

## **Town of Groton Finance Committee**

### **Minutes of Meeting held 9-15-09**

**Present:** J. Prager (Chair), J. Crowley, J. Cochran, M. Flynn, P. DiFranco, T. Sangiolo, R. Hughson, V. Jenkins (Town Accountant)

**Guests:** M. Bouchard (Town Clerk), F. Dillon & A. Elliot (Board of Selectmen), M. Haddad (Town Manager)

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 PM by the Chair. Acceptance of the minutes of a previous was deferred until the end of the meeting.

**Reserve Fund Transfers:** Mr. Bouchard presented a request for Reserve Fund Transfer (\$10,000) to cover expenses associated with the off-cycle primary and special election to replace Senator Kennedy. It is hoped that some State funding will be available to help cover such costs, but the amount is unclear. It is noted that if such funding becomes available, the unused Reserve Fund Transfer could be returned to the Fund, to be used for other purposes. Ms. Cochran moved and Mr. Sangiolo seconded support for the transfer, which was approved unanimously by the Finance Committee. A second transfer, for out of district vocational tuition was tabled, pending detailed discussion of the budget.

**Budget Review:** Mr. Haddad presented an overview of the budget to be amended and voted at the Fall Annual Town Meeting. Articles other than the budget with a financial impact were also discussed. A one-page funding plan outlined the total impact of the budget changes and other warrant articles with the majority of the funding coming from certified free cash. Discussion included potential funding of an IT Manager; funding of salary and wages for several months for the Country Club; funding consultant service to update the Town's Master Plan; and funding the training of Advanced Life Support. No formal votes were taken. The Committee agreed that the following is needed:

- A meeting with Mr. Whalen, Country Club Manager to seek more detailed information about operational issues and future plans. Mr. Prager will take this action item. Mr. Dillon from the Board of Selectmen will accompany Mr. Prager and it is possible that Mr. Flynn of the FinCom will also attend.
- More information regarding the necessity (State Law reference) and timing (every ten years) for updating a Master Plan. Mr. Haddad will ask the Town Planner to supply information.
- A cost benefit analysis for the Advanced Life Support training. Ms. Jenkins believes that a written proposal and cost justification already exists. She will contact the Fire Department and forward the plan to the FinCom

The FinCom discussed the benefits of funding a line item for out-of-district vocational placement vs. a reserve fund transfer and agreed that a reserve fund transfer was appropriate. The funding will cover vocational training at Minuteman Regional, and is the responsibility of the Town, according to State secondary education regulations. These regulations indicate, in summary, that students must obtain vocational training at the local vocational district, unless the course is not offered, in which case the Town must fund tuition at the closest available school. The course required by the student is not offered at Nashoba Tech. Therefore, Mr. Sangiolo moved, and Mr. DiFranco seconded support of the transfer for \$16,500. The motion passed unanimously.

Finally, after a heated debate, Ms. Jenkins was confirmed as recording secretary for the remainder of the fiscal year.

The Committee is reminded that a public hearing is posted for 9-21-09 at 7:30 PM in conjunction with the Board of Selectmen. The FinCom will also meet on 9-22-09 at 7:00 PM, as noted above, to take positions.

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Valerie Jenkins

Recording Secretary