

Finance Committee Meeting
Acton Town Hall, Room 204
May 27, 2014

Members present: Steve Noone (Chair), Mike Majors (Vice-Chair), Margaret Woolley Buse
(Clerk), Pat Clifford, Mary Ann Ashton, Bob Evans, Bill Mullin, Herman Kabakoff
Members Absent: Doug Tindal

Chairman Noone called meeting to order at 7:32pm

- I. **Public Participation:** none heard
- II. **Update on Nursing Service:** Steve Noone informed the committee re: the Nursing Service. The Board of Selectmen has requested more details on the different possible future scenarios for the Nursing Service, so there will be a more detailed presentation to BoS on June 23rd, with a follow up presentation to Fincom on June 24th. In addition, Mary Ann and Bob are looking into the Nursing Service in more detail
- III. **Discussion of Audit Reports for the Minuteman Regional School District (MRSN)**
This is follow up to letter sent to Nancy Banks from Fincom. Steve: Audit gave unqualified opinion. Mary Ann: We need to keep an eye on this because MRSN has been in the news, most recently with Medford expressing opposition to taking on capital costs. Of the member communities, 10 have voted to affirm the agreement, 5 towns deferred the vote, and Wayland has voted down the agreement. Margaret: I would like to know what the future different scenarios look like given that there seems to be some discontent amongst the new MRHS agreement as well as incurring heavy capital costs
- IV. **Finance Committee Business: Committee Assignments**
 - a. Pat: ACHC, SATSAC
 - b. Bob: Health Insurance Trust, Regional School District Savings Committee
 - c. Herman: CPC, BoS
 - d. Bill: Morrison Farm
 - e. Mike: Planning Board
 - f. Maryann: Schools, Three-way meeting (SC, Fincom, BoS), Morrison Farm
 - g. Margaret: Acton 2020, Kelley's Corner
 - h. Doug: EDC
- V. **Collective Bargaining Agreement with Acton Education Association: Presentation by Dennis Bruce, Chair, Acton Public Schools**
 - a. Discussion over the lack of clarity in the numbers presented: general confusion over what the salary percentage increase year over year really represents: Bob: the financial summary slide doesn't make sense because it conflates what's been negotiated, vs what would happen anyway.; Dennis: It was designed to show the whole impact of the financial impact; Bill: Question about financial summary chart—difficult to understand, needs to be clearer; Margaret: How does this contract compare with others, in terms of percent increases, etc? Mary Ann: Too different to really compare.

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- b. Discussion of new Thursday policy: *Pat*: may be confusing to parents/student; *Margaret*: Like the new Thursday policy. *Mary Ann*: New Thursday policy will take some time getting used to; 5 minutes shorter only in Elementary schools? *Dennis*: yes
- c. Discussion of timing of contract being made public: *Herman*: Why was the public not given any time to see the contract? *Dennis*: That's what the school committee wanted—they wanted to vote on it at a regular meeting. *Margaret*: Seems like it's not so hard to give the public a bit of time to digest the contract before voting on it;
- d. Other questions: *Margaret*: What % of teachers have master's degrees? *Dennis*: Majority do. *Steve*: Who is new finance director? *Dennis*: Interim person from Boxborough. Can we have a year-end report at next meeting? *Dennis*: We'll see.

VI. **Finance Committee Work Plan Fiscal Year 2015:** Three major initiatives: Global Cash Flow; Long-Range Planning, and Community Outreach.

- a. *Margaret*: Happy to help with Community Outreach, keep PTSO outreach, not neighborhood groups, rework warrant message, do either articles to Beacon or own background document; not do BLOG yet until we get more comfortable with our own public voice.
- b. *Pat*: what are we hoping to accomplish this summer?
- c. *Mary Ann & Margaret*: Schedule time with PTSO/other group outreach; create schedule for documents that we can do. Determine what documents they would be, when would they be released, and what outlets would we use for distribution.

VII. **Committee Reports**

- a. *Herman* reported on BoS meeting: CVS project proceeding, new tenant where Acton Jazz Café was, Mexican restaurant; Discussion about site plan for wood cutting business
- b. *Margaret* on Kelley's Corner Committee: *Roland Bartl* reported that *Jamie Eldridge* had secured a \$3 million earmark in the state budget for Kelley's Corner infrastructure
- c. *Mike*: We should start the conversation of getting a full-time Economic Development Officer. *Margaret* commented that in this year's budget that FTE didn't make the cut.

VIII. **Meeting adjourned at approximately 9:30pm**