

TOWN OF GROTON FINANCE COMMITTEE

Minutes of Meeting held 4-25-2011

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

Guest: T. Delaney, DPW Director

Mr. Prager called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. The Finance Committee reviewed the budget articles for the final time, and confirmed speakers for each of the budget motions. The Committee then heard from Mr. Delaney regarding the potential revenue increase for recycled materials once other towns bring their material to Groton. He notes that although the volume will increase, without additional baler capacity, the department will need to increase labor in order to process the work. He estimates that with tonnage from Littleton alone, the volume will double. He also estimates that it is possible he will recover the investment cost of the new baler in 2 to 3 years. His understanding is that Littleton, due to other state commitments, must maintain a recycling program for a few years into the future, but those commitments don't mandate where the material is processed, so he expects at least a two year commitment to his recycling venture from Littleton. There being no further questions for Mr. Delaney, Mr. Webber moved, and Mr. Flynn seconded the purchase of a baler. The motion carried with unanimous support.

The FinCom reviewed the information contained in the Town Meeting handout regarding the Community Preservation deposit into the Housing Trust. It is known that the Housing Trust intends to invest the money in a development project at 134 Main Street. The Committee confirmed that the deposit will go to the Housing Trust regardless of the development project taking place. The FinCom had originally voted to support the transfer of funds, but had been asked by Mr. Hargraves to reconsider the position because projected financials had not been received by the Committee. The numbers are now available and included with the Town Meeting handout. Mr. Hargraves expressed lingering concerns that the project is viable; Mr. Prager suggested that the project description and financials are better than most and that it is unclear what else would happen to the property which is currently under bank foreclosure. Mr. Webber moved, and Mr. Green seconded support for the transfer of funds, which carried by a vote of 6 in favor and 1 opposed.

The FinCom reviewed its discussion regarding the Prescott School Reuse Committee's request for funds to hire a consultant to help with its task to recommend a future use for the building. There is new information that would change the FinCom's original position. The Committee had originally voted not to support funding, but was asked by Mr. Hargraves to reconsider their vote, because the Prescott Committee had done as much as it could and it would be unfortunate to see their work at an end with no conclusive recommendation. Mr. Hargraves moved, and Mr. Webber seconded support for the transfer. The motion failed by a vote of 1 in favor, 5 opposed and 1 abstention.

There is new article on the warrant, enabling the Selectmen to transfer all, or a portion, of the land area known as Brownloaf, in the event the Selectmen believe there is no municipal use for the property. One possible reason for transfer would be in mitigation for encroachment on wetlands by the 134 Main Street development project. Mr. Webber suggested that one potential municipal use would be leasing the land for a solar energy project. Mr. Webber moved, and Mr. DiFranco seconded support for the article, which carried by a vote of 6 in favor, and 1 abstention.

The FinCom reviewed the Special Town Meeting articles. The Committee was informed that Article 6 will be postponed for one week. For the remaining five articles, Mr. Webber moved support for all five, which was seconded by Mr. DiFranco. The FinCom voted unanimously to support all five articles.

The meeting adjourned to move to the Town Meeting at 6:50 PM.

The next meeting is scheduled for May 2, 2011 at 6:30 PM in the Middle School Cafeteria.

Respectfully submitted:

Valerie Jenkins
Recording Secretary