TOWN OF GROTON FINANCE COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 3/21/11

(Includes Public Hearing on the FY 2012 Budget)

Present: J. Prager (Chair), M. Flynn, G. Green, P. DiFranco, R. Hargraves, J. Crowley, V. Jenkins (Town Accountant, recording), P. Dufresne

Absent: S. Webber

ATM Warrant FY 2012, latest update (3/18/2011)
Hand-outs from Nashoba Valley Technical School regarding Stabilization Fund

Mr. Prager called the meeting to order at 7:32 PM. The Committee participated in the Public Hearing on the Warrant in order to hold their own public hearing on the budget and financial articles. For details of the full Public Hearing please refer to the minutes of the Selectmen’s meeting. At 9:25 PM the FinCom re-convened their meeting in an adjacent room in order to take positions on the Warrant articles. These positions are detailed in the attachment to these minutes. During the FinCom's meeting the following discussion took place:

For the Annual Town Meeting

Article 4, Wage and Salary Classification Schedule. Mr. DiFranco requested deferral of the FinCom’s position until the Committee could review the Schedule. Ms. Jenkins will try to have a copy by the next meeting.

Article 5, Budget. The Committee has questions regarding the increase in the Town Manager’s Salary line item, and is unable to come to a decision about funding the Parks Department, give that the Parks Commission has not provided a budget. The Committee heard from Mr. Degan of the Board of Selectmen regarding his suggestion that financial responsibility be removed from the Parks Commission and give to the DPW Director. There is concern that this may not be allowable because the Commission is elected. Mr. Prager will confer with the Town Manager about options for assuring that Parks Commission takes responsibility for its budget. The FinCom will defer consideration of its position on Article 5 until more information is received about the above two issues. The Committee was also instructed by the Chair to do a final review of the budget and bring all questions to the next meeting.

Article 6a, Capital Budget, Baler. There are still remaining questions about the need for a baler at this time. Concerns about the fiscal viability of a regional recycling center were not adequately addressed by the DPW director. Mr. Crowley notes that he has communication from the Director which he will forward to the remainder of the FinCom. The Committee’s position on this item in the Capital Article is deferred.
**Article 15e, Community Preservation application, Habitat for Humanity.** It is predicted that this will be withdrawn by the proponents. The FinCom has deferred consideration until confirmation is received.

**Article 17, Transfer of Tax Title Land to ConsComm.** The listed value of one of the parcels is high; this is due to an old demolition lien. The Committee discussed whether the Conservation Fund could reimburse the cost of the lien. Mr. Dillon of the Board of Selectmen noted that he had similar thoughts about reimbursement. Ms. Jenkins will try to research this. The Committee’s position on the article will be deferred.

**For the Special Town Meeting.** The Committee’s position on all six articles has been deferred until more information is available.

The Committee requested that Ms. Jenkins invite the Town Manager to the next meeting, which is scheduled for March 29th.

The meeting adjourned at 10:50 PM upon a motion from Mr. Crowley and a second from Mr. Hargraves.

**Next Meeting:** March 29, 2011 at 7:00 PM in the First Floor Meeting Room at Town Hall

Respectfully submitted,

Valerie Jenkins, Town Accountant, Recording