

Minutes of the Meeting of the Heath Finance Committee
February 22, 2011

Time: 6:45 pm

Place: Sawyer Hall

Present: Ned Wolf, Don Freeman, Dave Gott, Jan Carr and the BOS , Jenna Day, and Kristi Nartowicz at 7:00 pm, Margo Newton at 7:30 pm, Becky Allen and Ann Pacino at 8:00 pm, Michael Buoniconti and Joanne Bleir at 8:30 pm, and Claire Rabbitt at 9:00 pm

There was a roll call vote on Don's motion to go into Executive Session for purpose #6, Section 21, M.G.L. c.30 A. The motion passed unanimously. For each of the meetings on January 25th, February 8th, and February 15th the Executive Session portions of the minutes were read and approved unanimously by roll call votes. A motion to leave Executive Session was approved by a unanimous roll call vote.

After Ned had deleted the last sentence of the second paragraph, members approved the minutes of the December 13th meeting. The minutes of the meetings on January 25th, February 8th, and February 15th were approved as well.

Members voted by roll call unanimously to approve a motion to go again into Executive Session for purpose #6, Section 21, M.G.L. c.30 A. Members voted by roll call unanimously to approve with emendations the minutes taken by Jan of the January 22 meeting with the Library Trustees. Members voted by roll call unanimously to approve a motion to go out of Executive Session.

At 7:05 pm members voted unanimously to approve a motion to adjourn and join the BOS meeting in progress.

Treasurer Kristi Nartowicz submitted her budget request. Line 16 for 'Unemployment' has increased from \$500 to \$1200 because the rate went up. The amount requested in Line 27 for FICA has gone up from \$9,888 to \$10,000.

Police Chief Margo Newton submitted her budget request. The amount in Line 12 for 'Communication & Transportation' has decreased from \$3500 to \$3000 because it is no longer necessary to pay someone to maintain the department's computer connection.

Mohawk Trail Regional Schools Superintendent Michael Buoniconti spoke of crafting this year's budget based on the assumption that there would be less aid from the state than last year. He talked of trying to create in the Heath School a mindset that is oriented more towards groups than grades where the two groups would be K – 3 and 4 – 6. Each of these groups would have two teachers, the advantage being that it would be less difficult than continually adjusting class configurations to the varying student populations. In reply to expressions of concern about his having used faulty enrollment data from Heath in forming the budget he said that preschool students are not part of the calculation for the assessment.

He said that he may come back to the Town asking that there be an ATM warrant article that would make Preschool free. Finally, Michael said that if enrollment figures for the Heath School change, he will change staffing accordingly.

Town Nurse Claire Rabbitt submitted a budget request. She asks for an increase in hourly pay from \$20. to \$30. That would mean that the 'Salary' line would increase from \$8569.60 to \$12,480. There was a consensus to add \$105 to the Expense line to cover the cost of an epi-pen.

Members reviewed the new Fire Department budget request. A line has been added for 'Firefighters incentive award' of \$6000 and a line for 'Travel expense for FF 1 class' of \$3000.

In the budget request of the Assessors there is a line for \$2500 to pay for software that had been free. The amount for the 'Interim revaluation' is \$900. Jenna reported that the person from the State whose visit is necessary for certifying the tax rate won't be here until March 23rd. There was a discussion of how the Assessors might do their job more in keeping with previously agreed upon schedules. There was also some discussion of whether townspeople might be encouraged to pay their taxes early as a way to compensate for delayed tax bills.

The FinCom adjourned at 10:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Ned Wolf, Secretary