

Finance Committee Meeting Minutes October 9, 2007

Present: Al DeVito - chair, Richard Knabel, Sharon Estrella, Brian Athearn and Ann Nelson.

Guests: Bruce Stone, Town Accountant; Glenn Hearn, Skip Manter and Diane Powers, Selectmen; Kathy Logue, Susan Hruby and Richard Mezger, Capital Improvement Committee members.

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m.

Capital Improvement Committee:

Kathy Logue began the discussion by stating that the Cap. Imp. Com. is looking to be pro-active by establishing a 5-year plan. Each member is assigned to one or more agencies/departments to be more informed and involved. Data gathering will be done in the next four to six weeks. They have asked departments to project their future capital expenses. The CIC overlaps and interfaces with the Community Preservation Committee.

Al suggested getting reports and analyzing them to determine the rate of progress. He also recommended a means to get departments and voters aware of a 5-year plan.

At present, the only projects listed are some school possibilities and the refuse district. Funding avenues need to be figured (CPA, town, etc.) to know the impact.

Al would like to move towards getting better planning from top to bottom. FinCom is not sure where the town/voters want to go. Perhaps suggest a by-law that, at a capped dollar amount, an article must be on the ballot as well as at the Annual town Meeting. There must both short-term and long-term plans.

Richard noted that maintenance is not a capital expense, which needs to be clear.

Al commented that since maintenance has not been done on the town hall we are now in a catch up situation. Is the CIP helping with that?

Bruce stated the need for asset management to maintain assets. Appropriations cannot be held over from year to year.

In closing, Al questioned if there should be a process, who will define it and how will it be implemented?

Board of Selectmen:

This discussion pertained to the issue of getting voters informed about and involved with the budget. The FinCom would like to have more support from the BoS.

The suggestion was made to the BoS to have articles over a certain amount be placed on the ballot. Jen said this was not possible. The only binding votes at the ballot are those required by law. She suggested creating a by-law to have a paper vote. (Over a certain amount there must be a paper vote.) Glenn and Diane would support this by-law, Skip

would support it depending upon the amount of the cap. He felt that the higher the cap, the more likely it would pass. It can always be amended. Jen will do some research.

Ann stated that the by-law recommendation should come from the BoS and that she would like to have more support from the BoS.

Other Business:

The high school budget hearings begin tomorrow, October 10, at 6pm. The UIRSD is at 5pm at the Chilmark School on Monday, October 15.

There is a meeting of the Association of Town Finance Committees on Saturday, November 3 in Westford , MA.

There is a Personnel Board meeting on October 18 to hear a consultant review.

Minutes of the September 4 meeting were approved.

The next meeting is Tuesday, November 13 at 4:30pm.

There being no other business, a motion for adjournment was made and seconded.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:00.

Respectfully Submitted,
Nancy Rogers, Administrative Clerk