

Town of Ayer

Finance Committee

Ayer Massachusetts, 01432



Location: Ayer Town Hall, Meeting Room
Finance Committee Minutes

Wednesday April 25, 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

Called to order at 7:02 pm by Scott Houde

- Mail and Minutes
 - SH Distributed FinCom mail for review. Distributed minutes for approval.
 - MP-Motion to approve the minutes for 4/11/12 as presented.

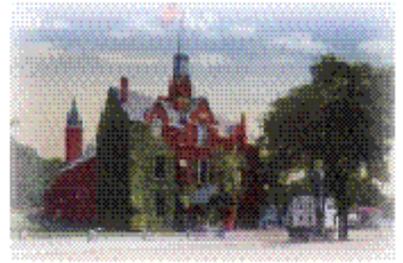
Motion	MP
Second	JK
B. Muldoon	Aye
S. Houde	Aye
J. Kilcommins	Aye
M. Pattenden	Aye
M. Zawacki	NA
Vote	4-0

- Green Community Committee
 - BM-They are unable to make it tonight. I want to meet with them on solar power net metering.
- State of the Town Presentation
 - SH-Will put together a State of the Town presentation for Town Meeting. I will have a copy to discuss at the 5/9 meeting.
- FY2013 Budget
 - SH-May 2cnd we will be presenting the budget in a public forum. I will present the budget and our changes. The stipends, OPEB, and stabilization will be areas for discussion.
 - SH-Should we include commentary on major articles (at Town Meeting)?
 - BM-Would think so, we are covering a bunch already.
 - SH-We should each have our own notes ready for 5/9. We can put them on a single sheet and comment at Town Meeting as necessary.
 - SH-Steps (raises) are done by Lisa Gabree. For non-unions this is an increase of \$24K.
 - JK-This is netted against the \$96K placeholder?
 - BM-Yes. I also want to be sure that we are not also on the hook for 2007-present frozen steps.
 - SH-There are a lot of people in town not getting raises.
 - PC-The 2% in the omni budget discussion is a COLA, this is different than a step increase. The 2%, if approved, moves the whole grid. COLA added to the grid adds up, the impact isn't \$24K, it is at least double.
 - SH-The \$96K is not COLA or step specific. It is just a placeholder.
 - MS-Are you asking to meet with the personnel board to talk through the procedure.
 - SH-Yes.
 - BM-After Town Meeting. We need to stress the \$96K is to cover all increases, COLA, steps, etc.

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- SH (Addressing FinCom's role at Town Meeting) For new members we represent the committee as a whole at Town Meeting. Comment from the table if you are representing the FinCom. Speak from the floor if you are speaking against the majority and preface your remarks by stating that you are speaking on your own behalf.
- FinCom Post Town Meeting Agenda
 - SH-For late spring and this summer I would like to review and maybe look at the financial policies, a 5 year budget subcommittee with the schools, zero based budgeting and the Devens question.
 - BM-We should also look at the high school project with the RSC. The Shirley BOS feels like things are not what they were told. There is also the issue of Ayer being charged for the middle school. This summer we should see what the final cost will be for these projects as a jump start on fall Town Meeting. People want to know how much this will raise their taxes and when. It is our responsibility to get this out to the Ayer taxpayers by reaching out to the schools.
 - JK-I agree. We need to form a subcommittee to work on this with the schools.
 - MP-I would like a meeting just to look at the finances. There are many variables and there is a lot of understating needed around these figures.
 - SH-I'm concerned with the impact on Shirley. We could be back at square one with just the cost of the feasibility study.
 - MS-We can't afford all this.
 - SH-We'll assign members to various subcommittees after town meeting.
- Town Issued Business Certificates/Business Licenses
 - BM-We discussed business certificates in late March and we voted some changes to the process. David Maher doesn't want changes. The businesses in town feel that they are being taxed enough. I asked him to attend the 5/9 meeting. He doesn't know where we got our data.
 - MS-Why is it his decision?
 - BM-We asked him and he'll bring us feedback.
 - SH-We need to get our hands around what other data we can get from the business licenses. It is not just the cash it is who and what is out there? We are not just grabbing for revenue this is information that the building inspector and fire department need.
 - BM-We could also tie the data into the town website in an effort to promote supporting your local businesses.
- Other Old Business
 - SH-We will address zero based budgeting and Devens after Town Meeting.
- FinCom Round Table
 - MP-I have more questions that I would like to see answered. We rarely tie things down tightly. Maybe we could address this after Town Meeting.
 - BM-If you put together a list we'll go through them.
 - MA-Who compiled the list of stipends?
 - JK-Robert Pontbriand.
 - MA-Is it just the stipends? Shirley, for example, includes health benefits. Should the question be 'What is the total compensation of the surrounding towns, not just the paychecks?'
 - BM-We'll move forward with what we have.
 - SH-It is up to the will of Town Meeting.
 - MS-Any updates on the delinquent tax list?
 - SH-No, we need to follow up on this.
 - PC-I am speaking as an individual. I feel compelled to apologize for last night's meeting. I am embarrassed to have sat at this table. I know the work you all put in. None of you deserved that last night.
 - SH-Thank you. It was a disorganized meeting from the get go.
 - PC- I hope you don't feel what you do isn't worth it

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- BM-You couldn't pay me enough to do this, I do it for the town.
- SH-I have been asked why the BOS doesn't have its own budget. I had asked for a BOS vote on the stipends and never heard anything. The meeting just felt disorganized last night.

- Motion to adjourn at 8:06 pm

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

Brian Muldoon, Chairman _____ Date _____

Scott Houde, Vice Chairman _____ Date _____

John Kilcommins, Clerk _____ Date _____

Michael Pattenden, Member _____ Date _____

Marianne Zawacki, Member _____ Date _____