

Finance Committee Minutes

February 13th 2013

The meeting was called to order at 7:05PM with Mr. David Herrick presiding, with Mr. Bill Hattendorf, Mr. Burt Imberman, Mr. Ira Yohalem, and Mrs. Prudence Spaulding in attendance. Guests were Mr. Michael Skorput, Mr. Nathaniel Yohalem, and Mr. Peter Marks, Highway Superintendent.

The Minutes were circulated at 7:00PM, and were accepted as read, Mr. Imberman 1st, Mr. Yohalem 2nd passed unanimously.

The following budgets were reviewed:-

Assessor's Consultant [10141.77] (\$5,000) level funded {\$5,000} this budget is for the appellate Tax Board Cases or to settle tax disputes, sometimes it is necessary to hire an outside professional to settle a tax dispute> If a case cannot be settled, it is sent to the appellate Tax Board and an appraiser and Town Counsel go with the board as expert witnesses. When this amount is not used it is, of course, rolled over to the next year! Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mr. Hattendorf 2nd passed unanimously.

Assessor's Computer Services [10141.44] (\$5,334) now requesting {\$4,231.33} the computer services budget resulted from an actual quote, from Paul S. Kapinos, with the Appraiser Software Contract being \$2,500 and the Motor Vehicle Software contract being \$1,731.33 with a total of \$4,231.33! Mrs. Spaulding 1st. Mr. Yohalem 2nd passed unanimously.

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission [6012.00] ((\$1012) now requesting {\$1,037} when questioned Mr. Skorput stated that the Regional Planning commission assisted our planning board, and helped with the grant from the state in administrating the use of that grant. Mr. Imberman 1st, Mr. Hattendorf 2nd passed unanimously.

Household Hazardous Waste [70539.00] (\$1,350) now requesting {\$1,100} this request is based upon a base fee of population as well as an additional fee for participation and disposal of the hazardous waste. Hazardous waste includes oil-based paint, pesticides, cleaning products, mercury fever thermometers, automotive supplies, driveway sealants, solvents and many other household products. Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mr. Hattendorf 2nd passed unanimously.

Town Records Preservation [10161.02] (\$26,122) now requesting {\$5,000}. On last year's budget the amount of \$26,122 was requested to hire a company to restore the town records. Now these records have been restored, and put on micro-film they need to be kept in a climate

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controlled area so that they will not disintegrate. This request for \$5,000 was to be seed money to hire an engineer and/or architect to design such a place. It is hoped that the microfilm can be stored in the library so that if something should happen to the town hall the town records would be preserved, although not in their original state! The original town records must be, by law, maintained in the town hall. There was some discussion about this \$5,000, and it was decided to put the requested budget item on HOLD until Mr. Skorput could present some actual figures including the architect's and engineer's estimate for their cost and the cost of the proposed area to be designed for the town records. Mr. Skorput stated that he would have the figures by March 7th.

The selectmen had requested the Finance Committee to make suggestions on how much the raises should be for the year and their manner of granting these raises. Mr. Herrick provided the committee with some information about the proposed raises of neighboring towns which ranged from 1% (Dalton) to 2.5% Richmond, Sheffield, and Williamstown, the other towns listed were giving raises of 2%. There were no figures for Sandisfield, Becket, Mount Washington, South Egremont, or Lee. There was some discussion about how the increases would be granted, although it was decided that the gross cost based on the town budget of the increase would remain the same. A motion was made to grant the salary increases for the FYI 2014 based upon the town budget to be 2.25%. The various departments would establish the actual increases to each individual based upon the evaluation of their performance. A motion was made to establish the salary increase of 2.25% to be administered by the department supervisors by Mr. Herrick 1st, Mr. Yohalem 2nd and passed unanimously.

Mr. Marks the Highway Superintendent came to present a problem existing with the loader, which had been scheduled to be replaced in the budget year 2017. The present loader has lost two of its cylinders, this prevents the loader for doing some of its activities, and what it does do must be done with great care and gentleness. Mr. Marks sought estimates, first to get three new cylinders for \$36,430 with a limited guarantee, or to rebuild the three damaged cylinders for \$13,854.76. With either the new cylinders or the rebuilt cylinders the remaining two cylinders could go. Mr. Yohalem asked if there were other parts that might break, to which Mr. Marks added that there was always the engine, and the rear end. This loader was purchased in 2004 and has not had regular servicing until 2009. Mr. Marks got an estimate of a new loader which would cost \$147,000, but with a \$52,000 on a trade in the net cost would be about \$78,000 which was about twice the cost of rebuilding the three damaged cylinders. A new loader comes with a two year warrantee! Now should the town decide to purchase a new loader it would go before the voters at town meeting and be placed outside 2 ½ but it would mean that the Highway Department would have to use the existing loader with great care! The Committee decided that a new loader was a better use of the town's money and a motion was made to put the loader on the town warrant, and include a one ton dump truck (previously

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scheduled to be bought during the 2024 fiscal year for about \$85,000 with a total of approximately \$165,000, this Mr. Imberman 1st, and Mrs. Spaulding 2nd passed unanimously.

The Committee then reviewed with Mr. Marks the proposed capital needs of the Highway department for the next four years.

Budget year 2014 replace Loader, (expected life 15 years) \$80,000 includes trade-in of the old loader; and purchase of 1 ton (F550) Dump Truck with body and plow for approximately \$85,000.

Budget Year 2015 replace Dump Truck (7300 last one bought in 2003 and expected to last 10 year) for about \$190,000 also replace F350 Pickup (bought in 2008 for about \$30,000

Budget Year 2016 replace Grader with a new or low hour used grader (expected life for about 15 years) \$250,000

Budget Year 2017 replace 10 wheeler

Budget Year 2018 replace Back Hoe.

Mr. Hattendorf circulated the budget approvals amount to date the Finance Committee has approved a total of \$1,484,432.34 with a Reserve Fund amount of \$21,439.11.

Mr. Herrick circulated the presentation of the Southern Berkshire Regional School District Budget for the Committee's perusal, and set the next Finance Committee Meeting Wednesday, February 20th at 7:00PM. The meeting adjourned at 8:20PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Prudence Spaulding, Secretary.

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