

Finance Committee

Meeting minutes – February 18, 2010

Present: **Committee Members:** Chris DeSimone (Chair), Alan Leao Jr., Michael Landino, Holly Seiferth, George Zacharakis

Absent: Chris Johnson (Vice Chair), Melissa Tzanoudakis

Guests: John Moak (Town Administrator), Lois Libby (Town Clerk)

Also present: Thomas Wilson (Town Accountant)

Chris DeSimone called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

New Business: Chris DeSimone started the meeting with John Moak. John Moak spoke to the Finance Committee about a transfer request of \$4,900.00 for engineering services bid for the Town Hall siding repair work needed. John Moak explained that there was a bond from eight years ago that had \$130,000 left in it. The replacement of some windows on the Town Hall came out of that money recently. The boiler in the Town Hall was going to need replacing along with piping which would cost about \$40,000. Alan Leao Jr asked if the new piping would reach the 3rd floor. John Moak replied that the new piping may possibly reach the third floor, but if they go beyond the 2nd floor they would need an elevator for the handicap access. John Moak spoke of getting the remaining money in the bond (approximately \$70,000.00) changed from inside maintenance to outside maintenance. This would require a vote at a town meeting. Meanwhile, it was in the town's best interest to get engineering work done to know exactly what outside maintenance was needed.

George Zacharakis asked what could potentially fall through the cracks if the bond does get changed from inside maintenance to outside maintenance. John Moak replied that it has been eight years since the town had this bond and the money had not all been up yet. There was major work needed to protect the outside of the building. The \$4900.00 was for a bid for engineering services.

Michael Landino asked if a study would need to be done. John Moak replied that the study had been done seven years ago. John Moak noted that the outside of the building was going to go downhill very soon if it is not taken care of. Michael Landino asked about the shape of the roof. John Moak replied that the roof was probably in good shape, but the cupola was possibly going to need repairs. Alan Leao Jr. questioned what the original bond was for, to which John Moak replied repair of interior.

Chris DeSimone noted that the general feeling was to not spend money on the current building since many felt a new building was needed. Chris DeSimone asked about the status of the windows and if they were leaking. John Moak replied that the windows had been replaced and they had already seen a savings in the heat bill due to the windows replacement. John Moak noted that the outside of the building was extremely compromised; the building was like a sponge. Chris DeSimone thought that if there were no more questions, there could be a motion about the transfer.

On a motion from Michael Landino, seconded by George Zacharakis, the transfer of \$4,900.00 from reserve funds to the Town Hall budget for an engineer bid for outside maintenance was put into motion to be recommended to be discussed and voted on. There was no additional discussion and it was approved by a vote 4(Aye)-0(No) and 0 abstained.

Chris DeSimone moved the meeting to talk with Lois Libby about the Town Clerk department budget. Lois Libby pointed out that the fees for many transactions had been increased, such as birth certificates from \$5.00 to \$10.00 and dog license fees from \$10.00 to \$15.00. Chris DeSimone asked how much extra revenue she anticipated the new fees would bring in to the town. Lois Libby replied that she estimated about \$9,000.00. Lois Libby also noted that the new town clerk would be earning less money than she was which would have an impact on the longevity budget.

Chris DeSimone asked for an explanation of Town Clerk, Wages, Hourly (100-16100-51113) and the increase from \$30,492 to \$37,787. Lois Libby explained that the increase is due to an increase in hours for the Assistant Town Clerk. Chris DeSimone questioned if the increase had been brought to the Selectmen. Lois Libby replied that not yet. George Zacharakis noted the decrease in Town Clerk, Wages, Hourly from 2009 (\$37,787.00) to 2010 (\$30,492.00). Lois Libby replied that her salary had also decreased from 2009 to 2010. Chris DeSimone pointed out that the increase in the hours for the Assistant Town Clerks must be approved by the selectmen before the town meeting.

Chris DeSimone asked what is in the Town Clerk, Book Binding (100-16100-52249) account. Lois Libby replied that all vital records, such as birth records, must be bound. Chris DeSimone questioned if that was something that had to be done or if it could be deferred another year. Lois Libby noted that it could be deferred another year.

Chris DeSimone asked what is in the Town Clerk, Sundries (100-16100-54425) account. Lois Libby answered that was for printer supplies.

George Zacharakis asked what is in the Town Clerk, Data Processing (100-16100-52308) account and noted that \$735 out of the 2010 budget of \$772 has been spent. Lois Libby answered that was for the computer system and it was a yearly payment.

George Zacharakis asked what is in the Town Clerk, Printing (100-16100-52313) account. Lois Libby replied that was for printing forms and envelopes.

Chris DeSimone asked why the increase in the Town Clerk, Conferences (100-16100-54425) account and noted the increase from \$500 to \$1000. Lois Libby noted the increase in the account was for the new Town Clerk. Lois Libby had already scheduled one conference for the new Town Clerk in the 2010 budget. Lois Libby explained that she had not gone to all of the conferences due to the length of time she had been doing the job. These were important conferences for someone new to attend. Lois Libby noted that there was an increase also in the Town Clerk, Dues (100-16100-54425) account and noted the increase from \$100 to \$200 for the same reason. Lois Libby pointed out that there is a class in August and that the new Town Clerk would get their certifications at these classes. Alan Leao Jr. questioned the food and lodging for the two nights of the conference. Lois Libby replied that these amounts were set by the conference. Michael Landino asked Lois Libby how long she thought the budget for Conferences and Dues should be doubled for the new Town Clerk. Lois Libby recommended a few years. Chris DeSimone thought that the conference amount for 2011 appeared to be more like \$700 or \$800, not \$1,000.00. Lois Libby replied that she would like to review the conference registrations offline.

Chris DeSimone moved the meeting to talk with Lois Libby about the Elections department budget. Lois Libby explained that each year there were three elections – Town Meeting, September Primary, and November General. Chris DeSimone asked what is in the Elections, Refreshments (100-16200-54491) account. Lois Libby answered that was for coffee and donuts for the volunteers. Chris DeSimone questioned if each volunteer stayed all day. Lois Libby replied that volunteers did not stay all day.

Holly Seiferth arrived at the meeting at 7:47 pm.

Chris DeSimone asked why the Elections, Public Safety – Police Details (100-16200-54491) account had an increase and noted that 2010 budget was \$600.00 compared to 2011 budget of \$1,800.00. Lois Libby noted this was due to 2010 did not have the September and November elections, they only had the Town election. George Zacharakis question how many election workers there were. Lois Libby noted that there were 7 or 8 people for the election hours of 6:00 am to 8:00 pm.

Alan Leao Jr. asked what is in the Elections, Prof & Tech – Misc other (100-16200-52319) account. Lois Libby explained this was for the two handicap machines that were mandated to have by the state. The state mandated to budget \$1,000.00 per election to program the machines. The machines were programmed by LHS, an outside agency. George Zacharakis questioned how long it took the outside agency to program them. Lois Libby replied that she sends the cards from inside the machine to them and it did not take long for the process to happen.

Chris DeSimone moved the meeting to talk with Lois Libby about the Registration department budget. Lois Libby commented that the Sundries (100-16300-54425) account was for cartridges. Chris DeSimone wondered if there was a difference between the Town Clerk department cartridges and the Registration department cartridges. Lois Libby noted that they were the same kind of cartridges.

George Zacharakis asked what is in the Registration, Printing (100-16300-52313) account and why the increase from 2009 \$2,151.00 to 2010 and 2011 of \$3,151.00. Lois Libby replied that was for printing the census and Street List book. She has ordered more books in the latter years. Holly Seiferth asked if the Street List book was sold and if there was any revenue from the sales. Lois Libby noted that the Street List book was sold for \$20.00 each, but as they got closer to being outdated that price was reduced.

On a motion from George Zacharakis, seconded by Michael Landino, the reduction of \$7,295.00 from Town Clerk budget, Wages, Hourly (100-16100-51113) from \$37,787.00 to \$30,492.00 was put into motion to be recommended to be discussed and voted on. There was no additional discussion and it was approved by a vote 5(Aye)-0(No) and 0 abstained.

On a motion from Alan Leao Jr., seconded by Michael Landino, the reduction of \$100.00 from Town Clerk, Sundries (100-16100-54425) from \$343.00 to \$243.00 was put into motion to be recommended to be discussed and voted on. There was no additional discussion and it was approved by a vote 4(Aye)-1(No) and 0 abstained.

On a motion from George Zacharakis, seconded by Michael Landino, the reduction of \$250.00 from Election, Sundries (100-16200-54425) from \$500.00 to \$250.00 was put into motion to be recommended to be discussed and voted on. There was no additional discussion and it was approved by a vote 3(Aye)-2(No) and 0 abstained.

On a motion from Michael Landino, seconded by Alan Leao Jr., the reduction of \$559.00 from Registration, Printing (100-16300-52313) from \$3,159.00 to \$2,600.00 was put into motion to be recommended to be discussed and voted on. There was no additional discussion and it was approved by a vote 5(Aye)-0(No) and 0 abstained.

On a motion from George Zacharakis, seconded by Chris DeSimone, the reduction of \$342.00 from Registration, Sundries (100-16300-54425) from \$642.00 to \$300.00 was put into motion to be recommended to be discussed and voted on. There was no additional discussion and it was not approved by a vote 1(Aye)-4(No) and 0 abstained. On a motion from Alan Leao Jr., seconded by Michael Landino, the reduction of \$142.00 from Registration, Sundries (100-16300-54425) from \$642.00 to \$500.00 was put into motion to be recommended to be discussed and voted on. There was no additional discussion and it was approved by a vote 4(Aye)-1(No) and 0 abstained.

Chris DeSimone questioned if there was an update on the Street Lighting issue. Thomas Wilson noted that there was no update yet.

Chris DeSimone commented that the Town Accountant, Auditing Services (100-13500-52331) was for contract for \$18,125.00 and there was an additional cost of about \$2360 for the Selectmen department.

Chris DeSimone reviewed the Board of Appeals budget, Advertising, Legal Notices (100-17600-52306) for \$200.00. Thomas Wilson explained that the advertising budget could be removed since the advertising was for applicants and there was no need for any. On a motion from George Zacharakis, seconded by Michael Landino, the reduction of \$200.00 from the Board of Appeals budget, Advertising, Legal Notices (100-17600-52306) from \$200.00 to \$0.00 was put into motion to be recommended to be discussed and voted on. There was no additional discussion and it was approved by a vote 5(Aye)-0(No) and 0 abstained.

On a motion from Michael Landino, seconded by Chris DeSimone, the reduction of \$180.00 from Board of Appeals, Meetings (100-17600-57712) from \$180.00 to \$0.00 was put into motion to be recommended to be discussed and voted on. There was no additional discussion and it was approved by a vote 5(Aye)-0(No) and 0 abstained.

On a motion from George Zacharakis, seconded by Alan Leao Jr., the reduction of \$134.00 from Board of Appeals, Sundries (100-17600-54425) from \$384.00 to \$250.00 was put into motion to be recommended to be discussed and voted on. There was no additional discussion and it was approved by a vote 5(Aye)-0(No) and 0 abstained.

Business: Chris DeSimone moved the meeting to discuss the Personnel Board department, noting that Peggy Mazzola had made up the budget. Chris DeSimone commented that Personnel Board, Printing (100-15200-52313) was for printing of forms, such as new employee forms, summer help forms, and termination forms. Chris DeSimone noted that Personnel Board, Medical (100-15200-54504) could be cut according to Peggy Mazzola since the money had been there for flu shots but would not be needed. On a motion from Michael Landino, seconded by George Zacharakis, the reduction of \$200.00 from Personnel Board, Medical (100-15200-52313) from \$200.00 to \$0.00 was put into motion to be recommended to be discussed and voted on. Holly Seiferth expressed concern that there was an obligation to pay for the flu shot for employees. There was a discussion about the flu shots by the town that were free. There was no additional discussion and it was approved by a vote 5(Aye)-0(No) and 0 abstained.

Chris DeSimone commented that Personnel Board, Subscriptions (100-15200-57732) could be cut according to Peggy Mazzola since they could be gotten offline now for free. On a motion from George Zacharakis, seconded by Michael Landino, the reduction of \$100.00 from Personnel Board, Subscriptions (100-15200-57732) from \$100.00 to \$0.00 was put into motion to be recommended to be discussed and voted on. There was no additional discussion and it was approved by a vote 5(Aye)-0(No) and 0 abstained.

On a motion from Michael Landino, seconded by George Zacharakis, the reduction of \$100.00 from Personnel Board, Forms (100-15200-54423) from \$250.00 to \$150.00 was put into motion to be recommended to be discussed and voted on. There was no additional discussion and it was approved by a vote 5(Aye)-0(No) and 0 abstained.

On a motion from Michael Landino, seconded by George Zacharakis, the reduction of \$100.00 from Personnel Board, Printing (100-15200-52313) from \$100.00 to \$0.00 was put into motion to be recommended to be discussed and voted on. There was no additional discussion and it was approved by a vote 3(Aye)-2(No) and 0 abstained.

Alan Leao Jr. moved the meeting to discuss the Building and Zoning Officer department. Alan Leao Jr. noted that Inspection Fees (100-24100-51193) was a replacement when the building inspector was not available. Holly Seiferth questioned the need for a replacement; she thought people had to wait until the building inspector was available. There was a discussion about the replacement when the building inspector was not available.

On a motion from George Zacharakis, seconded by Alan Leao Jr., the reduction of \$81.00 from Building and Zoning Officer, Sundries (100-24100-54425) from \$481.00 to \$400.00 was put into motion to be recommended to be discussed and voted on. There was no additional discussion and it was approved by a vote 5(Aye)-0(No) and 0 abstained.

Alan Leao Jr. commented that the building inspector used his own car for the Building and Zoning Officer, Mileage (100-24100-57711). It was noted that since there was less new construction which would have an impact on the Mileage account. On a motion from Alan Leao Jr, seconded by Michael Landino, the reduction of \$900.00 from Building and Zoning Officer, Sundries (100-24100-57711) from \$1,484.00 to \$584.00 was put into motion to be recommended to be discussed and voted on. There was no additional discussion and it was approved by a vote 4(Aye)-1(No) and 0 abstained.

Michael Landino questioned what Building and Zoning Officer, Tuition (100-24100-57715) and Building and Zoning Officer, Dues (100-24100-57731) were for. Alan Leao Jr. replied that these costs were mandatory for all states. The tuition costs were for classes the building inspector takes to keep his license up-to-date. Chris DeSimone noted that in the past the town shared a building inspector with another town so there were not tuition or dues expenses every year.

Alan Leao Jr. moved the meeting to discuss the Gas Inspector department, noting that the inspector had a \$180.00/month stipend that was paid when there was a need. Michael Landino questioned if the fees had been increased for inspections. Michael Landino questioned Gas Inspector, Conference Registration (100-24200-57714) and if it could be reduced by \$100.00. Alan Leao Jr. replied that these were required expenses; they were state mandated for the inspector.

On a motion from Alan Leao Jr., seconded by Michael Landino, the reduction of \$510.00 from Gas Inspector, Inspection Fees (100-24200-51193) from \$5,310.00 to \$4,800.00 was put into motion to be recommended to be discussed and voted on. There was no additional discussion and it was approved by a vote 3(Aye)-2(No) and 0 abstained.

Alan Leao Jr. moved the meeting to discuss the Plumbing Inspector department, noting that the inspector also had a stipend that was paid when there was a need. Holly Seiferth noted that the fee for an inspection was \$35.00. Thomas Wilson noted that in Plumbing Inspector, Inspection Fees (100-24300-51193) there had been less used than budgeted for 2008 and 2009. In 2008, the Inspection Fees budget had spent \$5,650.00 out of a budget of \$8,000.00. In 2009, the Inspection Fees budget had spent \$3,912.00 out of a budget of \$8,000.00. On a motion from Michael Landino, seconded by George Zacharakis, the reduction of \$1,463.00 from Gas Inspector, Inspection Fees (100-24300-51193) from \$7,363.00 to \$5,900.00 was put into motion to be recommended to be discussed and voted on. There was no additional discussion and it was approved by a vote 3(Aye)-2(No) and 0 abstained.

On a motion from George Zacharakis, seconded by Michael Landino, the reduction of \$125.00 from Gas Inspector, Conference Registration (100-24300-57714) from \$350.00 to \$225.00 was put into motion to be recommended to be discussed and voted on. Holly Seiferth expressed concern that they were going over a 5% reduction. On a motion from George Zacharakis, seconded by Michael Landino, there was a motion to reconsider the motion on the reduction of \$125.00 from Gas Inspector, Conference Registration (100-24300-57714) from \$350.00 to \$225.00. There was no additional discussion and it was approved by a vote 3(Aye)-2(No) and 0 abstained. Chris DeSimone question what was taken out of previous Conference Registration budgets. Alan Leao Jr. questioned what the conferences were for. Chris DeSimone noted that they were probably for state-mandated classes, and noted that there would be similar questions for the Wiring Inspection department budget. Alan Leao Jr. will do some research on these budget line items.

Chris DeSimone moved the meeting to discuss the next budgets for the next meeting, noting that the budgets were the Public Safety department budgets. Chris DeSimone volunteered to be the primary in-depth person for the Public Safety department budgets. George Zacharakis volunteered to be the backup in-depth person for the Public Safety department budgets.

Thomas Wilson commented on the town's ability to use eBills for taxes, due to special legislation. Holly Seiferth noted that there would be a reduction in some costs due to using eBills, but there would be some cost to set it up. Chris DeSimone thought it would be good to recommend that the Town Treasurer look into using eBills.

Chris DeSimone noted that the letter from John Moak about the GIS department would be used for the next meeting.

Holly Seiferth noted that she had drafted the letter in support for the State 2011 budget. Chris DeSimone suggested that she contact the Townsend and Ashby Finance Committees. Chris DeSimone noted a correction in the letter about preserving or increasing level funding.

Acceptance of Minutes: On a motion from Holly Seiferth, seconded by Michael Landino, the minutes from the January 28, 2009 meeting were approved, with a correction to the year in the date, by a vote 4(Aye) - 0(No), 1 abstained.

Upcoming Meetings: Thursday, February 25, 7:00pm
Thursday, March 4, 7:00pm
Thursday, March 11, 7:00pm
Thursday, March 18, 7:00pm

Adjournment: On a motion from Michael Landino, seconded by George Zacharakis, the meeting was adjourned at 9:35 pm and it was approved by a vote 5(Aye)-0(No) and 0 abstained.

Respectfully submitted,
Lynne Henderson