

Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

January 30, 2007

Those Present: Al DeVito - chair, Sharon Estrella, Richard Knabel and Brian Athearn

Guests: Bruce Stone, Town Accountant; Kathy Logue, Town Treasurer; Glenn Hearn, Selectman; Joan Jenkinson, Animal control Officer; Howard Curtis, Library Director; Hermine Hull and Ernie Mendenhall, Library Trustees.

This meeting was taped for airing on MVTV

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

During tonight's meeting the proposed FY '08 budgets of the Town Treasurer, the Animal Control Officer and the Library were reviewed with the FinCom. Department/Committee heads were informed that votes taken were preliminary due to the considerable increase in the total budget. Some line items may need further review for possible cuts.

Town Treasurer Budget:

Kathy's first line item was #145, salary and expenses. The increase in salary reflects a continuation through the step program and COLA. Kathy has tried to mitigate the increase by purchasing supplies in alternating years, i.e. envelopes one year, letterhead the next. She noted that the decrease in revenue was due to a decrease in invested funds. A motion was made and seconded for preliminary approval of line item #145. The motion passed 4-0.

Line item #155, Data Processing. There is no salary for this line item. The work is done on a volunteer basis, as time permits, by Kathy, Bruce Stone and Jo-Ann Resendes. Expenses include the contract with EduComp in the amount of \$12,000 for technical support, \$10,500 for permitting software and \$11,000 for accounting and billing software. Kathy stated that each permit application includes \$7.50 to help defray the cost of the permitting software. A motion was made and seconded for preliminary approval of line item #155. The motion passed 4-0.

Line item #158, Tax Title Foreclosure. Kathy is trying to clean up delinquent tax titles and reported that three or four are completely paid up this year. This should result in a significant profit for FY07. She also stated that on a yearly basis there is a 95% pay rate with only 5% delinquent - this is a very good percentage. Delinquent accounts are usually settled at the time of the sale of a property. Selectman Glenn Hearn noted that this is a very worthwhile project since the town is looking to this revenue to purchase lots for affordable housing. A motion was made and seconded for preliminary approval of line item #158. The motion passed 4-0.

Line items #710, 751 and 752, Debt Service. Kathy explained that as municipal debt amortizes the principal remains steady while the interest declines. She has budgeted \$10K in short-term debt due to the situation that occurred last year when tax bills went out late, causing a cash flow problem. Bruce explained that the schools need to be paid a month before the bills go out.

Since the bills went out so late, money had to be borrowed. A motion was made and seconded for preliminary approval of line item #710, 751 and 752. The motion passed 4-0.

Line items #911-916, Employee Benefits. #911, County Retirement is level funded. There are 30-40 employees actively contributing, with 8-10 retirees, only a few of whom get health coverage. #912, Worker's Compensation is a rough estimate. Kathy is unable to get a figure for new rates ahead of time. #913, Unemployment is down a bit due to the fact that the highway department employee is now year round and this insurance is only paid if there is a claim. #914, Health Insurance reflects a 10% increase to include rising insurance rates and extra money due to the fact that three employees are not taking the health insurance benefit. If they need to be rehired, new personnel would likely want the coverage. Line items #915 and #916 were not discussed. A motion was made and seconded for preliminary approval of line items #911-916. The motion passed 4-0.

Animal Control Budget:

Line item #292, Animal Control Officer. Joan explained that the \$100 for professional and technical services was to cover the cost of for pets hit by a car but not claimed by an owner. With regards to her vehicle, Bruce that the insurance on town vehicles is under one plan, but is shown in each departments budget. He also noted that the cost for maintenance in FY06 was \$2100 and that this year only \$58 has been spent. Joan mentioned that item #5270, rents and leases was for an agreement with the Town of Tisbury to defray the shared costs of their dog facility. She stated that though this had been agreed upon some time ago, West Tisbury had never been billed. Now Tisbury is requesting \$2500. Jen Rand is working on this. A motion was made and seconded for preliminary approval of line item #292. The motion passed 4-0.

Library Budget:

Line item #610. Director Howard Curtis began by explaining the State Aid to Public Libraries Municipal Appropriation Requirement. An error in FY07 budget request resulted in fewer appropriated funds necessary to meet the state "Municipal Appropriation Requirement." This would have made the library ineligible for annual state aid (\$11,000+) and ineligible to apply for or receive state grants. He hopes this will be rectified by the dog tax (\$16,428) and an additional amount (\$4,414) at the 2007 regular town meeting. The dog tax is money sent to the county from the purchase of dog licenses which is then returned to the town. The town can use this money for a number of purposes including the library. The county had not returned this money for seven years then gave a large amount. It should now be back on track.

Mr. Curtis then discussed the transfer of a stand alone Athena Library automation system to a web-based system. This will provide the ability to go online to get information. He also explained the requested funding for the promotion of a long-time employee to a level more consistent with her actual duties - as the de facto Head of Circulation, rather than the most senior clerk. He mentioned her work in training nearly all the present employees including the new director and the assistant librarian.

When asked why repairs/maintenance doubled he answered that included money for outside painting. The inside has been painted, now the outside needs to be done. Other items needed are new doors and work in the cellar. Mr. Curtis commented that there has never been money for programs that have been ongoing. He has budgeted money for these programs and will turn to the Friends of the Library for excess expenses related to programming. A motion

was made and seconded for preliminary approval of line item #610. The motion passed with 3 approving, 1 abstaining.

There being no other business, Richard made a motion to adjournment, Sharon seconded.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:45 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Nancy Rogers, Administrative Clerk