

Minutes of the Meeting of the Heath Finance Committee
June 14, 2011

Time: 7:10 pm

Place: Assessors' office, Sawyer Hall

Present: Don Freeman, Jeff Simmons, Jan Carr, and Ned Wolf

The May 31 minutes were read and approved.

Don noted that funding for the Assessors' Clerk and the Board of Health Clerk was not included in the Article 3 that was approved at the May 7th ATM. The BOS agreed in its meeting June 13 that an STM will be needed to correct the mistake.

Turning to the Selectboard's comments on the conduct of the May 7th ATM, Don said he saw a liking for good communication among town officials. As for the inclination of any FinCom member to speak out or send e-mails, he encouraged the expression of different opinions while cautioning that we be aware of the megaphone effect, i.e. the public thinks we know more than we do.

Members expressed appreciation for Dave Gott's e-mail report on the first meeting of the space planning committee on which he serves. There will be further discussions on the issues highlighted at that meeting.

Members wondered whether another model for budgeting might work better. Should the FinCom have a greater role in forming the budget? After meeting with the department heads the FinCom could make recommendations to the BOS. Would it help to send the message that if you want funding for a project, you have to have developed a plan and advocated for it?

Questioning the current method of supporting the pre-school, Jeff wondered why the Town sends pre-school money off to be held by the central office. He noted that Mohawk is a K – 12 district and does not include pre-school. He suggested that the Town hold onto the money until a bill is formed based on the number of students.

The discussion turned to Article 22 and the approaching meeting on June 20th to continue the May 7th ATM. Members said that the BOS would likely have an amendment based upon some of Dave Howland's ideas such as funding only the purchase of the Mackie house and not the renovation. Possibly a twenty year loan could be used instead of a USDA forty year loan. Members could only speculate on the wording of the amendment. Don made a motion that we make a recommendation to the Town on Article 22. The motion passed unanimously. Ned said that he would support Article 22 with an amendment based on Dave Howland's ideas. Jeff said that although he liked some of those ideas, the lack of certain information would lead him to vote 'no'. He expressed concern that the twenty year loan suggested by Dave had no lifetime cap on interest rates. Members felt unable to

recommend a hypothetical amendment. Jeff made a motion that we reconsider our earlier decision to make a recommendation on Article 22. The motion passed unanimously. Don made a motion that the FinCom make no recommendation on Article 22. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm. Respectfully submitted, Ned Wolf, Secretary