

Town of Fairhaven

Finance Committee

Minutes of the meeting for <April 14, 2016> at the Jeffery W. Osuch BPW Administration Building, 5 Arsene St., Fairhaven, MA

Members in attendance:

Chairman-Scott Fernandes, Robert A. Furtado, Kathi Carter, Tracey Diggins, John Mota, Thomas Alden

Lisa Plante: in at 7:04 PM.

Members absent:

Ann Ponichtera DesNardis

Padraic Elliott

Town of Fairhaven:

Mark Rees- Town Administrator

Robert J. Espindola- Selectman

Vincent D. Furtado- BPW Superintendent

Meeting was covered by government access television.

Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Announced that the meeting was being recorded by government access TV. Chairman has to be notified if anyone else present is recording the meeting by video or audio.

Chairman asks to amend the minutes of April 7, 2016 by clarifying that the 87% of revenue discussed was Local Receipts.

Motion made by Tom to accept the amended minutes from April 7, 2016. Seconded by John.

Vote: Unanimous

- Chairman distributes copies of a Reserve Fund Transfer requests from the BPW for Snow & Ice, the Animal Control Officer, and the Board of Health.
- Mr. Furtado is present for the Reserve Fund Transfer request, in the amount of \$15,000, for Snow & Ice.

- Chairman states this is to cover the deficit spending we authorized earlier in the year.
 - Tom motions to transfer \$15,000 to Acct. #001-420-00-5533-00-0272 Highway-Operating Expense- Snow and Ice. Seconded by Tracey. Vote: Unanimous 6-0

7:04 PM. Lisa joins the meeting.

- Selectman Espindola joins the meeting to discuss the difference in votes between the Selectmen and the Finance Committee.
- Mr. Rees states the differences exist with the \$6,000 Salary Survey, funding the \$5,000 for the Economic Development Committee, the Animal Control Dept., and the amount for Roadwork.
- Article 11- Roadwork
 - Mr. Rees states they wish to reduce the monetary amount of each approved road, so that the total equals \$300,000, and make up the remainder with the Chapter 90 money.

7:11 PM. Tom abstains and leaves the room.

- Lisa motions to reconsider Union Street, Harding Road, and Capeview Street. Seconded by Tracey. Vote: Unanimous with Tom abstaining.
- Lisa motions \$116,323 for Union Street. Seconded by Tracey. Vote: Unanimous with Tom abstaining.
- Lisa motions \$102,143 for Harding Road. Seconded by Tracey. Vote: Unanimous with Tom abstaining
- Lisa motions \$81,534 for Capeview Street. Seconded by Tracey. Vote: Unanimous with Tom abstaining.

7:12 PM. Tom returns to meeting.

- Mr. Rees starts discussion on the Sewer Reserve.
 - Mr. Rees states he would like to see the Reserve in both the Sewer and Water raised from \$25,000 to \$50,000 to cover the anticipated contract negotiations.
 - Mr. Furtado states he would like to see them both raised because of the aging infrastructure in town.

Mr. Furtado states when something "blows up" in town, history has shown that the repair is always more than \$25,000.

Mr. Furtado states he would still have to come before the Fin Com before accessing the money.

Without this option, he would have to borrow from the General Fund until there was a Town Meeting.
 - Chairman states he feels the salary should be in a separate Salary Reserve.

- Lisa asks about the condition of the Town's infrastructure.
Mr. Furtado states the system is old and is always working. It is never shut down.
 - Mr. Furtado states even without the contract negotiations, he would like to see the Reserve raised in order to have the money for emergency repairs.
 - Chairman states he will not recommend the money for salaries.
 - Mr. Rees states he will withdraw his request for salaries, and do it at the fall Special Town Meeting.
 - Lisa motions for the following amounts:

Sewer Reserve Fund	\$50,000
Water Reserve Fund	\$50,000
 - Both amounts seconded by Tom. Vote: Unanimous
- Animal Control
 - Mr. Rees distributes a spreadsheet showing the revenues and expenditures, both past and anticipated, for the Animal Control Department.
 - Discussion of the proposed part time position.
 - Lisa asks where the extra animals are coming from.
 - Selectman Espindola states the past ACO felt he could never take time off and the present ACO feels the same way.
 - Lisa questions the Rochester ACO covering for the Fairhaven ACO.
 - Chairman states it is a slippery slope adding positions. Other departments will ask for the same.
 - Mr. Rees states this would be a part time untenured position.
 - Bob asks how the \$6,300 increase in adoption revenue for FY17 is anticipated.
Mr. Rees states he can't guarantee it, but feels Ms. Massey can obtain that revenue.
 - Kathi asks if the part time position is just as needed. Mr. Rees states yes.
 - Lisa states she feels we are making the department too big for the town.
 - Mr. Rees states he can't disagree, as a new set of eyes in the Town, and would like to spend the next year looking at the operation to see what can be done.
That being said, the dept. still has to be funded at this time.
 - Tom questions the Veterinary Expenses. Wonders if we are taking in out of town animals and funding their vet. expenses.
 - Selectman Espindola states the Selectmen have looked at the increase in the department and felt it was a service the town's people wanted provided, even if the dept. ran in a deficit.
He states Ms. Massey is doing a better job of record keeping than the previous ACO, in order to follow the revenues and expenditures.

Selectman Espindola states Ms. Massey also requested having help when she was hired and was told by the Selectmen it would be looked at in the future.

- Lisa states her displeasure with receiving Reserve Fund Transfer requests for money after the bills have already been run up.
- Selectman Espindola agrees the department needs to be looked at.
- Tracey states, looking at the spreadsheet, the new part time position seems to be a wash, as far as the deficit goes.
- Chairman states he wants to reduce the Operating Expenses budget by \$120, based on Ms. Massey's discussion of gasoline usage when she was in.
 - Tracey motions for \$38,130 for Animal Control- Operating Expenses. Seconded by Tom. Vote: Passes 6 to 1 with Lisa opposed.
 - Tracey motions for \$49,347 for Animal Control- Salary & Wages. Seconded by Tom. Vote: Passes 6 to 1 with Lisa opposed.
- Discussion of the Economic Development Committee:
 - Mr. Rees states, as a compromise, he will drop the \$6,000 for the Salary Survey in return for having the \$5,000 funded for the Economic Development Committee.
 - Selectman Espindola states he is not representing the committee, but is here to answer any questions he can.
 - Mr. Rees states the EDC is still in the very early stages.
 - Mr. Rees states the \$5,000 is to provide seed money for the committee to be able to start their work.
 - Mr. Rees states he would like to see it listed the TA, Selectmen, & Finance Committee agree on this.
 - Tracey asks if it will be a separate line item in the budget.
Mr. Rees states yes.
 - Lisa states Town Meeting should be notified that in the past this would have been a separate Article.
 - Bob states, by being in the budget, the money will be returned to the General Fund at the end of the year if it is not used.
 - Tom asks why the committee is so important to the town.
Mr. Rees states there is a need to grow the tax base in the commercial and industrial segments.
 - Tom asks if the recent loss of businesses means this should have been done before now.
Mr. Rees states you could make the case that the Town could have been more proactive.
 - Tom states he has seen more frivolous things go before Town Meeting, for more money.

- John asks if this is something that should be handled by the Planning and Economic Development department?
Mr. Rees states they focus more on planning.
 - Tom motions for \$5,000 for the Economic Development Committee. Seconded by Tracey. Vote: Passes 4 to 3 Scott, Bob, Tracey, & Tom in favor. Kathi, Lisa, & John opposed.
- Selectman Espindola advises Mr. Rees to reach out to Selectman Freitas for a mission statement from the committee.
- Discussion and review of the letter from the Finance Committee to Town Meeting.
 - Committee hears Mr. Rees' suggestion of amendments to the letter.
 - Tom motions to accept the amended changes to the letter. Seconded by Tracey. Vote: Unanimous
- Mr. Rees discusses the new format for mailing documents to Town Meeting members.
- Discussion of STM Article 6- Sale of Oxford School
 - Selectman Espindola distributes copies of the draft Purchase & Sale Agreement for the Oxford, an overhead view of how the parcel lays out, as well as a letter concerning the Fairhaven Housing Authority managing the facility in the future.
 - Selectman Espindola states he is not here to present the proposal, but to answer questions we may have.
 - Selectman Espindola states negotiations have taken place between the Stratford Group and the Town.
The major compromises have been the Stratford Group constructing a parking lot for Livesey Park and allowing the Town of Fairhaven to retain the NFIA "old fire station" building, and associated easements.
The Town would retain the parcel labeled as Lot 2 where the NFIA building is now.
 - The Town compromised by capping the cost of the building permit fees at \$90,000. They were originally estimated at \$110,000.
 - Chairman asks what the purchase price is.
Selectman Espindola states it is \$325,000.
 - Chairman questions the cost to the Town. Water, Sewer?
Selectman Espindola states they will pay for what they use. They will also pay taxes. The tax rate is calculated with a formula by the Assessors, it will be less than the standard commercial rate.
 - Lisa questions the appraisal of the property being so low.
Mr. Rees states the property has more liabilities than value.

- Selectman Espindola states some people have suggested demolition, but that is much more expensive than most people realize.
- Chairman questions the effect on Town services. Ambulance, fire, police?
Selectman Espindola states they have asked the School Dept, Police Dept., and Fire Dept. and none have expressed any concerns in an increase.
- Lisa states she feels there is a need for senior housing.
Selectman Espindola states there has been a need proposed for the future and feels this company would not propose such a project if they didn't feel they could fill it.
- Lisa asks if it is definitely for 62 years old and over.
Selectman Espindola states yes, and says the permit would specify it would stay that way.
- Chairman asks if this would count towards the Town's affordable housing percentage?
Selectman Espindola states yes.
- Discussion of the building permits cost.
- Discussion of if streets will be altered.
- Mr. Rees states they will have to go before the Zoning Board of Appeals.
- Discussion of the Fairhaven Housing Authority running the facility.
- Bob questions the clauses in the P&S concerning the deposits being returned and also the Town reinstalling the cupola.
Selectman Espindola states the Town negotiated that if the buyer backs out of the deal, they will forfeit half of the deposits.
Selectman Espindola states the cupola clause was put in at the request of the Rogers Oxford Bell Committee, but the Town has no intention of spending Town money to reinstall the cupola.
- Lisa asks Selectman Espindola what was the consensus of those at the informational meeting?
Selectman Espindola states it was overwhelmingly against the proposal. He states he has received emails both for and against the proposal.
- Tracey asks what were the reasons against.
Selectman Espindola states there are concerns about the parking and density of the development.
- Selectman Espindola states the parking ratios are within the industry standards.
- Lisa states she feels there would be less traffic than a school.
- Chairman and the committee thank Selectman Espindola for his attendance and insight this evening.

8:46 PM. Chairman calls a recess. Back in session @ 8:52 PM.

- Chairman presents a Reserve Fund Transfer request from the Animal Control Officer in the amount of \$3,600 to cover the repairs to the water heater.
 - Lisa questions having already paid for this.
Chairman states we told her to come back when the category was spent down.
 - Mr. Rees states the category is now down and the ACO needs to pay for veterinary expenses.
 - Lisa states she feels if this money is transferred, it must last until the end of the year.
 - John motions to transfer \$3,600 to Animal Control- Purchase of Services.
Seconded by Tracey. Vote: Unanimous

- Chairman presents a Reserve Fund Transfer request from the Board of Health, in the amount of \$250. Money is needed to pay for mileage for the health inspector.
 - Mr. Rees states the Health Inspector has averaged \$81/ month for mileage, and there is only \$70.62 left.
 - States more inspections have been done and the Board of Health states they have sought to increase the budget in the past and were turned down.
 - John motions to transfer \$250 to Acct. #001-510-00-5712-00-0267 Board of Health- Mileage & Car Allowance, other charges. Seconded by Tracey. Vote: Unanimous

- Discussion and voting on the Special Town Meeting within the ATM:
 - Article 1- Town Charges- General Government
 - Lisa motions for the following amounts to be transferred from FY16 Group Insurance.

1. Weights and Measures		
B. Salary-Other		\$64.99
2. Police Department		
A. Salaries and Wages		\$35,000
3. Greater New Bedford Vocational		
A. Salaries and Wages		\$2,993.00
4. Fire Department		
A. Salaries and Wages		\$10,000.00
EMS Overtime		\$10,000.00
6. Recreation Dept.		\$7,500.00
7. Bristol Agricultural High School		\$4,838.00
8. Legal Services		\$15,000.00
10. BPW Administration		\$5,220.00
 - All above amounts seconded by John. Vote: Unanimous

- 5. General Fund- Debt
 - Lisa motions to transfer \$50,000 from interest account to the principal account. Seconded by John. Vote: Unanimous
 - 9. Water Department
 - John motions to transfer \$5,200 from Water Retained Earnings. Seconded by Lisa. Vote: Unanimous

- Article 2- Bills of Prior Year- 9/10 vote
 - Lisa motions for the following amounts to be transferred from FY16 Group Insurance.

A. Clerical Union appropriation	\$175.00
B. Associated Physicians- HMPP	\$200.00
C. MES Solutions	\$1,500.00
D. Steward Medical Group	\$141.58
E. Surgi-Care, Inc.	\$74.23
F. Southcoast Hospitals Group	\$306.47
G. Richard E. Tosi, M.D.	\$132.82
H. Dr. Brian Bowcock, D.C.	\$392.72
I. Anesthesia Associates of MA	\$2,240.00
J. Gragil Associates, Inc.	\$596.00
K. Southcoast Hospitals Group	\$11,202.83
L. Southcoast Hospitals Group	\$5,660.86
M. RAD Associates of Greater New Bedford	\$22.00
N. Melanson and Heath	\$1,000.00
O. Monaghan Printing	\$117.00

 - All above amounts seconded by Tom. Vote: Unanimous

- Article 3- Anaerobic Digester
 - Tom motions to Recommend at Town Meeting. Seconded by John. Vote: Unanimous

- Article 4- Inflow and Infiltration
 - Lisa motions to transfer \$200,000 from Sewer Retained Earnings. Seconded by John. Vote: Unanimous

- Article 5- Stabilization- Sewer Betterments
 - Lisa motions for transfer of the following amounts:

A. Sconticut Neck Sewer Betterment Stabilization	\$45,055.65
B. West Island Sewer Betterment Stabilization	\$14,016.00

C. Nancy Street Sewer Betterment Stabilization \$6,375.48

D. Boulder Park Sewer Betterment Stabilization \$160.00

➤ All above amount seconded by Tom. Vote: Unanimous

▪ Article 6- Sale of Oxford School

➤ Lisa motions to Recommend at Town Meeting. Seconded by John. Vote: Unanimous

▪ Article 7- Rogers Disposition

Mr. Rees states there is typo in the Warrant.

This Article would fund consultants to aid in the disposition of the Rogers School.

He will get us the correct language and explain the Article.

➤ Lisa motions to Recommend at Town Meeting. Seconded by John. Vote: Unanimous

▪ Article 8- Rogers and Oxford Schools Fiscal Year 2017

➤ Lisa motions for \$8,000. Seconded by Tom. Vote: Unanimous

▪ Article 9- Community Preservation Committee Appropriations

Discussion of the newspaper digitizing project.

➤ Lisa motions Recommend at Town Meeting for the following:

A. Bikeway Committee- Town Hall Bike Racks

B. Library-Fairhaven Star Newspaper Digitizing Project

➤ Motion seconded by Kathi. Vote: Unanimous

▪ Article 10- Pilot Agreement with Blue Wave Capital

○ Mr. Rees states this is still being negotiated.

○ Bob asks why the Town would enter into a PILOT when we are trying to expand the tax base?

○ Mr. Rees states these are allowed by the State to make the Town more friendly to green energy projects.

➤ Lisa motions to Recommend at Town Meeting. Seconded by John. Vote: Unanimous

▪ Article 11- Hastings Middle School Roof

➤ Tom motions to transfer \$400,000 from the Capital Planning Stabilization Fund and the balance needed from Surplus Revenue. Seconded by Lisa. Vote: Unanimous

- Discussion of meeting before Town Meeting.
- Mr. Rees states he will be on vacation next week.
- Chairman states he will cancel next week's meeting.
- Our next meeting will be April 28, 2016.

9:29 PM. Tom motions to adjourn. Seconded by John. Vote: Unanimous

Respectfully submitted by:

Robert A. Furtado
Finance Committee Secretary
(accepted 4/28/2016)