

**Town of Sudbury ~ Finance Committee  
Minutes of Meeting  
Monday - September 17, 2007  
Flynn Building Conference Room – 7:30pm**

**PRESENT:** Chair Chuck Woodard, Jamie Gossels, Bob Jacobson, Jim Jacobson, Bill Kneeland, Marty Ragones, Sheila Stewart, Ralph Verni, and Debbie Zurka

**Item 1: Approve meeting minutes:**

Corrections were handed in to be made to the June 18 and July 9, 2007 minutes.

VOTED: On motion, to approve the minutes of the June 18 and July 9, 2007 minutes with the understanding the submitted changes will be made. Motion made by Ralph Verni and seconded by Debbie Zurka. On vote, motion carries 8 in favor and 0 opposed.

**Item 2: Transfers and Other Business:**

There were no transfers to be voted on.

**Item 3: Budget Review Task Force Update:**

Marty Ragones provided the committee with a hand-out listing the discussion topics for the Budget Review Task Force (BRTF).

Marty Ragones informed the committee that the BRTF is an enthusiastic group, but there will definitely be a learning curve for the next few months. Bob Jacobson informed the committee that representatives from the cost centers will be making presentations to the BRTF, and will be explaining their respective budget process and how they go about making certain decisions. Marty and Bob both indicated to the new FinCom members that they might find it helpful to attend to the meetings as it will be a good learning process for all new members. Marty Ragones informed the committee that the BRTF would not be meeting in January because of the budget hearings that will be taking place.

Debbie Zurka asked if there was a schedule stating when the different topics would be discussed. Marty Ragones stated that the committee is working on one, and that when it is finish she will provide a copy to the FinCom. Marty stated that as they approach the date of when the different topics will be discussed, that reading materials will be placed on the town's websites for everyone's access.

Ralph Verni inquired about the dates of any future meetings that might be set. Bob Jacobson provided the following dates: October 8, 22 November 5, 26 December 10.

**Item 4: Code of Conduct:**

Ralph Verni informed the committee that Town Manger Maureen Valente and Finance Director Andrea Terkelsen took some of the current versions and created a version for the FinCom. He believes they did an excellent job and was very pleased with the material.

Ralph asked this committee for their opinions, so that the materials can be posted on the website. Chuck Woodard proposed that the committee take a look at the materials before the next meeting, so that if anyone has any questions/concerns they can be addressed at the next meeting.

Chuck Woodard stated that he would follow up with Mark Thompson, in regards to what the process for emailing each other should be.

Since the committee was discussing the possibility of giving info to the press, Bob Jacobson informed the committee that Stacy Hart has left the Town Crier. She has accepted a position with another organization. No one has been appointed to fill her position. She had encouraged Bob to contact her successor as learning the budget process is a very difficult task.

#### **Item 5: Letter to Cost Centers – Final Draft:**

Chuck Woodard asked for comments and suggestions on the final draft of the letter. Bob Jacobson stated that an email was sent to everyone, regarding the tone of the letter. He does not want to give the impression to the cost centers that the committee will support an override budget at this time. Bob suggested asking for three budgets: a 2%, 4%, and then whatever the cost center wants to submit.

Sheila Stewart asked why we had to allow the centers to provide whatever they want. Bob stated that it gives them a chance to provide what they will actually be voting on. Bill Kneeland stated the centers will always provide a budget of what they want. He likes to see the budgets that show what is needed to maintain a level service/ level staff budget.

Sheila Stewart stated that if Bob's figure of 1.87% is correct, than why not just say this is what we expect, and then when the working group discussions start, than change the percentage. She suggested just asking for a non-override budget. She suggested that it be let known that goal of the FinCom is to have a non-override budget, and then depending of the figures that come in it will be determined if an override is necessary. Bob Jacobson stated that 2% should not be an override, but 4% will be unless we get an extraordinary amount of state aid.

After further discussion, it was decided that rather than a 4% budget, the FinCom would request a level staff budget allowing for actual increases in fuel and utilities as well as benefits and insurance.

Ralph Verni asked if the committee had the right to tell the cost centers what the FinCom expected to be discussed at the budget hearings. Bob Jacobson stated that we probably could, but it would not be very fair to them. Chuck Woodard stated he believes we need to let the cost centers submit what they want, it is almost a professionally courtesy.

#### **Item 6: Liaison Meeting:**

Chuck Woodard asked if everyone was comfortable with the schedule and if they had any questions.

Bill Kneeland asked who the contact for SPS is, and when the meetings usually take place. Bob Jacobson informed him the meetings usually take first place in the morning and that John Brackett's secretary should be the contact.

Chuck Woodard thought of two more questions that he would like to have answered. The number of part-time employees eligible for benefits. Bob Jacobson stated the he would like to know the number of retirees with insurance coverage.

**Item 7: Budget Process Preparation:**

Instead of the FinCom holding a fall education meeting, members are encouraged to attend the Budget Review Task Force Meetings.

**There being no further business, the committee adjourned at 9:25pm.**