

Minutes of the Meeting of the Heath Finance Committee
November 23, 2010

Time: 7:00 pm

Place: The Assessors' Office, Sawyer Hall

Present: Ned Wolf, Jan Carr, Dave Gott, Don Freeman, invited guest Dave Howland, and Tom Lively and Jenna Day at 8:20 pm

After reviewing the minutes of the November 15th meeting, members approved them.

Members expressed concern over learning within the past few days that the amount in Stabilization is about \$102,000 instead of the \$130,894 announced just before the Annual Town Meeting. Don informed members of finding \$29,485 for the Charlemont ambulance in the 8/22 report from Tracey Baronas with no new Sabilization Fund balance. He said that Tracey has confirmed that the drop in Stabilization was due to this item.

Jan reported having been informed that the excess \$70,000 over the \$350,000 cost of the property is for such things as water, testing, deed recording fee, and Mark Reich's fees. The \$70,000 is considered a safe estimate of funds needed. None of it is for moving the McClouds.

Don handed members copies of a draft of the Warrant Articles for the December 14th Special Town Meeting. Jenna later delivered a more recent draft. Members had their first opportunity to read Articles whose total demand on Free Cash is \$19,186.

There was discussion of how to proceed with members feeling that insufficient time is being given to important issues. Ned wondered whether there might be a way of separating treatment of the new Warrant Articles from consideration of a potential purchase of the McCloud property. Jan cautioned about throwing a wrench into the negotiations over the land deal. Members found it hard to gauge the sensitivity of the negotiations.

Don suggested a motion that the Finance Committee informs the BOS that it cannot recommend STM Articles 1-8 because we only received the data this evening; the data impacts the financial package for the land purchase. Dave Gott so moved. Jan seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Don made a motion to discuss Article 9 about establishing and maintaining a municipal lighting plant in accordance with the regulations of the Department of Public Utilities and the Department of Telecommunications and Cable. Ned seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Don expressed members' consensus in recommending Article 9 if the words "municipal lighting plant" are explained. He made a motion to recommend Article 9 with the caveat of explaining "municipal lighting plant". Dave Gott seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The discussion turned to Article 10 which is to raise and appropriate an unstated amount for the acquisition by the Town of Charlemont of the McCloud property. Dave Gott made a motion that the Finance Committee recommends Article 10 provided the amount is stated subject to our coming up with a financial package this week. Jan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Members discussed the possible borrowing of funds to help finance Heath's \$140,000 share of the cost.

At 8:20 pm Tom Lively and Jenna Day visited the Finance Committee. Don informed them of the motions just approved. Tom said that the committee has until December 14th to make recommendations. The next meeting of the Finance Committee will be on Monday, November 29th at 5:00 pm in Sawyer Hall. There will be an effort to inform Jenna of the committee's recommendations sufficiently soon that evening to allow her to type them on the STM Warrant.

Regarding Article 9, Tom said that the words "municipal lighting plant" are from the language of an old law and have been given to us by Wired West, a company wanting to upgrade Telecommunications and Cable in this area.

Finally, there was some discussion of the request from Tracey that we allow for overspending in the Snow and Ice Winter Accounts. Don made a motion that the Finance Committee authorize overspending in the Snow and Ice Accounts provided that the amount is equal to or more than the previous year's appropriation. Ned seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Ned Wolf, Secretary