

**Town of Sudbury  
Finance Committee  
Minutes of Meeting  
Monday, December 19, 2011  
7:30 p.m.**

The Town of Sudbury's Finance Committee Meeting, held on the second floor of the Flynn Building, was called to order at 7:33 p.m. by Chairman Jim Rao. Present for this meeting were Joan Carlton, Jamie Gossels, Bill Kneeland, Doug Kohen, Jim Rao, Robert Stein and Chuck Woodard. Bob Jacobson arrived at 7:40 p.m.

**Item 1: Town Department Liaison Report**

The meeting commenced with a report from the Town Department liaisons. Doug Kohen and Bob Jacobson met with Maureen. Since cuts were made in the 2009 budget, things have been relatively stable. No new hires have been made. There is still an opening for a new Facilities Director which is being worked on. It was reported that there are two grants in excess of \$25,000. There is a fire and dispatch study being done.

The town is proactively looking at health plan costs and a decrease in senior plans. This is going to be challenging when cuts are made. Snow and ice costs are already causing difficulty in the current budget. Regarding the dispatch issue, regulations have been issued for a dual police and fire capital plan. Man hours for the dispatch system need to be looked at.

A discussion ensued regarding Question 5 of the report linking the Fire Department with ALS providing new services. This will make an impact on the budget and more research needs to be done on this because it will definitely impact the budget.

Question 6 discussed new cost savings. There should be no new revenues for 2013. Vacation and PPOs were also discussed. This is a case-by-case instance. It was stated that Maureen could research all employee accruals. It was stated that sick time is accrued up to 120 days. If a person retires, they are able to receive 50 days of sick time, but if an employee leaves or is let go, no sick time is paid to the employee.

**Item 2: Review of Preliminary Budget**

There will be two nights dedicated to the cost center budget hearing presentation, one on February 9<sup>th</sup> for the Level Service budget and one on February 19<sup>th</sup> for the No Override budget. The committee was in agreement on this schedule.

**Item 3: Sudbury Public Schools Liaison Report**

Jamie and Joan presented the SPS liaison report to the committee. There has not been a Facilities Manager hired, as stated previously. Regarding the lunch program this year, it was reported that only two former employees decided to accept jobs with the outsource

company. Mary Will, SPS Business and Finance Director, reported that things were not running smoothly so far. It was reported that the middle school students love the food whereas the elementary students feel the food is too healthy.

There is a great need for a school psychologist and several SPED teachers. SPED grants pay for tutors. A van driver is also needed, and this is paid by savings from benefits.

Bob Stein questioned the significant pay raises provided to the Business Manager, Interim Superintendent, and that the new Superintendent appears to be making more than the prior Superintendent. Bob Jacobson asked if the committee could get answers to Bob Stein's question, and Jamie and Joan stated they will get back to the committee.

There is an autism grant for approximately 20-30 children, and the program has been very successful. The largest expense for the schools is the SPED Departments. There was an increase of \$400,000 this year for out-of-district placements. As a means to lower costs, the district is working to bring out-of-district students back to the school system, however this is difficult to do. From an enrollment perspective, full day Kindergarten is becoming more popular, while there are concerns that class size at for the middle school is becoming too large in certain areas.

#### **Item 4: Lincoln Sudbury Liaison Report**

Chuck Woodard presented the LS liaison report to the committee. He said L/S is operating on a thin margin. The excess and deficiency fund is \$380,000, or only 1.6% of the operating budget, substantially below the recommended 4-5%. Due to budget constraints, it was necessary for L/S to cut back on staffing again this fiscal year. In addition, there is a long-term capital plan of \$2.8 million, including important updates to the school's technology infrastructure, which has no visible source of funding in light of the tight operating budget and the lack of cash reserves.

There are more out-of-district SPED placements than planned this fiscal year and, as a result, tuition and transportation costs have increased by more than \$510,000. Other positive adjustments still leave the projected budget deficit at \$343,00, which can be reduced to a more manageable \$109,000 by reducing reapportionment (the return of free cash to the two member towns) to zero. That solution essentially defers the shortfall into the next fiscal year. Emergency relief for some of or all of the deficit may be available from the State but we will not know whether and how much until May.

Jim thanked all members who pulled all their information together to present before FinCom.

#### **Item 5: Long-Term Capital Planning**

A discussion regarding long-term capital planning took place next. Again, it was mentioned that a Facilities Director needs to be hired.

Bob Jacobson asked about the LS and SPS five year capital plans. He suggested that it would be beneficial to have one entity aggregate capital requests so that one capital budget could be reviewed that looked at all our town's capital needs, regardless of what cost center the request was from. Chuck Woodard said there should be one central committee to help with prioritization. Bob Jacobson noted that LS opted out of inclusion in the CIPC capital budget when the CIPC was originally approved at Town Meeting. A "three cost center" approach by the CIPC will therefore require Town Meeting approval of an amendment to the CIPC charter to include LS. Ted Fedynyshyn, Chair of the CIPC, said he was interested in reviewing the capital budget for L/S but due to the way the funding worked, the budgets would have to be separate from the CIPC.

**Item 6: Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

**Item 7: Approval of Meeting Minutes**

**VOTED:** Motion was made by Bill to approve the Minutes of the November 19, 2011 Meeting and seconded by Jim. Joan spoke about a revision she had made that evening and submitted by email. On vote, Motion was carried in support (6 in support, 0 opposed).

Jim also mentioned there are at least two FinCom applicants interested in the current opening and that the committee will discuss them at the next meeting which will take place Monday, January 23, 2012 in the Flynn Building, Second Floor at 7:30 p.m.

**There being no further business, the committee adjourned at 9:47 p.m.**