

Town of Sudbury ~ Finance Committee
Minutes of Meeting
Thursday – January 20, 2005
Lower Town Hall – 7:30pm

Present: Co-Chairs Bob Jacobson & Marty Ragonas, Tracy Billig, Norman DeLuca, Michael Grosberg, Bill Kneeland, Larry Rowe, John Nikula, and Sheila Stewart. Also present: Suzanne Petersen, Finance Director, and Robin Porcella, Recording Secretary.

Item 1: Opening Remarks:

The meeting was opened at 7:35pm.

Item 2: Reserve Fund Transfer (#05-14):

Reserve Fund Transfer #05-14 is for \$2,800.00 and is being requested by the Department of Public Works. The funds are needed to hire a licensed trapper to remove the beavers from Camperdown Lane and behind the Peter Noyes School bus parking lot.

VOTED: Motion to approve the Reserve Fund Transfer #05-14 in the amount of \$2,800.00 to the Department of Public Works. On vote, motion carries 7 in support, 0 opposed, and 2 absent (Grosberg & Billig).

Item 3: Approve Minutes (Jan.13, 2005):

VOTED: Motion to approve the minutes from the January 13, 2005 meeting. On vote, motion carries 8 in support, 0 opposed, and 1 absent (Grosberg)

Item 4: FY06 Budget Hearing – Town of Sudbury

Co-Chair Bob Jacobson welcomed everyone to the Town of Sudbury's FY06 Budget Hearing. He informed everyone that the next scheduled meeting is January 24th, and that the FY06 Budget for Minuteman High School, Capital Improvement Planning Committee and the Community Preservation Committee will be discussed.

Selectmen John Drobinski thanked the Finance Committee for all of their hard work this year and for the past year.

Town Manager, Maureen Valente made the FY06 Budget Presentation on behalf of the Town. She informed the committee, that the Department Heads were in attendance in case the committee had any questions they needed answered.

Maureen Valente reminded the committee that some of the wage increases will look bigger than what they actually represent. She reminded the committee that a couple of the unions just settled their contracts and the increases go back to FY04. Therefore, the percentage increase between FY05 and FY06 will appear to be higher than it actually was.

Maureen Valente informed the committee that there are 30 department's that exist within the Town's budget, but for tonight she will be discussing the four major departments that have the greatest effect on the budget: Public Safety (Police & Fire), Public Works, and the Goodnow Library.

Police Department: One of the goals is to protect the current staffing levels. There are currently 27 authorized sworn positions. By the end of this year, it will be the first time in several years that all positions have been filled in this department. The standard would be 2 officers for every 1,000 people. Sudbury's population has grown to 18,000 and using that standard, 9 more police officers would be needed to meet that ratio.

Correction to Slide 14: Wayland is listed as 2.02, and the figure should be 1.70.

Marty Ragonese asked if it is hard to find academy trained officers. Maureen Valente stated that it is. She stated that the Chief of Police and the Assistant Town Manager spend a great deal of time reviewing the potential list provided by civil service. She informed the committee that there are now 3 female officers on the department, and she is very pleased with the current force.

Fire Department: The Department is looking to hire an Assistant Fire Chief in the upcoming fiscal year. \$73,000 is being asked for to cover this new position. The assistant chief's position is in all the budgets, except for the non-override budget. This position is essential in order to attend to the mounting administrative duties that have become part of the routine for Fire Departments. The department currently consists of 1 chief (the only administrative position), 3 dispatchers, 1 secretary, and 30 fire fighters. Chief Ken MacLean was introduced to discuss some of the different training & requirements of the fire department.

Public Works: Maureen Valente stated that this is a fairly new department within the Town. The Public Works Department consists of: Engineering Department, Streets & Road, Trees & Cemetery, Transfer Station, Parks & Grounds Department. There has been some reorganization within this department due to retirements of employees in some of the higher paid positions. Capital Lease Purchases and the need to replace aging vehicles continue to be a concern. New street signs are being installed and all must be replaced by 2008.

Goodnow Library: The committee was introduced to the library director, Bill Talentino. The library is part of the Minuteman Network, which means patrons can return books from other library in Sudbury, and libraries in other Towns may request books from Sudbury to be sent via courier.

Marty Ragonese thanked Maureen Valente for the presentation. The committee took a five-minute break before continuing on.

Item 5: Revenue Update:

The total projected revenues for fiscal year 2006 is estimated to be \$66,482,383. The committee was informed that there was more information in their actual budget books

regarding some of the figures being shown tonight. Maureen Valente stated that the Town Department's budgets are lean, and that they are spending all the money available to them. Free Cash has been certified at \$855,000. Maureen Valente stated that free cash was almost not certified due to a problem with an old account for \$62,000. She believes this is the year to get the deficit wiped off, so there will not be any problems in the future. Maureen Valente stated that the next update would be when the Governor's Budget is released. She believes we might see an increase in Chapter 70 funds, but is not positive. Legally, House 1 must be presented by February 1.

The committee was advised that the Board of Selectmen have not decided or discussed the amount of any potential override.

There being no further business, the committee adjourned at 9:40pm.