

Town of Ayer
Board of Selectmen
Ayer Town Hall – 1st Floor Meeting Room
Ayer, MA 01432



Joint Meeting of the Ayer Board of Selectmen and Ayer Finance Committee
April 21, 2015
Open Session Meeting Minutes

Broadcast and Recorded by APAC

BOS Present: Christopher R. Hillman, Chair; Jannice L. Livingston, Vice-Chair; Gary J. Luca, Clerk

Robert A. Pontbriand, Town Administrator
Carly M. Antonellis, Assistant to the Town Administrator
Lisa A. Gabree, Town Accountant/Finance Manager

Fin Com Present: Scott Houde, Chair; John Kilcommins, Vice-Chair; Pauline Conley, Clerk; Marianne Zawacki; Chris Meusel

Call to Order: C. Hillman called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

Review and Approve Agenda:

Motion: A motion was made by G. Luca and seconded by J. Livingston to approve the agenda. **Motion passed 3-0.**

Announcements: C. Hillman made the following announcements: the Annual Town Election will be held on Monday April 27, 2015 from 7:00 AM -8:00 PM; the Annual Town Meeting will take place on May 11, 2015 at 7:00 PM; there is a potential JBOS Super Town Meeting scheduled for June 8, 2015 at 7:00 PM; the Tax Collector's Office will be open until 4:00 PM on Friday May 1, 2015 to collect 4th quarter tax payments; and the Cleaner Ayer Town-wide cleanup event will take place on Saturday April 25th and Sunday April 26th, 2015.

Public Input: None

Ms. Alicia Hersey – Office of Community and Economic Development: Ms. Kelly White accompanied A. Hersey for the loan subordination request, case #11-369 for 83-85 West Main Street.

Motion: A motion was made by G. Luca and seconded by C. Hillman to approve the subordination of the Town's lien for a first mortgage in the amount of \$396,418 so the property owner can refinance to obtain a more competitive PMI. **Motion passed 3-0.**

Call to Order of the Ayer Finance Committee: S. Houde called the Finance Committee Meeting to order at 7:11 PM. Members joined the table.

Joint Review and Approval of the FY 2016 Budget: L. Gabree presented a Power Point presentation that included FY 2016 revenue projections, tax information, charges and the omnibus budget. R. Pontbriand then detailed the Selectmen's budget and the Town Counsel budget.

Mary Spinner, 18 Myrick Street asked about the status of the Communications Committee. R. Pontbriand stated that many of the functions of the Communications Committee have morphed into the I.T. Committee. Clean-up language will be presented at the 2015 Fall Special Town Meeting.

S. Houde then asked Ayer Police Chief William Murray to explain the added position of part-time records clerk sought at the Police Department. Chief Murray said that the Detectives spend several hours each day doing clerical functions, because the volume of requests is very high. This will be a part-time, non-benefitted, non-union position.

P. Conley asked why this position would not be in the union. Chief Murray said because of the high level of confidential material that would be handled.

L. Gabree presented the remainder of the FY' 2016 budget, highlighting the following: the Parks Department will see a slight increase due to the minimum wage increase and the lifeguards being paid at a higher rate; the Library will be eliminating a position and making the Children's Librarian position fulltime; the Fire line item will increase includes funding for a signal booster and a rescue boat; the Police Department will see a \$6,000 decrease in the Reserve Officer account.

Both Boards then discussed how to split the remainder of free cash between OPEB and the Stabilization Fund. The Finance Committee is recommending a 50/50 split with 25% of the Stabilization allotment going towards capital stabilization.

Joint Review and Approval of the 2015 Annual Town Meeting Warrant: R. Pontbriand presented the Draft Annual Town Meeting Warrant to both Boards. Several articles were asked to be held for further explanation/discussion, articles 5, 6, 8, 21, 22, 24, 25, 28, 35, 36, 39. R. Pontbriand and L. Gabree answered questions from both boards on these articles:

Articles 5 & 6 (Contract Funding Patrol and Communications Division) – P. Conley wanted a breakdown of funds on both contracts. R. Pontbriand stated he will be making a presentation at the Town Meeting.

Article 8 (Ayer Shirley Regional School District Assessment) - L. Gabree explained that the figure will be decreasing from \$10,083,995 to \$9,803,576.

Article 21 (Capital Budget Requests) – L. Gabree stated that the Stormwater Drain upgrades would not be borrowed; it would be coming out of free cash.

Article 22 (Grove Pond Water Treatment Plant Garage) – G. Luca wanted to know why this was not being paid out of free cash. L. Gabree stated that this article funds the garage by transferring previous town meeting funds and does fund the balance from free cash.

Articles 24 & 25 (OPEB Fund and Stabilization Fund) – L. Gabree stated that the figures would be added pursuant to the recommendations made earlier in the evening (remainder of free cash divided 50/50 between OPEB and Stabilization with 25% of the Stabilization allotment going towards Capital Stabilization).

Article 28 (Grant Agreement for Sandy Pond Schoolhouse Association) – Board members asked for clarification on the method of a grant agreement. R. Pontbriand explained that if approved by Town Meeting, the Board of Selectmen would be authorized to enter into a grant agreement with the Sandy Pond Schoolhouse Association.

Article 35 (Purchase and Acquisition of Land – 0 Park Street) – Board members asked for clarification on this article. R. Pontbriand explained that the acquisition of land is subject to Town Meeting approval and will

include a purchase and sales agreement and a Phase 1 Environmental Report. Chief Pedrazzi will be making a formal presentation at Town Meeting.

Article 36 (Acceptance of the Richard T. Fletcher 1987 Trust) – R. Pontbriand indicated that he would add the value of the trust into the explanatory note of the article.

Article 39 (Acquisition of Land on Snake Hill Road) – P. Conley asked that the phrase “to acquire by gift, purchase and/or eminent domain” be reviewed by Counsel again. She stated that if the land is being gifted, should the phrases “purchase” “eminent domain” be listed in the warrant article. R. Pontbriand stated that although Town Counsel has already reviewed the draft, he’ll inquire and advise.

Finance Committee Motion: A motion was made by J. Kilcommins and seconded by P. Conley to favorably recommend all warrant articles with the exception of the non-financial warrant articles, specifically Articles 36, 40, 41. **Motion passed 5-0.**

Board of Selectmen Motion: A motion was made by G. Luca and seconded by J. Livingston to favorably recommend all articles on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant with discussed revisions made at this evening’s meeting. **Motion passed 3-0.**

Adjournment of the Ayer Finance Committee:

Finance Committee Motion: A motion was made by J. Kilcommins and seconded by P. Conley to adjourn at 8:52 PM. **Motion passed 5-0.**

Members of the Finance Committee leave table.

Town Administrator’s Report: R. Pontbriand thanked all Department heads for their efforts in drafting the FY’2016 budget and the 2015 Annual Town Meeting Warrant. C. Hillman thanked L. Gabree for her efforts, as well.

Valet Parking Permit Proposal – R. Pontbriand, Chief Murray, Economic Development Director David Maher and DPW Superintendent Mark Wetzel outlined the proposed valet parking permit program. The Town had received a request from a downtown business owner to operate a valet service on the weekends in the evening. R. Pontbriand outlined the process of drafting the proposed program guidelines.

Motion: A motion was made by G. Luca and seconded by J. Livingston to approve the valet permit program and to authorize the Police Chief to administer it. **Motion passed 3-0.**

Reserve Fund Transfer – R. Pontbriand is requesting approval for a Reserve Fund Transfer in the amount of \$18,000 in the Legal Services line citing the following cases that have impacted the legal services budget: *Bolduc v. Town of Ayer*; *U.S. v. Boston and Maine Railroad v. Town of Ayer*; *Gintner v. Town of Ayer*; Officer M. Power 111F Medical Status; AFSCME 93 Unfair Labor Practice.

Motion: A motion was made by G. Luca and seconded by J. Livingston to approve the Reserve Fund Transfer request in the amount of \$18,000 to account #01151. **Motion passed 3-0.**

R. Pontbriand then gave an update of the MBTA/Depot Square property issue stating that the MBTA has arranged for the parcel to be staked out and surveyed and that the process will be completed by the first week of May, 2015.

New Business/Selectmen’s Questions: C. Hillman asked R. Pontbriand to facilitate the new Director of Mass Development to appear before the Board of Selectmen.

Approval of Meeting Minutes:

Motion: A motion was made by J. Livingston and seconded by G. Luca to approve the meeting minutes of April 7, 2015. **Motion passed 3-0.**

Executive Session:

Motion: A motion was made by C. Hillman and seconded by J. Livingston in Open Session to enter into Executive Session at 9:21 PM pursuant to Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 30A, Section 21A Exemption #3 (Collective Bargaining) Police and Dispatchers Contract Negotiations Update and to adjourn at the conclusion of Executive Session. C. Hillman stated that to discuss these items in Open Session would be detrimental to the Town's Negotiating Strategy. By Roll Call Vote: C. Hillman, Yes; J. Livingston, Yes; G. Luca, Yes. **Motion passed 3-0.**

Minutes Recorded and Submitted by Carly M. Antonellis

Minutes Approved by BOS: _____

5-5-15

Gary J. Luca, Clerk: _____

Gary J. Luca