

**Town of Sudbury ~ Finance Committee
Minutes of Meeting
Thursday – January 31, 2008
Flynn Building – 7:30pm**

Present: Chuck Woodard, Jamie Gossels, Bob Jacobson, Jim Jacobson, Bill Kneeland, Marty Ragonas, Sheila Stewart, Ralph Verni, and Debbie Zurka

The meeting was opened at 7:32pm

Town Manager, Maureen Valente, stated that the Town & SPS have received a public information request for salaries paid to all employees. The person requesting the information was upset with how the information regarding the salaries for managers who made over \$80,000 was presented in last year's warrant.

Bob Jacobson stated the committee needs to include information that they feel is relevant, and should not be pressured to add info.

Ralph Verni suggested that they look at the overtime & details paid to employees. Maureen Valente stated that they were able to get a section added into the union contract capping the number of detail hours an officer may work in a week period. Ralph Verni asked if detail pay increases an employee's pension. Maureen Valente stated that it does not, and that the town charges a 10% admin fee.

Chuck Woodard stated the list should include the base salary and other compensation listed separately. Maureen Valente suggested just giving a grand total under a column labeled "Other Compensation". The committee needs to remember there is a certain number of pages they are allowed, otherwise the cost of the printing of the warrant will increase.

The committee reviewed the following articles:

Article 2:

Maureen Valente stated that there is nothing to present yet. She would recommend that the committee Report at Town Meeting.

Article 4:

Maureen Valente stated the Blue Ribbon committee visited the Acton Police Station today. The committee agrees that the Route 20 station can not be renovated.

Article 5:

Maureen Valente stated that Bill Braun has been chairing this committee and that he has been doing a very good job. They are looking at coming up with a design for a smaller building, and are looking at future construction costs. Jim Jacobson asked if the town has

looked into the option of leasing a building. Maureen Valente stated that a police station is so unique that it would almost be impossible to do so. She stated that there are members on the Blue Ribbon committee that started out adamant that a new station was not needed, and now some are changing their opinions

Articles 18 & 19:

Maureen Valente stated that these are being presented separately from the other revolving funds, because of the wording in the articles. The accounts have already been established. This keeps the funds from going into the general fund.

Article 24:

Maureen Valente stated that there could be some implications. She recommends that the committee Report at Town Meeting.

Article 33:

Maureen Valente stated that an agreement has been reached. There is more info available on the website. The plan is to bond the purchase for 20-years. Bill Kneeland asked if there is a belief that the taxpayers have a good understanding of how the CPA works. Maureen Valente stated that the town has tried to explain it to the residents.

Article 35:

Bob Jacobson asked why the amount is doubled. Maureen Valente stated that she believes it is cost related, but is not definite. Ralph Verni asked if the CPA gets the approval for this, can they add funds to be used for the maintenance of the walkways. Maureen Valente stated that this is not possible. The funds can only be used for the design and creation of the walkways.

Jaime Gossels stated that she has been thinking of the budget/override numbers and she stated that she feels SPS has the most to lose. Ralph Verni disagreed, because the budget and override allocations are proportionate.

Chuck Woodard stated that he thinks LS would be able to get by with less than what they are asking for. Ralph Verni stated that there are probably a lot of people that feel this way. Bob Jacobson stated that high schools have an ability to cut programs or add fees when the budget are cut, but elementary systems do not have this option.

Debbie Zurka asked that if some of the committee member feel that SPS & Town Departments are suffering more, than why is the override proportionate. She stated that it seemed clear in the LS presentation that they have the most room to make the cuts.

Marty Ragonis stated there has been a discussion to create an override stabilization account, so that excess funds generated by higher than anticipated state aid or lower than anticipated spending may be used to offset future overrides. They are not sure if this allowable by law though. In regards to Debbie's question, Marty wondered if this is really a battle that the committee wants to take on this year.

Bob Jacobson stated he would not, but would be willing to next year. He wants to see how the cost centers do in the upcoming contract negotiations.

Marty Ragonas stated if we proceeded with this, that it might be a challenge to keep people coming to the budget working group meetings. Bob Jacobson stated that all you can do is be polite and listen to each other's views. It is important for everyone to continue to work together.

Approve Minutes:

The committee was asked to review and vote on the minutes for the following meetings: January 10, 14, 17, and 24, 2008. Sheila Stewart stated the split of the budget needed to be corrected within the January 17th minutes.

VOTED: On motion, to approve the minutes of the January 10, 14, 17, and 24, 2008 meetings, with the understanding the above mentioned changes would be made. Motion made by Marty Ragonas and seconded by Ralph Verni. On vote, motion carries 8 in support and 0 opposed.

Other Business:

The committee agreed to meet at 7pm on Wednesday in the Flynn Building. This will give them a half-hour before their joint meeting with the Bd. of Selectmen.

Chuck Woodard stated that the Budget Forum will be held on March 24 in the LSRHS auditorium. This will take the place of the regularly scheduled meeting. The format will be the same as last year. No one will be allowed to present a slideshow. They are only allowed to make brief remarks.

Sheila Stewart stated that if any committee members think of a question that they have in regards to the CPC articles, they should feel free to email her so that she may have the answer for Thursday night.

There being no further business, the committee adjourned at 8:57pm.