

TOWN OF KINGSTON

MASSACHUSETTS

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Minutes
9 February 2006

Chairperson Jean Landis Naumann opened a meeting of the Finance Committee at 7:30 PM on 9 February 2006. Also present were Frederick Baughman, Richard Gardner, Mathew Hamilton, Jason Lelio, Maurice Simard, and Claire Soares. Judythe Lewis was absent.

Robert Kostka, Chairman of the Board of Water Commissioners, met with the Finance Committee. Mr. Gardner, liaison to the Water Department, reviewed the department's Enterprise Fund request, noted a \$42,000 increase in the FY07 request, and observed that the Department turned back funds at the close of the last fiscal year.

Mr. Kostka explained the funds returned to the General Fund were primarily from unused overtime and the increase is due principally to contractual salary and wage increases and energy-related expenses. He also reported progress is being made in the department's leak-detection program.

Upon motion made by Richard Gardner and seconded by Frederick Baughman, following discussion, it was unanimously --

VOTED: To recommend an appropriation of \$1,384,507 for the FY07 Water Enterprise Fund subject to future adjustments in the cost of the debt service.

Mr. Kostka left following the review.

Upon motion made by Richard Gardner and seconded by Maurice Simard, following discussion and a 6 to 0 to 1 vote, it was --

VOTED: To accept the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 January 2006 as corrected.

Jason Lelio abstained from voting on the motion; all other members present and voting supported it.

Upon motion made by Jason Lelio and seconded by Maurice Simard, following discussion, it was unanimously --

VOTED: To authorize a transfer from the Reserve Fund of \$6,627.92 to the FY06 budget for Elections and Registration to cover the cost of the December 2006 special election.

The Committee deferred action on the Fire Chief's request for a transfer of \$12,404.84 for vehicle repair until it could be determined whether the manufacturer will pay for the repairs to the ladder truck and whether the bill has already been paid.

At the Wage and Personnel Board's request, its appointment was rescheduled to 23 February 2006 at 8:30 PM.

Jean Landis Naumann reported that the DOR has certified free cash as \$1,275,645.

There was a discussion of ways to make the transfer station more cost effective which included suggestions of curbside collection, a pay-as-you-throw policy, and raising sticker prices. Richard Gardner reported that the Capital Planning Committee did not act on the Superintendent's request for reconfiguration of the area.

Upon motion made by Richard Gardner and seconded by Mathew Hamilton, following discussion, it was unanimously --

VOTED: To create an informal subcommittee to determine the long-term needs of and improvements possible at the transfer station; to investigate how other towns manage solid waste; to determine the costs of curbside collection and a pay-as-you-throw policy; and other related topics; and further

That said subcommittee shall consist of two voting members from the Finance Committee and volunteers from the Capital Planning Committee who also would be voting members, and of three exofficio members, namely, the Town Treasurer, the Town Administrator, and the Superintendent of Streets, Trees and Parks who manages the Solid Waste Division.

Richard Gardner and Frederick Baughman volunteered to serve on the subcommittee as representatives from the Finance Committee. Mr. Gardner will ask for volunteers from the Capital Planning Committee to serve on the task force.

Thomas Bott, Town Planner, met with the Committee to review the Planning Board's budget request for FY07. He agreed that, because of the recent reduction in the mileage reimbursement, the request for travel and meetings could cut back by \$100.

Upon motion made by Jean Landis Naumann and seconded by Mathew Hamilton, following discussion, it was unanimously--

VOTED: To recommend an appropriation of \$43,268 for the Planning Board's FY07 budget of which \$34,757 is to be expended for salaries and wages and \$8,511 or expenses.

Mr. Bott reviewed the 40B affordable housing projects now going through the permitting process. He stated that state money is promised for affordable housing created under the Smart Growth, Chapter 40R (passed and funded) and Chapter 40S (passed but not yet funded), legislation. Selectman Paul Gallagher, who joined the meeting during the discussion, warned that Chapter 40S money, when passed, is more likely to be targeted to urban areas rather than suburbs. He said the regulations for 40S are not yet written.

Mr. Bott and Mr. Gallagher left the meeting following the reviews.

There was a discussion of --

- a current \$1.2 million deficit between available revenue and budget requests;
- increases in school costs contributing to the deficit;
- the Elementary School Committee's continuing effort to reduce expenses further;
- whether an override will be necessary to fund the FY07 budget;
- a reduction in the carrying charges for outstanding debt as a result of the Treasurer's expected refinancing in March;
- the Capital Planning Committee having voted to recommend \$319,600 for capital projects and equipment.

Jean Landis Naumann recommended a workshop on Conflict of Interest Law being given by the State Ethics Commission in the Kingston Town Hall on 21 March 2006.

The Committee reviewed the draft of the special town-meeting Warrant and of articles on the final annual town-meeting Warrant.

There being no further discussion or votes, the meeting was adjourned at 9:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Miriam Macinnis, Secretary