

Minutes of the Meeting of the Heath Finance Committee  
March 23, 2011

Time: 6:45pm

Place: Sawyer Hall

Present: Don Freeman, Ned Wolf, Jan Carr, and Dave Gott until 7:00 pm

After 7:00 pm the people listed joined the BOS, Margo Newton (substituting for Jenna Day), Bob Gruen, Suzanne Crawford, Joanne Blier, Ann Pacino, Rebecca Allen, and Deb Porter

The minutes of the March 15<sup>th</sup> meeting were read and approved.

Members discussed a request to transfer \$9.21 from the Reserve Fund to the Highway Department Fund. The motion to approve the transfer was approved by a unanimous vote. Members signed the Request to Transfer form.

Dave reported that he and Don had a helpful talk with Dave Howland earlier in the week about salary steps and issues related to the assessors. Don asked for comments on his draft of a 'Heath Herald' article on the FinCom. He said that after a conversation with Jeff he had decided to cut down the length of the last paragraph. Jan and Ned spoke favorably of the draft. At 7:00 pm the FinCom approved a motion to adjourn and join the BOS meeting in progress.

Sheila said that town counsel has said that a town can't legally give scholarships to preschoolers. Joanne said that Rowe has the cost of preschool in its budget. Hawlemont is going to do what Heath has done in past years: put \$10,000 for preschool into a revolving account. The cost is about \$1000 per student. Sheila asked what would happen if we put \$10,000 into Article 3 for preschool and more than 10 preschoolers show up. Joanne said there is money in the escrow fund. In response to Jan's question of how much she said about \$10,000. Joanne said that Heath could go ahead and appropriate money for preschool, but Heath can't 'not charge' tuition without approval from the School Committee. Sheila expressed hope that Heath would have a say in whether it has preschool 3 days a week, 4 hours each day, or 2 days a week, 6 hours each day. Jan asked about the possibility of having a 5 day program at the same tuition as a 3 day program with Heath making up the difference. Joanne said that the tuition rates set by the School Committee are based strictly on hours.

The discussion turned to ways of introducing voters to the proposal to purchase the Mackie house. Jan said that because a budget has not yet been passed in Washington there is some uncertainty about a USDA loan. Members wondered whether or not a tax rate would be certified by the ATM on May 7<sup>th</sup>. Tom reported that Alice Wozniak thinks the tax rate will be certified by the second or third week of April. Don said that Joe Boudreau told him in a phone conversation that even if the assessors were finished by March 22<sup>nd</sup>, the certifying of a tax rate by May 7<sup>th</sup> would be so uncertain that members should have ready a plan B. Tom said that if we were to go to the ATM without a certified tax rate, we would defer articles related to money to another town meeting probably in late June. Deb Porter said that the Library Trustees are planning information meetings. One will be on April 7<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm in the

Community Hall. Another will be on April 12<sup>th</sup> at the Heath School at 6:30 pm. There was a suggestion that Don Purington send questions to Jenna. Don Freeman said that he had calculated the project's effect on the tax rate under the assumption that the valuation does not change. With that assumption he said that there would be about a \$0.40 increase in the tax rate.

At the meeting on March 29<sup>th</sup> the grades of the Town Accountant and the Town Nurse will be reexamined.

The FinCom adjourned at 8:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ned Wolf, Secretary