

**Board of Finance**  
**Regular Meeting – October 21, 2008**  
**MINUTES**

**Attending:**

Board of Finance Members: Al Alper, Robert Kelso, Jim Meinhold, Andy Pforzheimer, Warren Serenbetz, Lynne Vanderslice (7:35 p.m. arrival)

Others: Joseph Dolan, Brian Shea

**Call to Order:**

Robert Kelso called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.

**Approval of Minutes:**

- Special Meeting of September 23, 2008

Warren Serenbetz motioned that the Minutes be approved as written; Al Alper seconded, and the motion passed 5-0. (Vanderslice not present for voting)

**Follow up on FY 2010 Goals and Objectives:**

With respect to the financial projections discussed at the September 23rd BOF meeting, Mr. Kelso reported that he had met individually with both First Selectman William Brennan and Superintendent of Schools Dr. Gary Richards, and that he had also attended the Board of Selectmen meeting on October 6 to answer questions. He further advised that a meeting of the three boards was scheduled for October 29 at Comstock to discuss the situation collaboratively. He asked individuals for agenda item suggestions, i.e. what the objectives of such a meeting should be and what it should accomplish.

Extensive discussion ensued.

Andy Pforzheimer stated he would like to see a guidance number or target range come out of the meeting. Lynne Vanderslice stated if cuts were deemed necessary, she would like to see some kind of philosophical agreement as to the types of programs which should be reviewed. Mr. Serenbetz stated he thought it would be an opportune time to talk about what had to happen in order to get to a zero budget increase. Mr. Alper stated he would like to gain a better understanding of priorities and mandates by asking the respective boards what was driving their bottom line numbers. Jim Meinhold stated that he hoped that at the conclusion of the meeting the BOS and BOE had a very clear idea of what they needed to do in terms of where they need to come out from a budget standpoint. Mr. Kelso stated he felt it was important to lay out the question of what was possible in a real life sense while being cognizant of the public's concern with taxes.

Discussion continued on whether or not it would have more of an impact to come up with a number to communicate to the boards prior to the joint meeting and if changes to the assumptions would need to be made. Several board members agreed that understanding the ramifications of a zero budget increase and then using that as the starting point for discussion would be a good approach to the meeting. In addition, Mr. Serenbetz stressed that it was imperative that there was buy-in from the BOE and BOS on the model and assumptions prior to the meeting. Mr. Kelso stated that based on his conversations, he believed that was already the case with respect to what the projections are and that it was now a question of what can be done to deal with the situation. He also noted he had already pointed out what potential soft spots in the projections were, such as debt service, tax relief program, etc., in his initial meetings.

Mr. Alper asked whether it was possible to defer, scale back or cancel projects that already had appropriations and bond authorizations. Joe Dolan explained that the appropriation is an authorization to spend, not a mandate. Discussion continued on current bond market conditions, debt service options, and the Town's future long-term capital projects.

Mr. Kelso said he would send out a draft of the agenda to board members as soon as it was available for their review prior to the joint meeting on the 29<sup>th</sup>.

### **Report of the Pension Investment Committee Representative:**

Mr. Kelso reported that the Pension Investment Committee met with representatives from Vanguard on October 1 to discuss investment performance and Vanguard's suggestions for future actions. He distributed materials that compared June 30 to September 30 and advised that allocation of assets was within guidelines but that there was unrealized depreciation in the assets during that time period. He noted that the actuarial valuation which affects the FY 2010 employer contribution would be based on the June 30<sup>th</sup> 2008 valuation, not September 30. Discussion followed Mr. Kelso's report.

### **Update of FY 2009 Financial Status:**

Mr. Dolan distributed materials and reported that he was not seeing anything unusual, despite current market conditions, and that revenue as of September 30, including taxes and fees, are consistent with the same period last year. He answered questions from board members with respect to back tax collection and revenue, interest income from investments, and tax deferral levels due to the elderly and disabled tax relief program.

### **Review and Acceptance of Letters From the Public:**

Mr. Meinhold reminded the Board that it had solicited public feedback with respect to the financial projections published in the local newspapers recently, and he reported that 14 letters to the BOF expressing opinions were received from the following individuals:

1. Ed Papp
2. Matthew Davies
3. Edward Tyrrell
4. Frank Dunn
5. Jane Field
6. Susan Resch
7. Nick Friese
8. Kimberly Purcell
9. Linda and Bert Pykosz
10. Brian and Robin Lynch
11. Orrie and Gail Zolluccio
12. Paul Bacher
13. James Kamp
14. Dorothy Hutchinson

Mr. Kelso asked for a motion to acknowledge receipt of and formally accept the letters received by the Board of Finance from the public; Mr. Serenbetz so motioned, Mr. Alper seconded and the motion passed 6-0. (Copies of referenced letters appended hereto.)

*Note:* Mr. Kelso advised that he would add the letters received from the public as an agenda item for the October 29<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**Other Business:**

- Mr. Alper advised that with respect to the contact information he had committed to giving at the last meeting for neighboring towns interested in pursuing a Joint Management Purchasing study, he would be forwarding additional names to Mr. Serenbetz after Election Day in November.
  
- Mr. Meinhold reminded the group that they had agreed several months ago to formally request a budget presentation format change from the respective boards and asked if that request had ever been conveyed to the appropriate individuals. Mr. Dolan stated he was not aware if that request had been communicated to the BOE yet and suggested that someone from the BOF contact Ken Post about it as soon as possible. Mr. Alper suggested that change request be conveyed on the 29<sup>th</sup> at the joint BOF/BOS/BOE meeting.
  
- Mr. Kelso informed the Board that he would not be at the November 18 meeting as he expected to be out of the country then but that Mr. Serenbetz would be assuming chairman duties in his absence.

**Public Comment:**

No public comment.

**Adjournment:**

There being no further business, Mr. Kelso asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Pforzheimer so motioned; Mr. Meinhold seconded, and the motion passed unanimously at 8:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Anna Corra  
Recording Secretary