



Finance Committee

**350 Main Street
Webster, MA 01570**

**Earl Gabor, Chairman
Sarah Sansom, Vice Chairman
Christine Jackel, Recording Secretary
Jim Bazinet
Joe Beresik**

**Julie Dell'Anna
Neil Dixon
Michael Finamore
Stanley Lenky
Carole Marchand**

MINUTES
September 1, 2016

Present: Julie Dell'Anna, Neil Dixon, Mike Finamore, Earl Gabor, Carole Marchand
Sarah Sansom and Stanley Lenky

Absent: Jim Bazinet and Joe Beresik

The meeting of the Finance Committee was called to order at 7:00 PM in the Board of Selectmen's Room in the Town Hall by Chairman Earl Gabor. Interim T/A Pamela Leduc was also present.

Minutes

Motion was made by Neil Dixon and seconded to approve the minutes of the June 2, 2017 meeting. Vote: Yes-6; Abstain-1; motion carried.

Motion was made by Carole Marchand and seconded to approve the minutes of the July 11, 2016 meeting. Vote: Yes-6; Abstain-1; motion carried.

The next item on the agenda was budget review for May, June, July and August. There were no questions for May. Several line items in June were brought up: Chairman Gabor asked what the \$1,200 was under community development; Ms. Leduc said this is an in-kind grant contribution and has been in the budget for the past 16 years to cover the salary of Director Carol Cyr, who brings in a large amount of money in grants for the Town. Mike Finamore asked why not change the phone service/space if doing in-kind, and charge \$100/month for space. Ms. Leduc said in 20 years there has been no increase so will remain as is.

Ms, Leduc said she finished the final revised June schedule this morning and will meet with Lisa to discuss and make adjustment entries and it will be available to upload prior to the next meeting.

Line 300 Schools budget of \$18m, Ms. Leduc said \$690,000 was spent and this will include sewer/water in the future and she will have final numbers at the next meeting. Line 420 Public Works over by 13%; Ms. Leduc said this is for snow/ice will show on FY17 recap. Line 630 Parks/Recreation adjusted entry of \$.19 overspent; service not paid but contracted. Line 710 Retirement of Debt \$199,000; Ms Leduc said the Town receives \$200,000/year from the Fels Foundation and this was a miss posting and should be split. Line 914 Health Insurance; Ms. Leduc said this will be zero and unemployment compensation budget dollars will be transferred to a special revenue fund. There were no questions for July. In August, Line 186 – ADA; Ms. Leduc said this was not budgeted will encumber last year into FY17. Salary expense 18% of the budget. Line 919 Other EE Benefits; Ms. Leduc said \$168,000 was spent last year. If an employee doesn't take the Town's insurance, they are given \$2,000; which is a savings for the Town as individual's share if paid by the Town is \$6,000. She noted the sick/vacation buyouts for those hired after July 1 has been changed and these employees will not be eligible for buyout; this applies to non-union and non-contracted employees. She said last year there was one individual who received it and that was the Deputy Chief. She said if the employee lets her know of their intention to retire one year in advance they received the payout.

There was some discussion regarding the Inspection Service Fee program. Ms. Leduc said there is no increase in fees and that the inspection fee has been added to the permit fee. Ms. Leduc said she agrees with Mike Finamore who suggested doing this many times in the past. Inspectors were paid monthly and had no accountability. Mike Finamore said he was told now they pay inspection fees and \$25 to the inspector and pay each time the inspector comes out. For example, a single family new construction up to 200 amp service, the current charge is \$100.00. They are proposing the inspection fee will be \$50.00 and will go to the revolving fund.

Chairman Gabor is also chairman of the Charter Review Committee and one of the items under review is Section 3-9 which defines the composition, term of office, powers and duties of the Finance Committee. This states the committee shall consist of fifteen members, and all the members shall serve for terms of three years each. Chairman Gabor said he looked at other towns and nine (9) seemed to be the average. Mike Finamore said that in the past the Board of Selectmen refused to appoint anyone, but noted the Moderator does appoint his three. Stanley Lenky said that due to the way things had been in the past, no one wants to go on the committee. Motion was made by Stanley Lenky and seconded to change to nine (9) members; with three (3) appointments made by the Board of Selectmen and Moderator and the other three elected. Vote: Yes-6; No-1; motion carried. Neil Dixon suggested removing "shall" and replace with "will." Same applies to Section B in regard to powers and duties. Chairman Gabor said a committee report is expected by the end of September. Ms. Leduc said this will get rid of any ambiguity and be clearly stated. Mike Finamore said the Town charter supersedes MA General Law. Motion was made by Mike Finamore and seconded for anyone with recommendations for the charter review, send them to Chairman Gabor and Vice Chairman Sansom before the next finance committee meeting. Vote was unanimous; motion carried.

Chairman Gabor said he was notified by the Office of the Attorney General, by Patrick Higgins (resident of Swansea), that the agenda for May 24 was in violation of the Open Meeting Law. The violation stated "Agenda has no specifics as required by the Open Meeting Law. Mr. Finamore (Chairman at the time) had been coached by Selectman Becker that this is a violation of the Open Meeting Law, and he is quoted in the January 26, 2016 Board of Selectmen's minutes that "Selectman Becker stated he attended a class during which the Attorney General's office strongly recommend not to have things discussed under 'other business unknown at time of posting' to prevent violations of the Open Meeting Law. Mr. Finamore stated the practice will remain until the State stops them. It is obvious that the Selectmen are paying attention to Coach other boards in Webster on the requirements of the Open Meeting Law, but it is also obvious that this violation is intentional and Chairman Finamore wants the state to tell him he is wrong, so as they say "be careful what you wish for." Mike Finamore said he called the Attorney General's office and discussed the agenda. Chairman Gabor said he would respond to the complaint sending his response. Motion was made by Stanley Lenky and seconded that Chairman Gabor respond to the Attorney General's office (with copies sent to the Finance Committee members). Vote was unanimous; motion carried.

With regard to free cash, Ms, Leduc said she will have an update within the next week. She informed the committee that the Board of Selectmen have appointed Lisa Dumont the "Acting Town Accountant." Ms. Leduc said Ms. Dumont attended a 3-day training for Municipal Accountants and currently is doing inter-departmental transfers and posting. Ms. Leduc said she is still responsible for journal entries. Depending on the outcome of filling the Town Administrator position of which she is a candidate, and if selected a replacement for her Town Accountant position will not take place before the Town meeting, but before year end. Ms. Leduc said she met with all department heads with regard to changes to the DOR made by MMA. Chairman Gabor reported on the Law Enforcement Trust Fund which provides that funds in this trust may be expended for the purposes specified in the statute without the necessity of any further appropriation by a municipality's appropriating body. Prior to the amendment, a municipality was required to make a further appropriation before a Police Chief could expend any of the funds. This trust was established as a separate account under the custody of the Treasurer. Ms. Leduc now has the Treasurer transfer the monthly interest that accrues from this trust, to the General Fund. This began on July 1st. Mike Finamore asked what the balance is saying he thought it was around \$200,000; Ms. Leduc said the updated balance is \$50,000.

The revenue from the beach was as follows: Memorial Beach general fund \$24,904; revolving fund \$49,693; compost revenue net \$8,700 and 4th of July \$8,055.30. The fees do not come close to what it cost to run the beach.

Ms. Leduc said she met with Mr. Fels and he is committed to the grant of \$120,000 for FY '17, and we can submit next year if needed. She noted that we can appoint two (2) police officers, and she recommended to the Chief that one be a Main Street patrolman,

and the second one, a detective. They are first going to look for lateral transfers to minimize training costs, and length of time to get them into their positions.

With regard to the Solar Farm agreement, the hospital owns the property but unsure of tax status. Mike Finamore requested a copy of the agreement. Chairman Gabor said he has been researching other towns and feels the Finance Committee should have a mission statement and guidelines, that we need to clearly define our mission. He stated the Finance Committee works with the best interest of the people in the town. Mike Finamore asked if the Interim T/A had a full list of town properties. Ms. Leduc said she has an accounting of all and could provide copies.

Chairman Gabor asked if anyone was interested in going to the annual AFTC meeting in October. Mr. Dixon, Mrs. Sansom, and Mr. Gabor indicated that they wanted to go. The registration form and fees will be sent out.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Finance Committee is scheduled for Thursday, September 29 at 7:00 PM in the Board of Selectmen's Meeting Room.

The committee will meet twice in October. The regularly scheduled monthly meeting will be held on Thursday, October 7th in the Board of Selectmen's Room in the Town Hall at 7:00 PM.

The committee will also meet on Monday, October 17th at 6:30 PM at BHS prior to the Town Meeting. The secretary will contact the School Department to request the meeting room next to the Auditorium for the committee's meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:35 PM.

Christine Jackel, Secretary

Earl Gabor, Chairman