10th graders. Brief discussing on how kids get prescribed medication, then they get addicted and turn to street drugs. Youth risk survey needs to be done with the schools, last time done was 2007.

Mr. Nally – Asked how reliable the answers are from the kids in these surveys. We hope that they are honest. Discussion on overdoses, where drug come from and program for the use Narcan.

Mr. Eaton – Asked what the \$20,000 will be used for. We know we need to start somewhere.

Ms. Newhouse – Wilmington just became a Heart Safe community, which requires private and public businesses to have AED.

Other business: High School tour Thursday Feb 12, 2015 @ 4:00.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Robert Palmer, seconded by Theresa Manganelli. Approved unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

The next meeting of the Finance Committee is scheduled for Tuesday, February 10, 2015.

Respectfully submitted,

Recording secretary