

**Finance Committee Meeting  
Dennis Town Hall  
Tuesday, January 3, 2006  
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**Approved**

**Present:** Chair, Jim Plath, Peter McDowell, Robert Prall, Michael Brennan, William Crowell, Ted Dumas, Town Administrator Sandra Fife and Recorder Peggie Hunter

Finance Committee discussed two reserve fund transfers. The first involved the Employment Agreement Renewal for Town Administrator Robert Canevazzi. A \$106,150.00 salary for FY '06 was agreed upon. The average salary for nine Cape communities is \$108,000.00. The adjustment of \$5000.00 plus \$150.00 (COA) only through July 1, 2006 will be coming out of reserve fund. This salary increase will be effective retro September 1, 2005. If this transfer is not made, Mr. Canevazzi will have to wait until the next Town meeting in May 2006 to receive this increase. The budgeted second year salary shall be further adjusted by \$5000.00 before any cost of living is figured in for September 2006. The second year goes up another \$5000.00 with a satisfactory evaluation that will take place in the spring of 2006. Mr. Canevazzi's contract expires in September 2008 and is a three year contract.

**MOTION:**

Peter McDowell moved and William Crowell seconded and Finance Committee voted 6-0-0:

**Finance Committee voted approval of a reserve fund transfer in the amount of \$5150.00 for Town Administrator salary increase.**

Chair Jim Plath discussed second request for reserve fund transfer of \$5000.00 for initial repairs to expand jetty at Corporation Beach.

**MOTION:**

Robert Prall moved and Bill Crowell seconded and Finance Committee voted 6-0-0:

**Finance Committee voted to approve request for reserve fund transfer in the amount of \$5000.00 for repairs to expand jetty at Corporation Beach.**

Chair Jim Plath discussed FY '07 budget review process. Assistant Town Administrator Sandra Fife asked for a tentative meeting schedule so that Department Heads can be given advance notice. The Board of Selectmen will be done with all budgets by Thursday, January 5, 2006 and should be finished up their budget review by the week of January 17, 2006. Chair Jim Plath asked if the Finance Committee could begin their budget review process the last week of January. The Finance Committee will need to schedule at least 6-7 meetings. Peter McDowell suggested Committee refer to last year's schedule.

The following tentative schedule was presented: Thursday, February 2, Thursday, February 9 Wednesday, February 15, Thursday, February 16, Thursday, March 2, Thursday, March 9, Wednesday, March 15 and Thursday, March 16, all at 6:30PM. It was determined that the following Town departments should plan on coming before the Finance Committee: Planning, Town Clerk, Natural Resources, Treasurer, Town Accountant, Beaches and Recreation, Harbor, Golf, Buildings, Police, Council on Aging, Library, Legal, Health, Town Administrator, Public Buildings, Engineering and DPW. Assistant Town Administrator Sandra Fife suggested that the Finance Committee needs to bear in mind that the Library Department and Assessors Department (even though Assessors is not on the above list) should be placed on the schedule earlier rather than later due to the fact that both of those Department Heads will be leaving their positions. Ms. Fife will send out an email of meeting schedule listing the meeting date and department scheduled for that date.

**UPCOMING MEETINGS**

Chair Jim Plath discussed upcoming meetings that included an invitation to attend a Yarmouth Board of Selectmen meeting on January 17, 2006 at 7PM at Yarmouth Town Hall. This meeting will include a discussion by Yarmouth consultant regarding Chapter 70 funds. The Dennis Board of Selectmen will probably send someone to this meeting. The School Committee was also invited. Mr. Plath was not sure

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if there would be an opportunity for attendees to ask questions. If questions are entertained, it might make sense to have the Dennis consultant present at this meeting. Peter McDowell was not sure how prudent this is, since the consultant is paid hourly. Mr. McDowell suggested it might be more cost effective to tape the presentation and send it to the Dennis consultant. Mr. Plath felt that it was well worth having a consultant there, especially if questions were allowed. If it is Yarmouth's intent to disperse information, the Finance Committee would like the chance to study findings in order to react in a more informed manner. Sandra Fife believes that Chair Donald Trepte may be going to this meeting. Chair Jim Plath once again stressed that that someone from the Finance Committee should be in attendance at this meeting.

Chair Jim Plath also discussed a School Committee Meeting that the Finance Committee was invited to. This meeting will take place on Thursday, January 5, 2006 at 7PM and will discuss addressing budgets. Michael Brennan will attend.

**Budget Process**

Chair Jim Plath is concerned with how high projected revenues are. The Board of Selectmen has already started to go through the budget and the \$8000.00 short fall doesn't include what was budgeted in for Town Administrator's salary increase. Peter McDowell said that the Finance Committee is charged by law to put the budget together. Mr. McDowell has some problems with raising revenue estimates and spending next year's money. Peter McDowell suggested that we ask Town Administrator Robert Canevazzi to revisit local receipts to re-examine those receipts to make sure that they are no more than 5% of the previous year. If Town puts up that money this year, it will be spent and won't be available next year. Assistant Town Administrator Sandra Fife pointed out that \$140,000.00 of levy is funding police cruisers, instead of taking it out of free cash, and that the number now shown is 9.3 million. Numbers are based on previous year along with 10 year history. Chair Jim Plath wanted to know if there is money appropriated for any new positions. Assistant Town Administrator Sandra Fife said that new positions include a Police Bike Patrol and a new position at DPW which would include converting an \$18,000.00 per year position into a \$38,000.00 per year position. If the Selectmen are willing to set money aside for capital, it will be necessary to decrease expenditures such as personnel. Five year bond funding proposal will be presented to the Board of Selectmen on January 24, 2006. Items such as equipment, ramp construction and the culvert at New Boston Road could be funded by this bond. Money for these projects could be taken from the Capital Improvement Fund with payback via free cash.

Chair Jim Plath said if Committee takes the Town payroll for this fiscal year and next year's fiscal year, this would be a minimum of what the Town would need to raise. The Finance Committee would like Ms. Fife to get 2006 vs. 2007 estimated payroll, retirement and health insurance figures. Peter McDowell is dubious of borrowing money for capital items. Sandy will email these figures to Finance Committee. Chair Jim Plath feels more comfortable raising the revenues and reducing local aid. There is a certain number that is needed to meet obligations and Finance Committee needs to know what that number is. It will be easier to figure out optional spending, once Committee knows what obligatory spending is.

**MOTION:**

Peter McDowell moved and Michael Brennan seconded and Finance Committee voted 6-0-0:  
**Finance Committee voted to adjourn at 7:35PM.**