

JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE AND BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING

April 11, 2012

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**Meeting Date:** April 11, 2012

**Called to Order:** 6:00 PM

**Location:** 1 Avenue A, Turners Falls MA

**Finance Committee Members Present:** John Hanold, Michael Naughton, Andrew Killeen, Lynn Reynolds and Roy Rosenblatt

**Board of Selectmen Members:** Pat Allen, Chris Boutwell (arrived at 7:09 PM) and Mark Fairbrother

**Others Present:** Frank Abbondanzio (Town Administrator) and Carolyn Olsen (Town Accountant)

**Minutes**

Finance Committee Moved:

To approve the minutes of March 28, 2012.

Vote: 5 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Selectmen Moved:

To approve the minutes of March 28, 2012.

Vote: 2 In Favor 0 Opposed 1 Abstained

**Special Town Meeting May 5, 2012**

The deadline for articles for the May 5, 2012 Special Town Meeting warrant is tomorrow, so there is nothing available for discussion.

**Reconsider recommendations and funding for Annual Town Meeting**

Mr. Abbondanzio received the new liability and workers compensation insurance rates from the new carrier. These rates resulted in a reduction of the town's operating budget by \$38,630 and the Water Pollution Control Facility operating budget by \$15,755.

Finance Committee Moved:

To change the recommend Town Operating Budget from \$7,527,101 to \$7,488,471, funded with \$125,000 from Free Cash and \$7,363,471 from Taxation.

Vote: 5 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Selectmen Moved:

To change the recommend Town Operating Budget from \$7,527,101 to \$7,488,471, funded with \$125,000 from Free Cash and \$7,363,471 from Taxation.

Vote: 2 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Finance Committee Moved:

To change the recommend Water Pollution Control Operating Budget from \$1,824,122 to \$1,808,367, funded with \$174,502 from Taxation and \$1,633,865 from Sewer User Fees.

Vote: 5 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Selectmen Moved:

To change the recommend Water Pollution Control Operating Budget from \$1,824,122 to \$1,808,367, funded with \$174,502 from Taxation and \$1,633,865 from Sewer User Fees.

Vote: 2 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Mr. Naughton raised the issue of how and when the calculation for the affordable assessment is changed. Mr. Naughton thinks it's appropriate to recalculate the affordable assessment for changes to certain estimates, but not when we're adjusting local receipts to balance the budget. There was agreement, and care should be taken to be clear about when we change the official calculation.

Mr. Abbondanzio had two questions about the Gill-Montague Regional School District's Excess and Deficiency account. First, there has been no action to return the amount that was above the limit that the district can have, and secondly the School Committee only used \$250,000 of an approximately \$800,000 balance towards the Fiscal Year 2013 budget. Mr. Abbondanzio also shared that the House budget provides additional education funding which might change the Gill-Montague Regional School District's assessment.

Mr. Hanold feels this is worth pursuing to see if there is a basis for amending the assessment at town meeting. Members of the Finance Committee now plan to attend the April 24, 2012 School Committee meeting to raise and discuss these issues. Mr. Naughton will contact Superintendent Nadine Ekstrom on these matters.

**Reconsider Funding for Special Articles**

The changes in the insurance costs has freed up \$38,630 of taxation. Additionally, \$5,996 was earlier reduced from the total taxation amount to balance the budget to the penny. There is now \$44,626 of taxation available that can be used instead of reserves. If this available taxation is not used elsewhere, estimated local receipts will be reduced to balance the budget and allow for additional changes to new growth and overlay amounts.

There was a brief discussion of the various options.

Finance Committee Moved:

To change the recommend funding source of the \$35,000 for Inflow & Infiltration and \$8,000 for Library Technology from Free Cash to Taxation.

Vote: 5 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Selectmen Moved:

To change the recommend funding source of the \$35,000 for Inflow & Infiltration and \$8,000 for Library Technology from Free Cash to Taxation.

Vote: 3 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

**The Board of Selectmen adjourned at 6:46 PM.**

**Finance Committee Report to Town Meeting**

Mr. Killeen reviewed the process and progress of the report. The latest version will be e-mailed to all members after the numbers are updated to reflect tonight's votes.

**Next Meeting**

There will be no meeting on April 25, but the April 24<sup>th</sup> School Committee meeting will be posted as a Finance Committee meeting. The next regular Finance Committee meeting will be May 2 if needed.

**Meeting Adjourned at 7:09 PM**

**List of Documents and Exhibits –**

- Minutes of March 28, 2012
- Latest draft of Finance Committee Report to Town Meeting
- Fiscal Year 2013 Town and Water Pollution Control Facility revised budget with funding breakdown
- History of Fiscal Year 2013 calculations of Affordable Assessment
- Appropriations from Reserves for ATM

**Next Meetings**

- 6:00 PM April 18, 2012      Votes on Special Town Meeting articles, final wording on report
- 6:00PM May 2, 2012      Deal with any late-breaking news, updates from meeting with school committee.