

Town of Sudbury ~ Finance Committee
Minutes of Meeting
Monday – September 20, 2010
Flynn Building – 7:30pm

PRESENT: Chairman Jim Rao, Joan Carlton, Tammie Dufault, Jamie Gossels, Bob Jacobson, Bill Kneeland, Marty Ragonas, Robert Stein, and Chuck Woodard

Item 1: Approve Minutes, Transfers, and Other Business

Minutes: Jim Rao reminded the committee that he had emailed his suggested corrections earlier. Marty Ragonas found a typo within the 8th paragraph on page 1.

VOTED: Motion to approve the minutes of the July 12, 2010 meeting with the understanding that the recommended changes will be made. Motion made by Jamie Gossels and second by Bill Kneeland. On vote, motion carries 9 in support and 0 opposed.

Transfers: The committee was informed that there were no transfer requests for the committee to take action on.

Other Business: The committee was informed that Bill Kneeland volunteered to be the FinCom's representative to the Community Preservation Committee, but that the FinCom needs to take a formal vote.

VOTED: Motion to approve Bill Kneeland to be the Finance Committee's representative to the Community Preservation Committee. Motion made by Bob Jacobson and second by Marty Ragonas. On vote, motion carries 9 in support and 0 opposed.

Jim Rao informed the committee that due to the changes in the Open Meeting Laws, the Budget Working Group will not be meeting as it has in the past. Jim Rao stated that he has requested a memo in writing from Town Counsel stating that this is to be true. Jim Rao gave an explanation to the new members the purpose of the Budget Working Group and how the group would meet.

Item 2: Follow-Up Discussion ~ Sept. 13th Joint Meeting

Jim Rao informed the committee that an agenda was still being worked on for the September 27th meeting. The meeting on the 27th will be held in the Lower Town Hall. Jim Rao reminded everyone that the forum is not planned to be a meeting to specifically address just the FY12 budget. The purpose is to provide context around what the next three years could look like, and to focus on creative ideas to address the issues that lie ahead.

Chuck Woodard stated that it might be helpful to feed the agenda to the Town Crier. He believes residents are more likely to take the time to read an article than to listen to a two-hour presentation. The meetings are educational for the residents of Sudbury as well as the employees and the bargaining groups. Tammie Dufault informed the committee of a new on-line newspaper that covers the town of Sudbury. She would like to see an update regarding the G4.

Chuck Woodard recommended an update of the G4 and the Consolidated Working Group be added as an agenda item for the 27th meeting.

Item 3: Discuss Annual Letter to Cost Centers

Jim Rao reminded the committee that they have some additional time to review/work on the letter, as the schedule dates have been pushed back 30-days. He stated that he does not believe it is warranted to even look at 4.5% growth budget this year. He feels the town might be optimistic to believe that state aid will remain at a flat level vs. FY11.

Jim Rao stated that this is the time for the committee to start thinking about how the budget funds are split amongst the cost centers and if the committee wishes to suggest changes to the split. He stated that the committee should be very specific as to what issue/driver is persuading the committee to switch the split. He stated that the committee needs to understand how the change in the split will affect the cost centers and what the consequences will be.

Item 4: Sudbury Baseball Proposal

Scott McGavick, Sudbury Babe Ruth, and Michael Walsh, Sudbury Little League made the presentation to the committee. The committee was presented with a hand-out: "Proposal for Development of Recreational Fields at Merloni Property".

Scott McGavick stated that they may be here prematurely, as they are still working on the proposal.

Scott McGavick reviewed the conditions of the town's playing fields. Feely Field is under the water line, and is not usually usable until after the month of May. If there are heavy rains during the summer, the field becomes unusable then as well. In order to make Feely Field usable year round, the town would need to spend approximately \$1 million dollars to add 6" to 12" of fill to raise it over the water line. The town would not be able to use CPA funds for this type of project.

Scott McGavick stated that they have actual blue prints of the proposed fields at the Merloni property. CPA funds could be used for this type of project since the town would be creating new fields. The unique aspect of this project is that this would create a potential revenue source for the town.

The committee was informed that Sudbury Little League has already met with the Board of Selectmen and will be meeting with the Sudbury Water District soon.

Jim Rao questioned who would own and be responsible for the project. He wondered if it would be Sudbury Baseball or if it would operate as a separate entity. His concerns are the liability and insurance costs. Scott McGavick stated that they would like to hire a Field Administrator who would report to a board. Sudbury Baseball does not want to own the land. They just want to be able to fund and maintain the land.

Robert Stein suggested that they meet with Town Counsel to get an article put together for the upcoming town meeting. Jamie Gossels proposed following the proper steps to obtain the Community Preservation Committee's approval on the project. She stated that most citizens like to see the projects approved by the CPC. Scott McGavick stated that they do understand the process to get a CPC article added. He wants everyone to feel good about this project. He informed the committee that they will be meeting with the Board of Selectmen again.

Bob Jacobson questioned the time frame for the project if it is approved. Scott McGavick replied they would probably begin during the spring of 2012. He has met with Bill Place, DPW Director, and the feeling is that the fields could be shaped quickly. He stated that both Bill Place and Nancy McShea, Recreation Director, have been very helpful.

Jaime Gossels questioned if any other potential projects have been presented for this property. Scott McGavick replied that he did not know of any. Jody Kablack stated that a couple of items have been discussed, such as recreation land and potential housing projects. A public forum was held, but this is the most in depth project that has been put forward.

Tammie Dufault complimented Scott for the work he has done to include all committees. Her recommendation to him is to keep the revenue projections conservative, as the town cannot afford to pick up any additional costs. Bob Jacobson recommended that they address what will become of the existing fields in future proposals.

Item 5: Housing/Planning Update

Jody Kablack, Director of Planning and Community Development, and Beth Rust, Housing Specialist made presentations to the committee. The committee was provided with three hand-outs: Housing Production Plan, Comprehensive Permit Applications under review by the town, and Community Housing Update to FinCom.

Jody Kablack informed the committee that they are here to have a frank discussion on housing issues and to answer any questions that the committee may have. She stated that there seems to be confusion regarding the functions of the Planning & Community Development Office and the Sudbury Housing Trust. They are currently making presentations to any board or committee that would like to meet with them.

Beth Rust informed the committee that she has been in her position for 5-years. Her position is funded through the CPC and the Housing Trust. Her salary is split 50/50 between the two accounts. The Housing Trust is in its fourth year of existence.

Marty Ragones questioned if the Housing Trust has a board. Beth Rust responded that the trust has a 9-member board. The board consists of one Selectman, and the other eight members are appointed by the Board of Selectmen.

Jody Kablack reviewed some of the 40B applications currently under review by the town:

- Landham Crossing – 32unit condominium complex
- Pine Grove – 12-unit detached development on Old Lancaster Rd
- Johnson Farm- 120 rental units within 12 buildings on Landham Rd
- Coolidge at Sudbury – 64 unit age-restricted affordable rental housing project

Tammie Dufault asked if Article 2 is passed at the polls, she would like to know who would be affected. Jody Kablack informed her that the CPC would not be affected.

Marty Ragones questioned how many communities have housing trusts. Beth Rust stated there are approximately 35 communities. She stated that she does help local communities with affordable housing projects. Jody Kablack informed the committee that many communities do not have housing planners as staff because the work is very complicated.

Jody Kablack informed the committee that it is uncommon for the number of 40B proposals currently being submitted. It most likely has to do with the fact of the possibility of the current law being repealed soon.

Jody Kablack informed the committee that she would be happy to come back at anytime should the committee have future questions.

Item 6: Public Comments

There were no remarks made from the public.

There being no further business, the committee adjourned at 9:48pm.