

**TOWN OF GROTON FINANCE COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 7-6-2010
(7:00 PM Second Floor Conference Room, Town Hall)**

PRESENT: Jay Prager (Chair), Mike Flynn, Tom Sangiolo, Jan Cochran. Valerie Jenkins (Town Accountant, Recording)

ABSENT: Rick Hughson, Joseph Crowley, Peter DiFranco

GUESTS: Steve Webber (candidate for FinCom appointment), Mark Haddad (Town Manager), Michelle Collette (Land Use Director)

Documents available: Minutes of 6-15-10 for committee approval
Letter from District Attorney Leone re: Open Meeting Law changes
Invitation from Town of Ayer to Discuss Consolidation of Service
Resignation from member Rick Hughson

Mr. Prager called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

Approval of Minutes: Mr. Sangiolo moved, and Mr. Flynn seconded, approval of the minutes of meeting held June 15, 2010. The motion carried unanimously.

Election of Officers: Mr. Flynn suggested that this item be tabled until the next meeting, given that there is a resignation in hand for Mr. Hughson, and it is preferable to wait until the vacancy is filled. Mr. Prager moved that election of officers be tabled and added to the next meeting's agenda. Ms. Cochran seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Departmental reviews: Mr. Prager summarized the FinCom's intention to review FY 2011 spending patterns to refine their understanding of budget requests and actual spending. The first reviews will occur in September at the earliest in order to have at least two months of expenses. In answer to questions from the Committee, Ms. Jenkins noted unusual expenses in the first quarter of the fiscal year including: the majority of debt service payments, annual fees or service contracts, and capital purchases, especially new vehicles.

Other Business

Correspondence: Ms. Jenkins asked the committee to note the receipt of correspondence from the District Attorney, transferring the responsibility to the Attorney General for interpretation and enforcement of the open meeting law. The committee also reviewed and discussed the Town of Ayer's invitation to join a group of officials from several towns on August 11, 2010 to seek consolidation or sharing of towns' services in an effort to save money. The committee is interested in this effort, but the timing is difficult. Mr. Prager is unable to attend that meeting and there was no immediate response from any other member. Mr. Prager has already communicated with Ayer in the hope that a different date would be possible. He will follow-up. The committee also noted, with regret, the resignation of Mr. Hughson, effective immediately.

Increased hours for Building Commissioner: Mr. Haddad and Ms. Collette informed the FinCom that building efforts in Town have increased significantly since the Spring and that this appears to be an indicator that things have improved somewhat economically. They propose adding Inspection hours,

either through increasing the Building Commissioner to 40 hours per week (from 35) or through on-call services of an alternate inspector. They seek the FinCom's approval of the additional funding, which would be proposed at the Fall Town Meeting. The FinCom agreed with the proposal, but requested some data that would support the permanent nature of the increase. Ms. Collette has been working on gathering information about the number and types of permits recently issued and will forward the information to the Finance Committee. The committee expressed its preference for a full time Building Commissioner rather than hiring another employee.

Mr. Flynn moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:25 PM. Mr. Sangiolo seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Valerie Jenkins
Recording Secretary