

DRAFT --- FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Meeting Date: May 19, 2008

CALL TO ORDER

The Meeting was called to order at 6:45 p.m. in the band room, Amherst Regional Middle School

COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Marilyn Blaustein, Alice Carlozzi, Kay Moran, Brian Morton (chair), Douglas Slaughter, Andy Steinberg.

OTHERS PRESENT

Assistant Town Manager/Treasurer John Musante, ACTV cameraman

COMMITTEE AGENDA

1. Finance Committee position on Article 8, FY 08 budget amendments
2. Finance Committee position on Article 17, Part C, capital program, portable classrooms
3. Minutes
4. Miscellaneous

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION AND ACTION

1. **Article 8, FY 08 budget amendments.** The Finance Committee voted 6-0 to RECOMMEND amending the action taken under Article 17 of the 2007 Annual Town Meeting by increasing the appropriations and the amounts to be raised by taxation for the following accounts by \$254,000: Public Safety by \$184,000 and Public Works by \$70,000, and to meet such increased appropriation by decreasing the appropriation and the amount to be raised by taxation for the following accounts by \$254,000: General Government by \$122,000, Planning, Conservation, and Inspections by \$69,000, and Community Services by \$63,000. The Public Safety budget shortfall was due to police overtime and retirement costs. Musante reported that the Public Works budget shortfall was due to extra snow and ice removal costs. Surpluses in the other three department are due to staff vacancies and turnover, health insurance costs lower than estimated, and redistribution of salary reserves.
2. **Article 17, Part C, capital program, portable classrooms.** The Finance Committee voted 6-0 to RECOMMEND amending the actions taken under Article 5 of the Special Town Meeting held on Nov. 5, 2007, and appropriate \$105,000 to purchase portable classrooms for the School Department and all related costs, to be expended in addition to the \$195,000 previously appropriated, and to authorize borrowing this amount. Musante reported that bids opened last week were lower than original estimates, and that Facilities Director Ron Bohonowicz has inspected the units offered by the two lowest bidders and found them acceptable. The total cost will be no more than \$300,000, including installation and furnishings.

3. **Minutes.** The Finance Committee voted 5-0, 1 abstaining, to APPROVE the minutes of May 14, 2008, as corrected.
4. **Miscellaneous.** The Finance Committee voted 5-0, 1 abstaining, to NOT RECOMMEND any motions that might be made to amend the FY 09 operating budget proposals and to OPPOSE reconsideration of any operating budget sections already approved by Town Meeting. These votes and related discussion were prompted by a May 14 memo from Vincent O'Connor to the Select Board and Finance Committee proposing a "budget amendment package." Finance Committee members said his five proposed amendments had already been discussed and rejected by Town Meeting and should not be taken up again. We had opposed them in the first place. One committee member abstained from voting due to a potential conflict of interest involving a town department in one of the proposed amendments.
5. **Next meeting.** Committee members will consult their calendars so Morton can schedule another meeting sometime before June 9 to discuss financial projections for a long-range plan, and to approve our backlog of minutes.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:19 p.m.

Submitted by Kay Moran, acting clerk