

Town of Fairhaven

Finance Committee

Minutes of the meeting for <March 30, 2017> at the Jeffery W. Osuch BPW Administration Building, 5 Arsene St., Fairhaven, MA

Members in attendance:

Chairman-Scott Fernandes, Robert A. Furtado, Padraic Elliott, Kathi Carter, Lisa Plante, Bernard F. Roderick, Tracy Diggins, Thomas Alden

Town of Fairhaven:

Mark Rees- Town Administrator

Wendy Graves- Collector/Treasurer/Finance Director

Dr. Robert Baldwin- Superintendent of Schools

Brian Monroe- Vice Chairman School Committee

Michael McNamara- School Committee

Donna McKenna- School Committee

Pam Kuechler- Chairman School Committee (in @ 7:09 PM.)

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.

Motion made by Bernie to accept the minutes from March 23, 2017. Seconded by Tom. Vote: Unanimous

- Mr. Rees distributes copies of the legal Warrant, approved by the Selectmen, copies of a voting schedule he created, a "cheat sheet" spreadsheet for voting Articles, and 2 handouts for the FY17 and FY18 CPC Articles.
- Chairman states the School Dept. is requesting \$20,062,696. Mr. Rees is recommending \$20,015,826 a reduction of \$46,870.
- Dr. Baldwin starts his presentation of the School Dept. budget:
 - Dr. Baldwin distributes a sheet labeled "Tipping Point" that speaks to the loss of grants, a sheet about net school spending, and the complete School Dept. budget packet.

- Dr. Baldwin states, Statewide, other communities spend 20% more above net school spending than Fairhaven.
- Dr. Baldwin states the Full Day Kindergarten Grant from the State was lost and they are in danger of losing the Educator Quality Grant, which is a Federal grant.
- Dr. Baldwin states the budget as proposed is a level service budget.
- Dr. Baldwin lists some services that are not included, but they would like to include at some point:
 - Intermediate Science (grades 3-6)
 - District Reading Initiatives
 - Middle School Behavioral Programming
 - High School Adjustment Counselor/Social Worker
- Dr. Baldwin speaks about the money the School Dept. brings into Town.
Dr. Baldwin refers to the \$2,532,174 from Acushnet for students at the high school and \$108,977 that is brought in by the Rec Center After School Program that uses the schools' facilities.
- Chairman and Dr. Baldwin discuss the money and how it is considered in the Chapter 70 money.
- Mr. Monroe states the School Dept. allows the After School Program to use the schools equipment and gyms, but does not see the revenue.
- Dr. Baldwin discusses the new IT Consolidation Plan between the School dept. and Town Hall.
- Mr. Rees agrees, and states both sides are only budgeting for 6 months of salary for the year.
Mr. Rees states they are now looking into doing the same for facilities maintenance.
- Dr. Baldwin states he is requesting the full budget amount.
- Chairman asks if the Net School Spending formula has changed?
Dr. Baldwin states no.
- Mr. Rees states the number is distorted because we get so much money from Acushnet.
- Chairman questions the foundation enrollment going down.
Dr. Baldwin states the numbers are what they are.
- Lisa asks if services will be cut if the budget is reduced?
Dr. Baldwin states he will not say they will lose services, but they can only do so much with what they are given.
- Dr. Baldwin states the administration side has been running lean, but they don't have support in some areas.
- Dr, Baldwin states they are trying to be fiscally responsible while providing the best product.

- Mr. Monroe states they are tired of having to rob Peter to pay Paul. States ORR district is 40% about Net School Spending and Fairhaven is .7% above. States they would like to bring back full year subject courses that have been cut to half year.
- Chairman states regional districts always fair better than non-regional when it comes to funding.
- Dr. Baldwin states when you reduce, it usually comes from the salary side.
- Mr. Rees assures everyone he believes a strong public school system is important to the Town.
- Mr. Rees states he doesn't micromanage the School Dept. for budget, he just recommends the overall number. States he is responsible for balancing the Town budget and made the decision to cot .25% of the asked for budget.
- Lisa states she would rather see the School Dept. funded than the leaf collection or bike path plowing.
- Dr. Baldwin states he appreciates the working relationship between the School Dept. and Mr. Rees.
- Mr. Rees states the Selectmen have charged him with working on a Revenue Sharing Agreement with the School Dept., as recommended by the DOR.
- Chairman asks if the School Dept. contracts for FY18 have been settled? Dr. Baldwin states yes.
- Discussion of the Special Education Reserve Fund:
 - Dr. Baldwin states the amount needed for Special Education has already increased since the budget was created.
 - Dr. Baldwin states by using some services, which are actually better for the student, for Special Education, it actually causes your Circuit Breaker reimbursement to be reduced.
 - Dr. Baldwin states the amount of Circuit Breaker reimbursement varies from year to year based on the formula the State is using that year.
 - Dr. Baldwin states just 1 family moving into the district, with a child with special needs, can cause an increase in this budget.
 - This Reserve Fund would establish a fund to cover overages in the SPED budget. It would be administered by the School Committee and the Selectmen.
 - Discussion of Homeless Transportation. Considered another unfunded mandate.
- Article 50- Revocation of Civil Service for School Dept. Custodian Union:
 - Dr. Baldwin states this would only apply to the custodian personnel. States it is an outdated practice, they don't have a civil service test for the position any more.
- Article 42- Fairhaven-Acushnet School Regionalization Study Committee:

- Dr. Baldwin states the School Committee and the Board of Selectmen have voted to study regionalization of schools between Fairhaven and Acushnet.
- Dr. Baldwin states they are just studying the possibilities now.
- Dr. Baldwin states there are several levels of regionalization that are possible:
 - Only enhanced collaboration
 - Shared administrative services
 - Regionalizing only grades 9 thru 12
 - Full regionalization of all grade levels
- Article 43- Fairhaven-Acushnet School Regionalization Study Appropriation- FY18:
 - Dr. Baldwin states this seeks \$20,000 to provide the funding for the study, by the previously mentioned committee.
 - Dr. Baldwin states they have received a grant of \$20,000 for Fairhaven and \$20,000 for Acushnet, for the study.
- Mr. Rees states there are major Capital projects coming forward and we need to plan for them.
 - Discussion of the roof of Fairhaven High school.
 - Dr. Baldwin state they have done \$1,200,000 worth of work on the High School, in recent years, but there is much more left to do.

7:59 PM. Chairman calls a recess. School personnel leave the meeting.

Back in session @ 8:04 PM.

- Mr. Rees states the Selectmen have a special meeting called for Monday night to present the new labor contracts.
 - Mr. Rees states the raise is already included in the FY18 budget.
 - Chairman states the money has to be voted for FY17 before FY18.
- Mr. Rees states he has been able to extend the printer deadline for votes until April 14th.
- Discussion and voting on Articles:
- Article 1- Measurer of Wood and Bark
 - Lisa motions for Adoption. Seconded by Tracey. Vote: Unanimous
- Article 2- Town report
 - Tracey motions for Adoption. Seconded by Bernie. Vote: Unanimous
- Article 3- Report of Committees
 - Lisa motions to Yield to Petitioner. Seconded by Pat. Vote: Unanimous
- Article 4- Sewer Capital Fee- FY17
 - Lisa motions for Adoption. Seconded by Bernie. Vote: Unanimous
- Article 5- Sewer Capital Improvements Stabilization Fund- FY17

- Tom motions to Adopt the overall Article as written. Seconded by Bernie. Vote: Unanimous
- Article 6- Community Preservation Program Appropriations- FY17
 - Lisa questions part B. Recreation Center/Wellness Committee- Fitness Station Project:
 - Mr. Rees states it would be a fitness station installed behind the Rec Center adjacent to the Bike Path.
 - Questions of the cost of ongoing maintenance?
 - Mr. Rees states the more you do to encourage healthy lifestyles, the more you save in health insurance.
 - Pat asks who is asking for this?
Mr. Rees states, it was asked for by the Wellness Committee.
 - Pat states he feels sometimes this money is just looked at as free money.
 - Kathi states she feels the committee needs a clearer understanding of what this is.
 - Mr. Rees recommends holding off on voting the whole Article.
- Article 13- Amended FY17 General Fund Capital Plan
 - Mr. Rees states last year Town Meeting appropriated \$45,000 for this. He put out 2 RFP's, and all offers were significantly higher. This would make up the difference.
 - Pat motions for Adoption. Seconded by Tom. Vote: Unanimous
- Article 14- Amending FY17 Sewer Enterprise Capital Plan
 - Part A:
 - Pat motions for Adoption as written. Seconded by Lisa. Vote: Unanimous
 - Part B:
 - Pat motions to Adopt as written and the language as to where the money comes from will be added at Town Meeting. Seconded by Tom. Vote: Unanimous
- Article 15- Bills of Prior Year- Paid from FY17 funds
 - Tracey motions the following amounts from Free Cash:

Southcoast Physicians Group	\$124.53
Southcoast Hospitals Group	\$50.24
Enos Home Oxygen	\$46.23
RAD Home Oxygen	\$11.03
Tool Discounter	\$24.82
Nancy Charest	\$562.50
Southcoast Physicians Group	\$532.63

 - All amounts seconded by Tom. Vote: Unanimous
- Article 16- Adoption of M.G.L. Chapter 7, Section 37M
 - Pat motions to Recommend Adoption. Seconded by Tom. Vote: Unanimous
- Article 17- Recreation Enterprise to General Fund- FY18
 - Pat motions to Recommend Adoption. Seconded by Tom. Vote: Unanimous

- Article 23- FEMA Grant For Ladder 1- 25% Match- FY18
 - Pat motions to Recommend at Town Meeting. Seconded by Lisa. Vote: Unanimous
- Article 24- General Fund Capital Plan (FY18)
 - Mr. Rees states by adopting the Article you also adopt the recommended financing, which includes the borrowing for the Ladder Truck.
 - Kathi asks for details on the financing.
 - Mr. Rees states you can increase the debt service to 3-5% of the operating budget. As you pay off one item, you can take on more debt for future needs.
 - Lisa asks if increasing the operating budget to fund debt service has an effect on the bond rating?
 - Mr. Rees states the bond rating is usually more concerned with how fast you pay it off.
 - A. Fire, IV Pumps for Ambulance:
 - Tom motions for \$21,000 from the Ambulance Fund. Seconded by Lisa. Vote: Unanimous
 - B. Fire, Ambulance Replacement: \$98,817 from Ambulance Stabilization, \$161,183 from the Ambulance Fund.
 - Pat states the Chief's sheet shows that the 3rd ambulance is only used on 6% of the runs. Questions what would happen if these runs were allowed to go to mutual aid.
 - Mr. Rees states the 3rd ambulance also serves as a back-up.
 - Pat wants to see the cost numbers to prove the value of the 3rd ambulance. Wants to see the whole picture.
 - We will hold on this for now.
 - C. Police, Radio Communication System:
 - Lisa motions for \$250,000 from Free Cash. Seconded by Pat. Vote: Unanimous
 - D. Police, Two Patrol Vehicles:
 - Pat motions for \$80,000 from Free Cash. Seconded by Lisa. Vote: Unanimous
 - F. Town Hall Snow Guards:
 - Pat motions for \$60,000 from Free Cash. Seconded by Lisa. Vote: Unanimous
 - G. BPW- Highway: Replace Catch Basin Truck
 - Pat motions for \$165,000 from Free Cash combined with \$165,000 from Chapter 90 funds. Seconded by Lisa. Vote: Unanimous
 - H. School: Fairhaven H.S. Wood Window Restoration Project:
 - Pat motions for \$230,000 from Free Cash combined with \$20,000 from the Trust Fund. Seconded by Lisa. Vote: Unanimous
 - I. BPW-Parks: Replace 2001 Toro Mower
 - Lisa motions for \$65,000 from Free Cash. Seconded by Pat. Vote: Unanimous
 - J. Fire- Ladder Truck

- Pat motions for \$925,000 from Debt Service to be determined at Town Meeting. Seconded by Lisa. Vote: Unanimous
- E. Marine Resources, Union Wharf Public Safety Marina:
 - Mr. Rees states initially there was concern that this could have an impact on economic development of the wharf. It was determined that it would not. The piers could be moved if necessary in the future.
 - Pat asks if this would provide a cost savings?
Mr. Rees states we are not paying to dock the boats now, but the marinas could decide to start charging at any time. Mr. Rees states there would be an operational efficiency in having them all docked together.
 - Lisa asks if there would be any long term maintenance?
Mr. Rees states it would come from the Waterways Account.
 - Bob asks if we would have to repay the grant if the dock was moved in the future.
Mr. Rees states no.
 - Bernie motions for \$20,000 from the Waterways Account combined with a \$80,000 State Grant. Seconded by Lisa. Vote: Unanimous
- Article 25- Roadwork- FY18
 - Article seeks \$216,000 from Overlay Surplus and \$104,000 from Free Cash.
 - Discussion of recommended roads.
 - Tom states he viewed the roads and questions doing Diamond Street without doing Club Street or Henry Street.
 - Lisa also questions leaving a dirt road at each end.
 - Tom states he called Mr. Charbonneau and he stated they were doing Club & Henry Streets also.
 - Discussion of the wording of the Article.
 - Chairman will check, and we will hold off on all streets for now.
- Article 26- State Aid to Highways- FY18
 - A. Accepting the money
 - Pat motions for Adoption. Seconded by Tom. Vote: Unanimous
 - B. Appropriating the money
 - Pat motions for Adoption. Seconded by Tom. Vote: Unanimous
- Article 28- Ambulance Stabilization- FY18
 - Pat motions to transfer funds not to exceed \$50,000 from Receipts Reserved for Appropriation. Seconded by Lisa. Vote: Unanimous
- Article 29- Water Enterprise Capital Plan- FY18
 - A. Replacing Roofs at Pump Stations
 - Pat motions for \$150,000 from Water Retained Earnings. Seconded by Lisa. Vote: Unanimous

- B. Replacement of Tinkham Lane Well
 - Pat motions for \$550,000 from Water Retained Earnings. Seconded by Lisa. Vote: Unanimous
- Article 30- Sewer Enterprise Capital Plan- FY18
 - A. Sewer Department Truck
 - Pat motions for \$73,000 from Sewer Retained Earnings. Seconded by Lisa. Vote: Unanimous
 - B. NPDES Permit Review Assistance
 - Pat motions for \$50,000 from Sewer Retained Earnings. Seconded by Lisa. Vote: Unanimous
- Article 31- Community Preservation Program Appropriations- FY18
 - A. Buzzards Bay Coalition: Indian Rock Farms Land Protection Project
 - Pat motions for \$150,000. Seconded by Lisa. Vote: Unanimous
 - B. Fairhaven Housing Authority- Oxford Terrace Handicap Door Replacement Project
 - Pat motions for \$45,000. Seconded by Lisa. Vote: Unanimous
 - C. Stratford Capital Group- Oxford School Residences
 - Bernie asks why they agreed to a purchase price, but now are asking for this money.
 - Mr. Rees states the State looks to local town for support of the project as part of the process of issuing the tax credits.
 - The developer will not start the project until they get all the funding for the project.
 - Kathi asks if the tax credits are written into the agreement with the Town. Mr. Rees states yes.
 - Pat motions for \$50,000. Seconded by Tom. Vote: Unanimous
 - D. Library Exterior Restoration Project PH. 4
 - Pat motions for \$160,000. Seconded by Lisa. vote: Unanimous
 - E. Board of Selectmen- Town Hall Restoration Study
 - Mr. Rees states this is to bring in an engineer to study the future maintenance needs of Town Hall and keep it historically accurate.
 - Pat motions for \$12,000. Seconded by Lisa. Vote: Unanimous
 - F. Historical Commission- Academy Building- Doorway Restoration & Handicap Access Project
 - Would provide handicap access to the visitors center.
 - Bernie motions for \$119,000. Seconded by Lisa. Vote: Unanimous
 - G. CPC Administration Costs
 - Pat motions for \$12,600. Seconded by Lisa. Vote: Unanimous
- Article 32- Revolving Funds- FY18
 - Recurring Article we see each year for the Revolving Accounts.

- This year a new account is added for the Wellness Committee. This will be used for program fees and vendor fees from different programs the Wellness Committee has. The fund will be administered by the Wellness Committee, after approval by Mr. Rees.
 - Pat motions for Adoption as written. Seconded by Kathi. Vote: Unanimous
- Article 33- By-Law: Use of Revolving Accounts
 - Mr. Rees states this would make it so in future years, only the limit amount would have to be approved at TM.
 - Pat motions for Adoption. Seconded by Lisa. Vote: Unanimous
- Article 34- Social Day Care Center- FY18
 - Pat motions for Adoption. Seconded by Lisa. Vote: Unanimous
- Article 35- Propagation of Shellfish- FY18
 - Pat motions for \$17,500 from the General Fund. Seconded by Lisa. Vote: Unanimous
- Article 36- Maintenance to Rogers & Oxford School Buildings- FY18
 - Bob asks if the proposed mural on the back of the Rogers School is also coming from this money?
Mr. Rees states yes.
 - Pat motions for \$8,000 from the tax levy. Seconded by Lisa. Vote: Unanimous
- Article 37- Cultural Council Funding- FY18
 - Kathi & Lisa have questions about how the money is used.
 - We will hold off on this for now.
- Article 38- Harbor Master Plan, Matching Funds- FY18
 - Bob asks if both side of the harbor will get equal attention.
Mr. Rees states yes.
 - Pat motions Adoption with a maximum of \$6,000 from the Waterways Account. Seconded by Tom. Vote: Unanimous
- Article 40- Adoption of M.G.L., Chapter40, Section 13E
 - This would establish the SPED Reserve Fund.
 - Selectmen and School Committee would expend from the fund.
 - Pat motions for Adoption. Seconded by Bernie. Vote: Unanimous
- Article 41- Fund Reserve for Special education- FY18
 - This would fund the SPED Reserve
 - Bob asks how they came up with the \$386,453 number.
Mr. Rees states it is a formula, 2% of the school budget.
 - Kathi motions for Adoption. Seconded by Pat. Vote: Unanimous
- Article 42- Fairhaven-Acushnet School Regionalization Study Committee
 - This would establish the committee.
 - Tom motions for Adoption. Seconded by Pat. Vote: Unanimous

- Article 43- Fairhaven-Acushnet School Regionalization Study Appropriation- FY18
 - This would fund the committee.
 - Pat motions to Recommend at Town Meeting. Seconded by Tracey. Vote: Unanimous
- Article 44- Street Lights- FY18
 - Tom states he has viewed the pole, and the location does conform to the every other pole policy.
 - Pat motions for \$800. Seconded by Tom. Vote: Unanimous

9:30 PM. Scott turns the meeting over to Vice Chairman Pat, and leaves the room.

- Article 45: Retirement COLA Base Increase In FY18
 - Mr. Rees explains, last year the COLA base was raised from \$12,000 to \$13,000. This would raise it to \$14,000.
 - Last year Mr. Rees appropriated \$60,000. This year it is in the retirement budget.
 - Pat asks the cost.
 - Mr. Rees states approximately \$60,000.
 - Tom motions for Adoption. Seconded by Lisa. Vote: Motion passes 7-0-1 with Scott abstaining

9:33 PM. Scott returns to the meeting and resumes as Chairman.

- Article 46: Demolition of Abandoned Properties
 - Mr. Rees states this would petition to establish legislation to allow for demolition of abandoned problem properties.
 - Pat motions for Adoption of Sections 1 & 2. Seconded by Tom. Vote: Unanimous
- Article 47- Senior Work-Off Changes
 - This would increase the program from \$7,500 to \$10,000.
 - Pat motions for Adoption. Seconded by Tom. Vote: Motion passes 7-0-1 with Lisa abstaining
- Article 48- Transfer From Surplus Revenue
 - Pat motions to Recommend at Town Meeting. Seconded by Lisa. Vote: Unanimous
- Article 50- Revocation of Civil Service for School Department Custodian Union
 - Pat motions for Adoption. Seconded by Tom. Vote: Unanimous
- Article 51- Temporary Moratorium on Sale and Distribution of Recreational Marijuana
 - Tom motions for Yield to Petitioner. Seconded by Pat. Vote: Unanimous

- Article 52- Conveyance of a Portion of Park Land and Corresponding Dedication of Other Land to Park Use
 - This is a transfer as part of the Oxford School project.
 - Pat recommends Adoption. Seconded by Tom. Vote: Unanimous
- Article 53- Amendment to Zoning Map- Citizen Petition
 - Lisa motions to Yield to Petitioner. Seconded by Pat. Vote: Unanimous
- Article 54- Support For Proposed Amendment to United States Constitution- Citizen Petition
 - Lisa motions to Yield to Petitioner. Seconded by Pat. Vote: Unanimous
- Article 56- Narragansett Blvd. Land Transfer
 - Mr. Rees states this would "clean-up" the bounds of a piece of property.
 - Pat motions for Adoption. Seconded by Tom. Vote: Unanimous
- Article 57- Acquisition of easement- 33 William Street
 - Mr. Rees states this is to allow the construction of the shed behind Town Hall.
 - Lisa motions for Adoption. Seconded by Tom. Vote: Unanimous
- Chairman states he will try to get the answers for the roadwork questions and the ambulance numbers.
- Next week we will start the operations budget.

9:42 PM. Pat motions to adjourn. Seconded by the Tom. Vote: Unanimous

Respectfully submitted by:

Robert A. Furtado
 Finance Committee Secretary
 (accepted 4-6-2017)