

## FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Meeting Date: 19 November, 2007

### CALL TO ORDER

The Meeting was called to order at 7:02 P.M. in the Band Room, Amherst Regional Middle School. Ms. Moran chaired the meeting.

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Kay Moran (Vice Chair), Marilyn Blaustein, Paul Bobrowski, Alice Carlozzi, Andrew Steinberg

### OTHERS PRESENT

John Musante (Finance Director/Treasurer)

### COMMITTEE AGENDA

1. Fall Town Meeting Article 17
2. Miscellaneous

### COMMITTEE ACTION

Bobrowski moved that the Committee not recommend approval of Article 17. The motion was seconded by Blaustein and passed 5-0.

### DISCUSSION

Blaustein noted that the Planning Board does not recommend this article. Steinberg posed the question whether, if Article 16 fails, the Town will be served better by the passage of Article 17 than continuation of current zoning in the affected area. Article 17 could lead to development that does not have the financial impact that could result from another zoning approach. Bobrowski urged the committee to think about the long term. If Article 16 fails and Article 17 passes, the area will not be developed to its maximum potential but will be tied up for many years. This is an area that is next to a commercial zone. The Peoples Bank building produces less taxation than other buildings that might have been constructed and is now the use for that parcel for many years. It often takes multiple attempts before a zoning proposal is passed, which could be required for something as proposed in Article 16. Blaustein observed that it is more difficult to develop areas by Special Permit, as specified for some uses with an R-VC zoning designation. Bobrowski added that more can be done with a B-VC zoning.

Moran asked whether there has been further discussion about whether to alter the allocation of resources amongst the schools, regional schools, library, and municipal functions. Steinberg noted that while Select Board member Brewer asked whether the Select Board should discuss that issue, it has not been placed on an agenda and budgets are now being developed in accordance with the Finance Committee's preliminary guidelines.

Carlozzi reported on the last meeting of the Budget Coordinating Group. The BCG asked members to ask their boards whether they desire the BCG to consider an override for 2009 to address the deficit for that year. The BCG also asked whether the boards are willing to support

and participate in the public engagement and survey process for a long-range plan, which will not be for 2009. Members of the committee asked about how we would fund the consultant expenses for a process and what the process and survey would encompass. Moran queried whether a survey can educate the public about the needs of municipal departments they don't see. Carlozzi responded that a survey can advise a public engagement process and build public acceptance and support for the outcome of the process.

The Finance Committee agreed that it is more important to hear from the elected boards regarding the need for an override. Musante reminded the committee that we will know more in January than we know today and the 2009 fiscal year is still seven months away. The consensus was that the Finance Committee supports the idea of a public engagement process and survey even though it is uncertain about the funding for the process.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew Steinberg  
Acting Clerk