

Town of Sudbury ~ Finance Committee
Minutes of Meeting
Monday – June 22, 2009
7:30pm – Flynn Building (Silva Room)

Present: Chair Chuck Woodard, Bob Jacobson (arrived 7:35pm), Bill Kneeland, Marty Ragonas, Jim Rao, and Sheila Stewart.

Absent: Jamie Gossels

Opening Comments

The meeting was opened at 7:31pm. Chuck Woodard informed the committee that they were now down to seven members. This is due to Debbie Zurka not seeking to be re-appointed after her term expired and that Todj Gozdeck has not been re-appointed. Both terms expired at the conclusion of the Annual Town Meeting.

Item 1: Approve Meeting Minutes

The committee was asked to approve the minutes from the May 11th & 18th meeting, and the minutes from the June 15th meeting. The committee was informed that Chuck Woodard and Todj Gozdeck had previously emailed some corrections to be made. The committee was asked if they had any other suggestions/corrections.

Voted: On motion to approve the minutes of the May 11, 2009 meeting with the understanding that the suggested corrections be made. Motion made by Marty Ragonas and seconded by Bill Kneeland. On vote, motion carries 5 in support, 0 opposed, and 2 absent (Gossels, Jacobson).

Voted: On motion to approve the minutes of the May 18, 2009 meeting with the understanding that the suggested corrections be made. Motion made by Jim Rao and seconded by Bill Kneeland. On vote, motion carries 5 in support, 0 opposed, and 2 absent (Gossels, Jacobson).

Voted: On motion to approve the minutes of the June 15, 2009 meeting with the understanding that the suggested corrections be made. Motion made by Jim Rao and seconded by Bill Kneeland. On vote, motion carries 5 in support, 0 opposed, and 2 absent (Gossels, Jacobson).

Transfers and Other Business

Transfers – There were no transfers to be voted on.

Other Business – Chuck Woodard reminded the committee members that their next meeting is scheduled for July 20th. The agenda for the night will be to interview candidates to fill the second vacancy on the committee and to vote on any transfers.

The committee was informed that an advertisement is to run in the Town Crier this coming Thursday stating that applications are being accepted to fill the second vacancy on the committee. The interviews for this vacancy will take place at the July meeting.

The committee discussed the idea of having their future meetings taped and made available on the town website or to have the meetings shown live and replayed on the local cable channel. Chuck Woodard preferred to have the meetings taped and made available on the website. He did not think they had the following to justify the cost of having their meetings taped lived. Bob Jacobson thought it sent a nice message to the public if the committee had the meeting shown live and replayed on cable. Jim Rao stated his decision would be decided on the cost.

Chuck Woodard asked Jim Rao to provide a brief description regarding the progress to date of the working group evaluating school administration consolidation. The committee was informed that five meetings had been held, with representatives from stakeholder groups in both Sudbury and Lincoln attending. In total, the working group consists of 12 people. In his opinion the meetings have been going well, with the group heading down a dual path of looking at the relative costs and benefits of different options to formally consolidate school administrations, while also looking at other cost saving opportunities that could be realized and that are focused on sharing resources across districts such as IT payroll, etc. He stated the education/learning phase for the group is winding down. As part of this diligence process, the working group has interviewed the superintendent's for SPS and LSRHS to gain better clarity on their respective administrative operations. In addition, the group interviewed the respective superintendents for both Concord-Carlisle and Acton-Boxborough to learn more about how those school administrations function. The group is working to schedule a meeting with the Dover-Sherborn superintendent. Once the diligence process has been completed, a more formal mission statement and project plan will need to be developed as the ultimate goal of the group, should consensus be achieved, is to have an article ready by December to be presented at the next Annual Town Meeting.

Item 3: Member Feedback

Marty Ragones started the discussion by thanking everyone for their input. She believes this a good exercise to follow through on at the end of each year.

Marty Ragones went over the results from her discussion with the FinCom members. A copy of the results had been emailed to all committee members earlier in the day by Marty. The discussion took place regarding the budget process, the initiatives of the committee, the leadership of the committee, the Budget Working Group, the Budget Review Task Force, and the letter that is sent to the cost centers annually.

Item 4: Chair position through ATM 2010

Marty Ragones stated that prior to the meeting she had spoken with Jamie Gossels, and Jamie is willing to serve as a vice-chair.

Voted: On motion to support the appointment of Chuck Woodard as Chairman and Jamie Gossels as Vice-Chairman through the 2010 Annual Town Meeting. On vote, motion carries 6 in support, 0 opposed, and 1 absent (Gossels).

Item 5 & 6: New member interviews:

The committee members were reminded of the new FinCom criteria list that was emailed to them previously.

The applicants interviewed were Robert Stein and Joan Carlton.

The applicants were asked the same set of questions that the committee had previously prepared. Some of the questions included: explain your background, why they applied, their comfort level with public speaking, their willingness to take a leadership role, and would they be willing to serve on the committee for at least three years.

Due to rumors circulating, Bob Stein was questioned as to whether or not he had moved from the Town of Sudbury. Bob Stein explained that he has not and does not have any intention to sell his home in Sudbury.

Item 7: Vote on new member to replace Debbie Zurka:

As to not influence how other committee members would vote, it was agreed that the FinCom members would list their preference on a sheet of paper and the chairman would tally the votes. It was noted that the results of the FinCom members' individual vote would be documented in the minutes.

The first ballot resulted in a tie (3 votes for Bob Stein & 3 votes for Joan Carlton). It was agreed that the members would give a brief reason as to who they voted for and why. After everyone had a chance to speak, it was agreed that a second ballot would be placed.

Results of Ballot #1:

Jim Rao – voted for Bob Stein – Reason being that he has the education since he attends the meetings, is committed to the town, and he has noticed a change in his performance at town meetings.

Marty Ragones – voted for Joan Carlton – Reason being she believes she will be a good asset to the committee and has the experience.

Bob Jacobson – voted for Bob Stein – Reason being is that he has dealt with issues regarding the town for many years, he attends meetings regularly, and when given information he is open to changing his view on matters.

Chuck Woodard- voted for Joan Carlton-Reason being is that he believes her budget experience will be a bonus for the committee. He has concerns about some of the Bob Stein's past public comments.

Sheila Stewart – voted for Joan Carlton –Reason being is that she likes her experience and what she has to offer to the committee, and likes the fact that she is a long-term resident.

Bill Kneeland- voted for Bob Stein – Reason being he has the educational and professional experience. He attends and engages at a lot of the meetings, although he does have a concern about his behavior at past meetings.

Ballot #2:

The second vote provided the exact same results as the first ballot. It was agreed to table the interviews/vote until the next meeting when all members could be present. The committee was informed that the whole process would need to be completed again. The committee and candidates agreed for the interviews to be held at the July 20th meeting.

There being no further business, the committee adjourned at 9:13pm