

Minutes of the Meeting of the Heath Finance Committee
April 24, 2012

Time: 7:00 pm

Place: Sawyer Hall

Present: Ned Wolf, Jeff Simmons, Jan Carr, Don Freeman, Dave Gott, and at 7:55 Kara Leistyna, Tom Lively, Brian DeVriese, Bob Bourke, Ken Gilbert, Dave Christofolis of the Hilltown Community Development Corporation, and Becky Allen

Members received copies of the following documents:

-Agenda from Don

-April 17th minutes from Ned

-FY 2013 Projected Tax Levy vs. FY 2012 Tax Levy Worksheet 4/23/12 from Don

-Implications of FY 2013 tax rate for Levy Limit and Levy Ceiling 4/23/12 from Don

-atm warrant 5.12 draft 04.24.12 PM update from Kara

-Projected Levy Limits 04.24.2012 from Jeff

The minutes of the April 17th meeting were read and approved with emendations.

Members discussed Article 16 (atm warrant 5.12 draft 04.24.12 PM update) which would raise and appropriate \$36,000 for the purchase of a new police cruiser. Jeff made a motion that the Finance Committee does not recommend Article 16. The motion passed by unanimous vote. There was a consensus to support an additional \$4000 for maintenance.

The discussion turned to an increase in pay for the Town Clerk and the codification of the Town's bylaws. Don noted that if Hilma were to take on the bylaws project, there might be the struggle to do the usual versus the new project. Members acknowledged that the Town Clerk's job involves more work. There was a consensus to give Hilma 5 more hours and ask her how she would fit the bylaws project into her work. Members expressed interest in Don's contacting the Attorney General's office to ask for Heath's bylaws after he has talked with Hilma.

On the issue of Community Hall storage Dave recalled the conclusion of the April 17th discussion to be that \$7000 would still be allocated for storage although not necessarily for a new shed. The results of the feasibility study would apply here. Jeff said he favored splitting the feasibility study into 2 studies: one for the municipal complex and one for the Community Hall/Sawyer Hall. Dave favored a single study to allow for a unified effort without necessarily reviving prior disagreements regarding the purchase of the Mackie property. Members voiced their support of that approach.

At 7:55 the Finance Committee joined the BOS meeting and a discussion with Dave Christofolis of the Hilltown Community Development Corporation about possible assistance for Heath. Dave Christofolis said that if the Town is eligible for a block grant, it will have to complete a 'study' first.

At 8:10 the discussion shifted to the Article 23 (4/24/2012) relating to the pension needs of volunteer firefighters. Tom said that more information is needed. He said that the BOS is supportive of volunteer firefighters. Members expressed interest in finding a town which has adopted Article 23 and asking how it has been implemented.

At 8:50 Don told the Selectboard that the Finance Committee had voted earlier not to recommend Article 16 (4/24/2012) for a new police cruiser. He said that we recommend putting \$4000 more into maintenance. Tom said that Article 16 has been removed from the list of Warrant Articles for the May 12th ATM.

Don referred the BOS to 5 budget scenarios explained on his handout 'FY 2013 Projected Tax Levy vs. FY 2012 Tax Levy Worksheet'. The fifth scenario drew the most attention. It would restore the COLA's, add back the firefighters' turnout gear, and use the Overlay Surplus to buy down the tax rate. This would give us a FY 13 tax rate of \$20.50, up 66 cents or 3.3% over FY 12.

Members discussed the possibility of borrowing up to \$91,000 to pay for the combined cost of the bridge engineering study(\$40,000), the feasibility study(\$35,000), and the new garage doors(\$16,000).

There was continued discussion about Community Hall storage.

Members discussed the transfer of money from Free Cash to Stabilization. Don said he favored leaving close to \$50,000 in Free Cash. Of the \$124,000 in Free Cash the FinCom recommends that \$50,000 be allocated to reducing the tax rate and \$25,000 be transferred to Stabilization. Jeff made a motion that the Finance Committee recommends the transfer of \$25,000 from Free Cash to Stabilization. The motion passed unanimously. Don made a motion to transfer \$12,369 from the Assessors' Overlay Surplus Account to the General Fund to reduce taxes. The motion passed unanimously.

At 9:55 the Finance Committee returned to the Assessors' Office. Don said he would contact Hilma regarding a request to the Attorney General for Heath's bylaws. Jeff informed members that Alice would like Special Municipal Employee status. Ned said he would post a Finance Committee meeting for May 1 at 7:00 pm with Article 3 on the agenda.

The meeting adjourned at 10:02.

Respectfully submitted,
Ned Wolf, Secretary