

**Town of Sudbury ~ Finance Committee
Minutes of Meeting
Monday - January 26, 2009
Lower Town Hall – 7:30pm**

Present: Chairman Chuck Woodard, Todj Gozdeck, Jaime Gossels, Bob Jacobson, Bill Kneeland, Marty Ragonas, Jim Rao, Sheila Stewart, and Debbie Zurka.

Opening Comments:

The meeting was opened at 7:35pm.

Community Preservation Committee Budget Hearing:

Chris Morley, chairman of the CPC was introduced to the committee. Chris Morley started his presentation by explaining that the CPC is mindful of the economic climate and that the state & town is facing reduced revenues. There were 17 applications submitted for CPA funds, and the committee is considering 11 for Town Meeting. The CPC is still in deliberations.

The CPA balance is approximately \$2.3 million + interest. The town received a 71.26% match this past October. Todj Gozdeck asked when the match is decided. Chris Morley explained that match is received one year in the arrears. The match for FY09 will be received in October 2009. The state is warning to expect to a 35% match for FY09.

Chris Morley gave a brief description of the eleven articles that will be proposed at Town Meeting.

The two proposals relating to the CSX acquisition were discussed. The first proposal is requesting \$700,000 to acquire the rail road corridor, and the second is requesting \$25,000 to create a concept design plan for the Bruce Freeman rail corridor. Bob Jacobson asked what would happen with the \$25,000 if the articles do not pass at Town Meeting. Chris Morley responded that it would go back to the CPA.

Bill Kneeland asked if it possible to get a copy of the debt schedule for the CPA projects. Jody Kablack stated she would request a copy from the Town Accountant.

Robert Stein, resident of Sudbury, stated that when the CPA was adopted, it was approved by a narrow margin. The reason it was probably approved was because the residents were told we would be receiving a 100% match from the state. Because of the economy and the lower state matches, he suggested suspending the CPA since it does not seem to be lucrative for the town. Bob Jacobson responded that we are responsible for the projects that have already been approved, but we can stop approving new projects. Chris Morley responded that discussions did take place explaining state matches of less than 100% could be received.

Citizens Presentations:

Robert Stein: stated that he has been attending every budget hearing, LS & SPS school committee meeting, and all selectmen meetings the last few months. The simple way to avoid lay-offs is implementing pay freezes. Mayors and corporations have been implementing pay freezes, and he finds it hard to believe that unions could be expecting raises in this economy. He stated that he is glad to hear the non-union employees have accepted the idea of a pay freeze, and believes this will be a good push for the unions.

Carole Wolfe: stated she would like to discuss the two CPC articles relating to the CSX purchase. She stated that these articles are to strictly purchase and develop the rail trail than to try to protect the well water and wild life. She believes there is no pressing need to purchase the corridor and that the funds should be held and used for more important projects. By purchasing the corridor, that town will be responsible for the maintenance & operation of the trail, which will put more strain on the staff. She informed the committee that the CPA matches can go down to as low as 5%. She thanked the FinCom for giving citizens an opportunity to participate in these hearings.

Jim Nigrelli: stated that Carole Wolfe made a lot of good points. It needs to be known that the purchase of the corridor will place additional work on the Town staff and add additional costs to the town. It also needs to be determined who will be responsible for the clean-up of the contamination that was found. He stated that the Town Planner admitted that this is not a high priority and that we may proceed with other articles. He is wondering how much more money needs to be spent before it is realized whether or not this project can be built.

Chuck Woodard asked if Jody Kablack would like to respond to the comments that were made. Jody Kablack explained that some minor contamination was found. CSX will be responsible for the clean up. This would be contingent upon the sale taking place. Due to the economy, this is being considered a low priority, but the goal is to continue to make some progress on this project.

Dan DePompei: stated that the rail trail is a wonderful idea and that there is no question that the funds should be spent. He stated that this has been a project in the works for the last five years. No one is sure whether it is a local, regional, or state project. He would like to see the article give the Rail Trail Conversion Advisory Committee some oversight on a concept plan. He stated that there is a lack of communication between the town and the Rail Trail Conversion Committee.

There being no further business, the committee adjourned at 8:20pm.