

TOWN OF KINGSTON

MASSACHUSETTS

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Minutes **19 March 2009**

Chairman Mathew Hamilton opened a meeting of the Finance Committee at 7:05 PM on 19 March 2009 at the Kingston Town Hall. Members present were Elaine Fiore, John LaBrache, Paul Ricci¹, and Claire Soares. Jason Lelio and Lawrence Hunt were absent. Also present were Town Administrator John Healey, Town Clerk Mary Lou Murzyn, Town Collector Priscilla Palombo, and Selectman Sandy MacFarlane.

Mr. Healey reported the KTEU will hold a meeting on 26 March 2009 to consider the Finance Committee's proposal to freeze FY10 salaries at the FY09 level. He provided copies of responses and questions employees directed to him. He asked for the Finance Committee's direction in responding to them.

Upon motion made by Elaine Fiore and seconded by John LaBrache, following discussion, it was unanimously—

VOTED: That the 1-per cent retroactive increase negotiated for KTEU employees for FY09 would be included in the FY10 KTEU salaries to be frozen if town meeting approves the KTEU contract at the special town meeting and the union accepts the wage freeze for those union employees.

John LaBrache said that, for fairness, the Committee is basing its calculations on a 7- per cent reduction in salary and wages or a 2.4-hour reduction in hours unless such an hourly reduction would affect the employees' ability to qualify for the Town's health insurance coverage.

John LaBrache reported that Governor Patrick is directing \$166,430 in Federal money to Kingston Elementary and Intermediate Schools and \$142,465 to the Silver Lake Regional School District.

John LaBrache reported the outstanding debt will be increased by \$2,000 as the result of two new notes issued.

¹ Paul Ricci arrived at 7:25 and did not participate in the first vote.

Upon motion made by John LaBrache and seconded by Elaine Fiore, following discussion, it was unanimously—

VOTED: To recommend an FY10 appropriation of \$2,810,292 for outstanding debt.

The Committee discussed an article for salaries for elected officials. Elaine Fiore recused herself from the discussion.

The Town Clerk indicated she would accept a wage freeze for herself but does not want her staff's hours cut because that would cut service to the public. Noting cuts in expenses, Ms. Murzyn asked that she be allowed \$200 to attend only two conferences and advised that the union employee's contract guarantees attendance at classes for professional development. The Committee agreed that she can reallocate \$ 750 for training so she can use \$550 for her conferences and \$200 for the Assistant Town Clerk's professional development.

The Town Collector noted that the Post Office will increase postage in May and that should be reflected in her budget. She said she would withhold her position on the FY10 freeze until the issue of whether the vacancy in her office staffing is resolved.

Upon motion made by Claire Soares and seconded by Mathew Hamilton, following discussion and a 2 to 1 vote, it was—

VOTED: To recommend a FY10 salary of \$23,628 at Step 5 for the Treasurer; \$61,572 for the Town Clerk, and \$61,572 for the Town Collector.

Mathew Hamilton and Claire Soares voted in favor of the motion; Paul Ricci opposed it; and Elaine Fiore and John LaBrache recused themselves from participating in the vote.

The Chairman said the Committee would revisit the postage allowance for the Collector at another meeting.

The Committee reviewed articles on the special town meeting warrant.

Upon motion made by Elaine Fiore and seconded by John LaBrache, following discussion, it was unanimously—

VOTED: To recommend that the special town meeting appropriate \$578,855 to be allocated to various

departments for FY09 expenses as requested in Article 1.

Upon motion made by Elaine Fiore and seconded by Paul Ricci, following discussion, it was unanimously—

VOTED: To make the Committee's recommendation on Article 2 at the special town meeting when the \$74,645 needed in FY09 and FY10 to fund the KTEU contract will be reapportioned to determine the FY09 number.

The Committee reviewed articles on the town meeting warrants.

Upon motion made by Mathew Hamilton and seconded by John LaBrache, following discussion, it was unanimously—

VOTED: To recommend that the special town meeting borrow \$250,000 for replacement of water mains as requested in Article 4.

Upon motion made by Elaine Fiore and seconded by Paul Ricci, following discussion, it was unanimously—

VOTED: To recommend favorable action on Article 12 of the annual warrant authorizing revolving funds.

Upon motion made by Elaine Fiore and seconded by Mathew Hamilton, following discussion, it was unanimously—

VOTED: To recommend favorable action on Article 13 of the annual warrant authorizing an expenditure of \$400,000 in accordance with the provisions of the Community Preservation Act for the Frederic C. Adams Building.

Upon motion made by Elaine Fiore and seconded by Claire Soares, following discussion, it was unanimously—

VOTED: To recommend favorable action on Article 13 of the annual warrant authorizing an expenditure of \$28,714 in accordance with the provisions of the Community Preservation Act for the Faunce School.

Upon motion made by Elaine Fiore and seconded by Claire Soares, following discussion, it was unanimously—

VOTED: To recommend favorable action on Article 13 of the annual warrant authorizing an expenditure of \$125,000 in accordance with the provisions of the Community Preservation Act for the Reed Community Building.

Upon motion made by Elaine Fiore and seconded by Claire Soares, following discussion, it was unanimously—

VOTED: To recommend favorable action on Article 13 of the annual warrant requesting an expenditure of \$20,000 in accordance with the provisions of the Community Preservation Act for a survey of historic buildings.

Upon motion made by Elaine Fiore and seconded by Paul Ricci, following discussion and a 3 to 2 vote, it was—

VOTED: To recommend unfavorable action on Article 13 of the annual warrant requesting an expenditure of \$75,000 in accordance with the provisions of the Community Preservation Act for the boatyard on Landing Road.

Mathew Hamilton and John LaBrache opposed the motion;

Upon motion made by Claire Soares and seconded by John LaBrache, following discussion, it was unanimously—

VOTED: To recommend favorable action on Article 13 of the annual warrant requesting an expenditure of \$50,000 conditionally in accordance with the provisions of the Community Preservation Act for the construction of a Habitat for Humanity House on the condition that housing so constructed be offered only to Kingston residents.

Upon motion made by Elaine Fiore and seconded by Claire Soares, following discussion and a 4 to 1 vote, it was—

VOTED: To recommend unfavorable action on Article 13 of the annual warrant requesting an expenditure of \$60,000 in accordance with the provisions of the Community Preservation Act for removal of the dam at Triphammer and restoration and beautification of the surrounding area.

Paul Ricci opposed the motion. Mathew Hamilton, Elaine Fiore, Claire Soares, and John LaBrache supported it.

The Chairman asked that Pine duBois be invited to attend the Committee's next meeting to discuss the requests on which there were two unfavorable votes under Article 13.

Upon motion made by John LaBrache and seconded by Paul Ricci, following discussion, it was unanimously—

VOTED: To recommend unfavorable action on Article 14 of the annual warrant requesting a demand fee for the Collector of Taxes.

Upon motion made by Elaine Fiore and seconded by Mathew Hamilton, following discussion, it was unanimously—

VOTED: To recommend favorable action on Article 16 of the annual warrant requesting a lock box for the Collector of Taxes.

Upon motion made by John LaBrache and seconded by Mathew Hamilton, following discussion, it was—

VOTED: To recommend favorable action on Article 17 of the annual warrant requesting provisions for Phase 2 sewer connections.

Elaine Fiore recused herself from the discussion and subsequent vote; all other members present and voting supported it.

Upon motion made by Paul Ricci and seconded by John LaBrache, following discussion, it was unanimously—

VOTED: To recommend unfavorable action on Article 19 of the annual warrant requesting a reduction in the

surcharge previously voted under the Community Preservation Act.

Elaine Fiore recused herself from the discussion and subsequent vote; all other members present and voting supported it.

A motion made by Paul Ricci and seconded by Mathew Hamilton to recommend favorable action on Article 20 of the annual warrant requesting elimination of the surcharge previously voted under the Community Preservation Act did not pass following a 2 to 2 vote. Elaine Fiore recused herself from the discussion and subsequent vote; Paul Ricci and Mathew Hamilton supported it; John LaBrache and Claire Soares opposed it.

Upon motion made by Mathew Hamilton and seconded by Claire Soares, following discussion, it was—

VOTED: To recommend unfavorable action on Article 23 of the annual warrant requesting an amendment to the General Bylaws pertaining to the Finance Committee.

Elaine Fiore and John LaBrache recused themselves from the discussion and subsequent vote; all others present and voting supported it.

Upon motion made by Mathew Hamilton and seconded by Paul Ricci, following discussion and a 3 to 1 vote, it was —

VOTED: To recommend unfavorable action on Article 24 of the annual warrant requesting an amendment to the General Bylaws pertaining to the Capital Planning Committee.

Elaine Fiore recused herself from the discussion and subsequent vote. John LaBrache opposed it; Mathew Hamilton, Paul Ricci, and Claire Soares supported it.

John LaBrache reported that based on a level-funded budget following a 7 per cent reduction in personal services, the budget is reflecting a balance of \$167,167 as of this date.

Upon motion made by Elaine Fiore and seconded by Claire Soares, following discussion, it was—

VOTED: To accept the Minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2009 as amended.

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Mathew Hamilton and Paul Ricci abstained from voting on the motion; all other members present and voting supported it.

There being no further discussion or vote, the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Miriam MacInnis, Secretary