

Finance Committee Meeting
March 18, 2014
Minutes

Chairman John F. Doherty called the meeting to order at 8:05 p.m. Members present were Theresa M Manganelli, Jonathan R. Eaton, Bernard P. Nally Jr., Robert P. Palmer, Richard K. Hayden, Jordan Weiner, Victoria L. Ellsworth, William J. Wallace. Members

Also present: Kendra Amaral, Assistant Town Manager,

PRESENT IN INTEREST:

Article 3: Mr. Doherty reads Article. Mr. Hull – Standard article. There will be no accounts requiring this. He recommends the Finance Committee pass over the article.

Article 4: Mr. Doherty reads Article. Mr. Hull – Standard article to authorize the Treasurer to enter into an agreement with Eastern Bank, for depository for payroll and vendor checks.

Questions/comments: Kevin McDonald 140 Andover Road – Asked if Eastern Bank is the only bank the Town does business with and how much money is deposited. Mr. Hull – Responded that he did not have the balances at the present time. Mr. McDonald noted he is concerned with being over taxed. Mr. Newhouse – stated he is opposed to questions as they have no relation to this article. Mr. Doherty – Agrees with Mr. Newhouse and explains the article. Mr. McDonald asked if the Town is tied into Eastern Bank agreement for the next 3 years. Ms. MacKenzie – Noted the Town can cancel the agreement at any time.

Article 5: Mr. Doherty reads Article. Mr. Hull – Omnibus article covering various department budgets, and reviews highlights of the budgets.

Questions/comments: Mr. McDonald – Asked if someone has been hired to operate the controls at the High School and if so what is the salary? Mr. Hull – Yes, the position has been filled and also assists with other buildings. Mr. McDonald – Has a problem with a person being hired when the building hasn't been finished yet. Mr. Wallace – This was approved last year.

Article 6: Mr. Doherty reads Article. Mr. Hull – This is to replace police cruisers, cargo vans, a mower, and box trucks. Also Public Works dump truck to be replaced half through water & sewer.

Questions/comments: Mr. McDonald – When is an article is for specific items, what happens to the money not spent? Mr. Hull – Any remaining funds for these appropriations will go to general fund. Mr. McDonald- Does the remaining funds go to the

banks. Mr. Hull – Explains how the general fund works. Mr. Hayden – Explains accounting processes.

Article 7: Mr. Doherty reads Article. Mr. Hull – This is to install ground speed control retrofits to DPW vehicles to distribute chemicals for winter/snow.

Questions/comments: None

Article 8: Mr. Doherty reads Article. Mr. Hull – This is for a hydraulic breaker attachment for existing excavator; half the cost to be funded by water & sewer.

Questions/comments: Mr. McDonald- How much money is in the water department account? Mr. Hull – Does not have the balance at this time.

Article 9: Mr. Doherty reads Article. Mr. Hull – This is to upgrade computer systems and software for Town offices and public safety \$100,000

Questions/comments: None

Article 10: Mr. Doherty reads Article. Mr. Hull – This is for technology improvements in school department including projectors and other equipment for classrooms.

Questions/comments: None

Article 11: Mr. Doherty reads Article. Mr. Hull – Requested \$132,750.00 from school department for desk top computers.

Questions/comments: None

Article 12: Mr. Doherty reads article. Mr. Hull – This is a request to replace equipment.

Questions/comments: None

Article 15: Mr. Doherty read Article. Mr. Hull – This is a request to complete a portion of North Intermediate roof replacement.

Questions/comments: None

Article 16: Mr. Doherty reads Article. Mr. Hull – This is a standard article for unforeseen situations and expenditures.

Questions/comments: None

Article 17: Mr. Doherty reads Article. Mr. Hull – This is a request to address issues with an existing culvert.

Questions/comments: None

Article 18: Mr. Doherty reads Article. Mr. Hull – This request is to resurface town parking lots.

Questions/comments: None

Article 19: Mr. Doherty reads Article. Mr. Hull – This is a request to replace equipment for fire emergency use. The national organization sets standards for life expectancy of the equipment.

Questions/comments: None

Article 20: Mr. Doherty reads Article. Mr. Hull – Explains that he believes it is advisable to have a long term plan for town buildings and land. Acknowledges the Finance Committee doesn't believe this is the right time. Due to this he proposes this article be withdrawn.

Questions/comments: None

Article 21: Mr. Doherty reads Article. Mr. Hull –Reviewed the process of developing the conceptual design. Announces that the meeting is Sat. March 29th @10:00AM.

Questions/comments: None

Article 22: Mr. Doherty reads Article. Mr. Hull – Request is to support a Fourth of July event.

Questions/comments: None

Article 23: Mr. Doherty reads Article. Mr. Hull – This request is part of an effort to further establish the Town is serious about our financial stability. OPEB is largely health insurance for municipal employee's and past employees upon retirement.

Questions/comments: None

Article 24: Mr. Doherty reads Article. Mr. Hull – This is a request to draw from available funds/free cash and place the funds towards the retirement liability. Explains obligation for retiree's. The funds can be used to even out spikes in retirement obligations.

Questions/comments: None

Article 25: Mr. Doherty reads Article. Mr. Hull – This request is a precautionary measure. He consulted with MSBA, and there is currently no provision for the town to

transfer remaining funds from the high school feasibility study to the construction project. This will rectify that.

Questions/comments: None

Article 26: Mr. Doherty reads Article. Mr. Hull – This is a request for funding to demolish the Whitfield building. The town understands the historical commission position. Since 2005 the building has been vacant and used as storage. The town does not have any foreseeable use for the building. It has serious issues including the roof needs to be replace, needs insulation, has horse hair plaster, electrical and plumbing are out of code.

Questions/comments: Kathleen Reynolds - Has a couple of issues, and believes this article should not be approved. She asked for an additional year to find funds or other solutions. Mr. Doherty – Asked what historical significance does the building have? Ms. Reynolds – This is one of the last schools left by the designing architect. Mr. Doherty - Why did the Historical Commission wait so long to start focusing on the building? Ms. Reynolds – Conversations have been ongoing with the town. This Historical Commission does not have a budget to maintain historical buildings. Explains how they can find funds and access grants. She stresses the Commission only wants one year. Mr. George Lingenfelter, 11 Concord Street – States he is disappointed that the Historic Commission just found out about this, through the newspaper. He agrees that they deserve one year. Ms. Reynolds – The year will give the Historic Commission the ability to inventory the building and to preserve the resources. Frank West, 2 Birchwood Road –Spoke on his work on the Historic Commission and on the Board of Selectmen. He agrees that the Historic Commission should have one year. Mr. Newhouse - Agreed with some of statements and disagreed with others. He agreed with the effectiveness of the Historic Commission and their fine work. He recognized how effective the Commission can be and explains the process and money it has taken to preserve Butters Farm. On behalf of the Board of Selectmen, he feels that the demolition should go forward. Mr. Wallace – Concerned about safety of the building. Mr. Hooper – States he would not allow children to play on or near the building, due to asbestos siding. There is nothing falling from the building. The roof is leaking. Mr. Mike Champoux, 10 Gloria Way – He was the sole member of the Board that did not agree. He doesn't feel that he has the information from the Historic Commission needed and believes they should be given a year. Ms. Karen West, 2 Birchwood Road – Explained the benefits of preserving historic buildings, for example Foster School, in Tewksbury, and praised the Historic Commission. She would like to see them get one year. Ms. Reynolds – Appreciated the support and comments. She state that in October they were asked to prioritize the town's historic buildings and how they see them being used. The Commission has a few new members and will meet again in Feb. She is concerned that they have not had enough time to do what they need

to do. Tina Stewart, Library Director - Believed that Article 20, the facility master plan request is needed.

Article 27: Mr. Doherty reads Article. Mr. Hull – Explains that at the corner of Middlesex and Adams, a portion of the home owner's property has been paved and a catch basin installed on it. This will allow the town to obtain a drain and utility easement.

Questions/comments: None

Article 29: Mr. Doherty reads Article. Mr. Hull – This is the standard transfer article to reconcile 2014 budget. He anticipates a number of transfers will be needed for approximately \$1.2million to cover items such as snow and ice, and fire overtime. Other categories being monitored

Questions/comments: None

Article 30: Mr. Doherty reads Article. Mr. Hull – This is an annual program that benefits senior citizens.

Questions/comments: None

Article 31: Mr. Doherty reads Article. Mr. Hull – This is a standard article.

Questions/comments: None

Article 32: Mr. Doherty Reads Article. Mr. Hull – This is a standard article.

Questions/comments: None

Article 33: Mr. Doherty Reads Article. Mr. Hull – This is a standard article for various revolving accounts the town has maintained for several years.

Questions/comments: None

Article 34: Mr. Doherty reads Article. Mr. Hull – This is a housekeeping article that addresses a numbering error identified in the course of reviewing the bylaws. There is no change to the subject of the bylaw.

Questions/comments: None

Article 35: Mr. Doherty reads article. Mr. Hull – This is to deal with issues faced over several years at Silver Lake. On further review with town counsel, the Recreation Commission does not have legal authority to set fines. Therefore a revision to this article will be requested to authorize the Board of Selectmen to set fines.

Questions/Comments:

There being no further business, a motion was made to adjourn by Theresa M Manganelli, seconded by Jordan Weiner, and by the affirmative vote of all, it was.

VOTED: That the Finance Committee adjourned

Meeting adjourned at 9:48 p.m., next meeting of the Finance Committee is scheduled for Thursday, March 20, 2014.

Respectfully submitted,

Recording secretary