

Town of Ayer

Finance Committee

Ayer Massachusetts, 01432



Location: Ayer Town Hall, Meeting Room
Finance Committee Minutes

Wednesday May 9, 2012

Present: Scott Houde; Chairman, Brian Muldoon; Vice Chairman, John Kilcommins; Clerk, Michael Pattenden; Member, Marianne Zawacki Member

In Attendance: Mary Spinner, Pauline Conley, Mary Arata, Patrick Marr, Jeremy Callahan, and Mike Berkowski (EPG Solar)

Called to order at 7:00 pm by Scott Houde

- o Green Community Committee
 - o PM Led a discussion of the solar power net metering, a Town Meeting article.
 - o PM-Explained that net metering would reduce town energy costs. There is a sense of urgency as the MA and FED incentives are open for just the one year while we compete against other towns.
 - o SH-Is this an agreement or will we own our own solar panels?
 - o PM-Led to recommend net metering (agreement) because there are hidden costs and risks with installing our own solar arrays.
 - o PM-We have reviewed the existing bills and met with three solar providers. The EPG solar proposal is most favorable.
 - o MB Led a review of the net metering process. Net metering promotes distributed generation. Every six months we can work with the town to re-allocate credits amongst the town's meters. Credits carry forward indefinitely.
 - o JK-What is EPG's role?
 - o MB-These are our solar arrays.
 - o JK-What happens if EPG goes under?
 - o PM-We examined that. We looked at their other contracts, if dissolved, sold etc then the acquirer has to honor the contract.
 - o MP-This program is only available one year?
 - o MB-Utilities are only required to net-meter a certain percentage of their power, once it is gone it is gone.
 - o SH-The warrant article is just to enter into negotiations?
 - o PM-Yes, just to negotiate.
 - o JC-The Green Committee is hoping for a sense of where the FinCom stands.
 - o SH-When do we pay for the credit?
 - o MB-Only after it is received.
 - o PC-As a selectman I would like the FinCom to review all potential providers. I would like to see them all, not just one vendor.
 - o JK-Motion that the Finance Committee support Article 36 of the Spring Town Meeting.

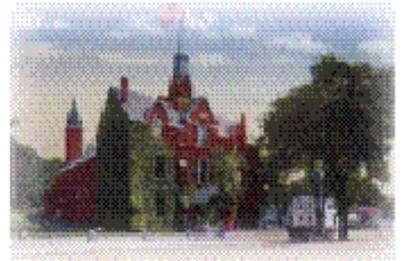
Motion	JK
Second	MZ
B. Muldoon	Aye
S. Houde	Aye
J. Kilcommins	Aye
M. Pattenden	Aye
M. Zawacki	Aye

- o Mail and Minutes
 - o SH Distributed FinCom mail for review. Distributed minutes for approval.

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- BM-Motion to approve the minutes for 2/22/12, 4/25/12, and 5/2/12 as presented.

Motion	BM
Second	MP
B. Muldoon	Aye
S. Houde	Aye
J. Kilcommins	Aye
M. Pattenden	Aye
M. Zawacki	Aye
Vote	5-0

- Reserve Fund Transfers
 - BM-Motion to approve a reserve fund transfer in the amount of \$787.00 to the tree warden account 01294 for tree work from the October Storm.

Motion	BM
Second	MZ
B. Muldoon	Aye
S. Houde	Aye
J. Kilcommins	Aye
M. Pattenden	Aye
M. Zawacki	Aye
Vote	5-0

- SH-Nothing has been received yet for a veteran's benefit reserve fund transfer.
- Unpaid Taxes for FY2012
 - SH Distributed the list. The Tax Collector is unable to attend.
 - JK-Can we initiate the public notifications ourselves?
 - SH-Selectmen Fay and Hillman reached out to me. We can always send a letter to the editor.
 - BM-We can get the word out. The old list is still out there, we can get Cindy to update our site.
 - SH-We should give some kind of warning and allow people to contact the collector before publication. I suggest two weeks after posting, this allows for BOS feedback.
 - PC-What else can we (BOS and FinCom) do beside publish?
 - SH-This is the last path; this is due to the inaction of those responsible.
 - PC-Maybe we could ask the Assistant Collector for copies of the collection letters.
 - MP-I would like an accountant to review this whole thing.
 - SH-It should be the Tax Collector. That's the frustration; we shouldn't rely on other employees beyond the collector.
 - BM-Motion we post on the town website that we will post a full listing of tax delinquents with a copy available at the Tax Collector's office.
 - SH-We should specify that these are tax bills with nothing paid at all in 2012.
 - SH-I think the list should just be here (website) and town hall. As for notification I'll contact APAC to publish as well as contact Cindy to get this onto Face Book.

Motion	BM
Second	MP
B. Muldoon	Aye
S. Houde	Aye
J. Kilcommins	Aye
M. Pattenden	Aye
M. Zawacki	Aye
Vote	5-0

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- SH-I will send a memo to the BOS and Tax Collector to notify them as to our vote.
- Town Meeting
 - SH Led a discussion of the presentation that he will be making.
 - SH-Will there be a presentation or handout for the hotel and meals tax?
 - BM-I can share my memo.
 - SH Led a review of Article 3 (Compensation Freeze) and the impact of the FinCom budgetary 'placeholder' of \$96K.
 - BM-The FinCom figure is set in stone, there is \$96K and that is it. The BOS has to figure out the allocation in negotiations.
 - SH-The contracts are not final. If the negotiated contracts are higher than 2% then we revisit this in the fall. Part of the frustration is we don't know when the contracts will be final. Contracts should be final before the budget.
- School Building Committee Member from FinCom
 - JK-The RSC Chair reached out to me in regards to joining the RSBC. I'll do it unless others are interested.
 - SH-Will there be a Shirley FinCom rep?
 - JK-I'll find out.
 - MP-I'll serve as your back up.
 - BM-Motion we appoint John to the School Building Committee as a representative of the Finance Committee.

Motion	BM
Second	MZ
B. Muldoon	Aye
S. Houde	Aye
J. Kilcommins	Aye
M. Pattenden	Aye
M. Zawacki	Aye
Vote	5-0

- Round Table
 - BM-In regards to Jim Fay's email on Article 4 (Stipends) I have been thinking about this. From the BOS point of view they are the only ones being looked at for a cut. Maybe we should approach this in a more holistic view rather than just looking at the contiguous towns. I don't want the FinCom being seen as having a vendetta
 - SH-We don't want to be seen as petty but we do have our recommendation. This line item has grown over the years and I'll speak to it at Town Meeting. We need to change Article 4 anyway to reflect the changes to the elected officials salaries.
 - PC-the unions will cite the 2% (increase to elected officials). Caution you not to do this or it will come up in negotiations.
 - MP-I have attended a number of school meetings. I saw \$111-\$116MM as the cost of doing all the schools. Would the Chair send the RSC a letter asking what their anticipated spending is?
 - SH-They have high school figures but the numbers on Page Hilltop are not firm. I'd like to align the principal debt pay downs with the Page Hilltop. We need to work with the schools and Lisa Gabree to position things correctly to move forward.

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- o Motion to adjourn at 9:15 pm

Motion	MZ
Second	JK
B. Muldoon	Aye
S. Houde	Aye
J. Kilcommins	Aye
M. Pattenden	Aye
M. Zawacki	Aye
Vote	5 - 0

Scott Houde, Chairman _____ Date _____

Brian Muldoon, Vice Chairman _____ Date _____

John Kilcommins, Clerk _____ Date _____

Michael Pattenden, Member _____ Date _____

Marianne Zawacki, Member _____ Date _____