

Minutes for Finance Committee meeting on Feb. 26, 2009

Attendee's: Diane Gaspar (Chairperson), Burke Bero (Vice Chair), Chris DeSimone, Stephanie Cronin, Shaun Cummings, Jeanne LeBlanc,

Also Present: Terry Walsh, Terry Spaulding, Cemetery Parks Superintendent, Peter Shattuck, Highway Surveyor.

Absent: Chris Johnson

Guests: Toby Tyler – Fire Chief  
Dave Priddle, Recreation Chairman

Meeting called to order at 7:00 PM

First discussion was about the Fire Capital outlay. Chief Tyler said that the PFD wanted to drop their request for an equipment cabinet and apply the funds to more hose. The PFD has lost about 4400ft of hose in the last 2 years. Some of the current hose is over 15 years old. Each length cost \$625. Each pumper is supposed to have 1000 ft on board, now have only 800ft.

It was asked if a grant request could be put in for this. Tyler said each town can only submit one per year and we had already used 09 for turnout gear. The plan was to apply for funds for Scott air packs in the 2010 submission.

After discussion, it was decided that the PFD should move \$5000 from the operation budget and add it to the \$10k budgeted in the Capital Program request land buy \$15,000 worth of hose this year. Then \$5,000 should be budgeted every year for ongoing replacement of hose. This was adopted by the Fin Com.

Dave Priddle was in attendance to present the Recreation Commission's position on the Summer Playground. Fin Com has suggested cutting the budget to zero. Priddle said they've been discussing how to reduce the budget and there had been discussion of raising the fee by \$25/child. They had thought they might get a \$3000 cut. He was meeting with Brendan McNabb to discuss the Playground staffing on Monday. He suggested that they may be able to use fewer asst directors and pay a lower wage to the new counselors. It may be necessary to reduce the weeks from 6 to 4 also. If the Fin Com's recommendation to cut the town support (\$9880) goes through, he'd have a very hard time making that up.

Regarding the Community Center, the only way to save more money over and above the salary cuts is to reduce hours. Dave said he'd not want to charge the Boy Scouts/ Girl Scouts for their use of the facility. There was discussion about non-profits contributing more. Bero said his lacrosse organization would be pleased to contribute for their use of the facility. When asked, Priddle said that most organizations are already paying for use of the fields but he might be able

to get more. He promised to get back to us after his Monday meeting with McNabb.

Other items discussed:

The Pepperell Police Department is scheduled to replace 3 vehicles this year. Chief Davis has volunteered to only buy 2 this year at \$30K each. He also removed his request for additional tasers. He would still like funds for needed renovations at the Public Safety complex.

If Step increases were eliminated, the saving would be in the \$15-20K range. Chris D and Burke suggested that this be tabled until the unions have responded to the BOS request to revisit their contract. It was suggested that maybe this would be better than reducing hours. Terry Walsh will provide comparison numbers.

There was discussion about the potential that the Town's assessment for the retirement fund might be delayed or cancelled. This would save the town ~\$420k although some of that is in the enterprise funds. There is the possibility that the assessment would be delayed until 2029. We should hear soon.

Jeanne briefed us on the NMRSD presentation.

It was discussed eliminating the \$3000 for the Town's Annual Report. It was decided that an online version should be acceptable.

Terry informed us that Peter Shattuck needs a new air compressor to heat the garage. It had almost failed inspection last time but he was able to keep it in service. That won't happen again. He'll need \$6000 to replace the unit. He has \$2494 left in the Varnum Brook access road repair line which he'll use so he needs another \$4000. Peter expects to go forward with a Warrant Article for this. He's expected to meet with us next week.

Jeanne moved to accept minutes of the 2/19/09 meeting. Bero seconded, passed 4-0.

Meeting adjourned at 8:52