

Present: Chair James Plath, Peter McDowell, Brian Sullivan, Robert Prall, Ted Dumas, William Crowell and Michael Brennan. Also present Selectmen Donald Trepte, William Crowell, Sheryl McMahon and Paul McCormick, Town Administrator Robert Canevazzi and Assistant Town Administrator Sandra Fife and Recorder Peggie Hunter.

Chair James Plath spoke about the school situation and said that the Town of Yarmouth has voted to enact the provisions of Chapter 70. There is presently a \$613,000.00 deficit in our school budget. We may need an override for this amount. There is some continuing negotiation taking place.

Article 12-Large Capital Outlay

Chair Plath reviewed the capital items. The Capital Outlay Committee has done an outstanding job in paring down requests. They were able to bring a realistic number of items forward.

Chair Plath asked if we knew what the actual lease percentage is for the fire pumper. Sheryl McMahon believes it is less than 5%. William Crowell asked if there would be more restrictions if we lease it in terms of mileage, etc. Ms. McMahon didn't think so.

Peter McDowell has serious opposition to putting 1 million dollars into Sesuit Creek. It doesn't make sense to say that we should spend taxpayers' dollars of more that 1 million for Sesuit Creek, when the Town can't afford a lot of other requests.

Michael Brennan said that the Committee was looking for firm quotes for the DPW equipment.

Ted Dumas asked if cruisers are really cruisers or some other type of vehicle. There are four cruisers and one Expedition, which is like for like.

MOTION:

William Crowell moved and Michael Brennan seconded and Committee voted 6-1-0:
(Peter McDowell)

The Finance Committee recommended approval of Article 12 and recommended the transfer of \$235,825.00 from the Golf Capital Improvement Fund, transfer \$35, 500.00 from Cable Receipts Fund, transfer \$506, 213.00 from Free Cash, transfer \$500,000.00 from Capital Improvements Fund and transfer \$12, 500.00 from the Waterways Improvement Fund for a total of \$1,290,038.00.

Article 47

To see if the Town, in accordance with Section 8 of the amended agreement between the Towns of Dennis and Yarmouth establishing a regional school district, shall vote to instruct the school committee to draw up an amendment to said agreement setting for the terms by which the Town of Dennis may withdraw from the school district.

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Wayne Bergeron addressed the Article and has been teaching in the school district for 34 years. As a result of Yarmouth's decision, money would be better spent on our own children, rather than the children of Yarmouth.

Chair Plath asked about the scheduling of articles and asked if there was any chance of moving this article up. Donald Trepte said that all of the petitioned articles were put in the same area. Mr. McDowell suggested that the D-Y School District should be grouped together. The Board of Selectmen will discuss this on Friday morning, April 14, 2006.

MOTION:

Peter McDowell moved and Robert Prall seconded and Committee voted 7-0-0:

The Finance Committee voted to move Article 47 up with a grouping of like school articles.

Chair Plath said that this type of petition is what Town Meeting is all about. Chair Plath thinks that Article 47 should pass. There has been no issue that has been a greater strain than the school issue.

Mr. McDowell agreed with Mr. Plath. Because of the change, Dennis and Yarmouth had an agreement that each Town would pay their own way. Mr. McDowell will support Article 47 because the rules of the ballgame have changed.

William Crowell said that there has always been a clear understanding between the two towns and that we haven't yet been compensated for land taken for an elementary school in the Town of Yarmouth.

Chair Plath said the present School Committee has been working toward some sort of compromise. Any discussion was rejected when the Town of Yarmouth was approached.

Donald Trepte said that he wanted to clarify the chair position on the School Committee. The former chair and present chair are both residents of Dennis, so the proper rotation has taken place.

Wayne Bergeron thanked the Committee for their support. The majority of regional school districts that had the Chapter 70 choice have honored their regional school agreements.

MOTION:

Robert Prall moved and Ted Dumas seconded and Committee voted 7-0-0:

The Finance Committee voted to recommend approval of Article 47.

Article 49-Package Stores

Brett Webber of South Dennis reported on this non-binding Article. A voter initiative for a "Wine Only License" could soon be made available and Mr. Webber said that this would be detrimental to our community.

Chair Plath asked if the Town could bind the hand of the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Canevazzi said that the statutory way to do it would be the reversal of a ballot question. Chair Plath asked can the ABCC issue a license over a Board. The ABCC would not overrule the Board of Selectmen if the argument were a good jurisdictional argument.

Mr. McDowell asked how long would it take to run this by Town Counsel. It might do us well to know legally where we stand.

Michael Brennan doesn't see any clear and present danger involved and doesn't see a problem with the number of licenses that are issued.

Mr. Webber said it has been approved for the November ballot. Donald Trepte asked if this potential legislation before the state could have a major effect on Mr. Webber's business. The concern of the expansion could have an impact on Mr. Webber's business. Article 49 doesn't say that. The petition is not clear on what the issue is.

Chair Plath said that Article 49 leaves a ton of questions. In this draft form it leaves so much open. One possibility is to create a town by-law.

William Crowell said that it is not necessary to hear from Town Counsel. We have 13 licenses and at some point we may need more.

Mr. McDowell asked do we want to invest in clarification with Town Counsel or do we want to decide as a Committee.

Brian Sullivan said that we could save our money by not consulting Town Counsel on this issue.

MOTION:

William Crowell moved and Michael Brennan seconded and Committee voted 7-0-0:
The Finance Committee voted not to recommend Article 49 as written.

Article 22-Budget Supplements

Chair Plath read the listing of budget supplements. Sandra Fife spoke about the following items: \$15,000.00 for the Consultant on the school issue, line Item 15-Purchase of Services, 42,000.00, Line Item 16-Energy Supplies and that the balance of \$66,000.00 is low, Law Department for \$25,000.00, Municipal Buildings-\$5000.00 for building supplies line item and Personnel Services for Fire Department for the overtime line item.

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Michael Brennan asked about overtime number. Ms. Fife said \$630,000.00 plus \$200,000.00 totals \$830,000.00

David Johansen, DPW Department Head, said this is his first time in three years he is asking for money and most of it is out of his control.

William Crowell asked what criteria are used when a police detail is enlisted. David Johansen said we only use them when we need them. If staff isn't safe, a police detail is called in.

Peter McDowell asked about the amount paid to police relative to snowstorms and asked why police are charged to DPW budget, rather than the Police budget. Mr. Johansen said that we had 30 ice and snow events (not plowable) that required overtime.

Sandra Fife spoke about the street lighting issue and said that with the increase in electricity and the increase in the contract, the \$9500.00 might not make it.

Dennis Penner spoke about the Golf Department purchase of services and golf supplies. Irrigation pumps were started up earlier this year because of the dryer weather, which contributed to the increase.

Sandra Fife spoke about the fringe benefits for sick leave buybacks, which involved three employees who left.

Ms. Fife said that the balance in the Fire Department account is \$22,000.00 in the line item for overtime. Mr. McDowell worked figures for the Fire Department estimates which rounded out to be \$725,000.00. Mr. McDowell asked if the shifts have been increased with the new hires to reduce the overtime. Sheryl McMahan did some quick calculations and got \$190,000.00. Chair Plath came up with \$160,000.00.

Donald Trepte said that every week is not the same and would caution the Committee to get an answer from the Fire Chief. Mr. McDowell said the rate of spending took them through the busiest time of year. Ms. Fife said as long as they don't overspend on the bottom line.

Robert Prall asked for the balance of free cash and was told the balance is zero as the current amount is allocated to schools.

Committee will make a recommendation at Town Meeting.

Article 42-Airline Road

Joe Rodricks, Town Engineer, spoke about Article 42, which deals with an acre of land transferred by the Dennis Water District to serve as safety improvements to Airline Road. The article does incorporate a clean up of bookkeeping for a funding mechanism of

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approximately \$300,000.00 (likely to increase). If the roundabout does not come to fruition, the land will still be used for a safety purpose.

Mr. Rodricks explained in detail the drawing of the proposal. Mr. McDowell asked if it is expected that any lands will be taken by eminent domain. Mr. Rodricks said the Airline Road layout from 1966 is on file at the Registry of Deeds and that this is the layout that would be used. Mr. Rodricks said that a recommendation to the Board would be to use Chapter 90 funds, and that Chapter 90 criteria would need to be used. Mr. McDowell asked best guess for this project and Mr. Rodricks said a little over \$300,000.00, but prices will go up.

MOTION:

Robert Prall moved and Brian Sullivan seconded and Committee voted 4-2-1 (Opposed Peter McDowell and James Plath and Abstention William Crowell)

The Finance Committee voted to recommend the Article as written.

Article 49-Fireworks

To see if the Town, will vote to appropriate or transfer \$16,000.00 to fund the fireworks display during the Dennis Summerfest in August 2006, including all ancillary services associated with such fireworks (including without limitation, fire and police).

Janet Boudreau from South Dennis reported on this Article. The Board of Selectmen approved the use of West Dennis Beach unanimously on April 4, 2006. Radio stations will provide a simulcast. Fireworks benefit tourism. A total of \$15,975.00 total is needed including ancillary services.

Ted Dumas said that there is no money to transfer and that the voters need to know where this money is coming from and mentioned the \$25,000.00 Town Promotion Article.

Chair Plath asked what type of Committee is the Dennis Fireworks Committee. Last year we did locate \$7000.00 from the Town. Ms. Boudreau said that Cliff Metcalfe, Martha Murray and Joe Labelle are members of this Committee. Last year's money was from a previous article. This group is working in tandem with the Dennis South Business Association. The Fireworks are scheduled during what used to be the Dennis Festival Days timeframe. We hope to double the number of people that we hope to bring into the Town along with the Dennis Chamber's Labor Day Weekend events. Dennis Summerfest is the name of this event. Donald Trepte said that the Board of Selectmen have approved use of the West Dennis Beach but have not approved this Article. Sandra Fife, Assistant Town Administrator, said there is no free cash.

Chair Plath said with the school deficit, he couldn't support the Article. If we were able to find a funding source or mechanism, he would support this Article.

Peter McDowell said that currently we are not aware of a source of funds and that maybe we shouldn't recommend this.

MOTION:

Peter McDowell moved and Brian Sullivan seconded and Committee voted 7-0-0:

The Finance Committee voted not to recommend the Article.

(The Finance Committee took a 10-minute recess.)

(The Finance Committee returned from their 10-minute recess.)

Articles 38 & 39

Valerie Foster, Dennis Housing Authority, spoke about these Articles.

Attorney Brian Wall accompanied Ms. Foster. Breakdown of acreage and square footage handout was given to Finance Committee. The Board of Selectmen has changed bedroom number to 52.

Ms. Foster said that everything remains in place except for the reverter provision. Mr. Trepte said there could be 10-11 horses. Chair Plath asked if the limitation was written anywhere into the restriction. Ms. Foster said it is not written in the deed.

Ms. Foster said that land would be leased as a ground lease to developer.

Ted Dumas asked for the number of acres this Article is seeking from Town. Ms. Foster said it is a little over two acres. Mr. Dumas has some concerns because it is in a Zone 2. Ms Foster said that Housing Authority is proposing a nitrate removal on this property, which would be maintained by the developer.

Henry Kelley said that the amount of the Town's land would be affected and it is 1.55 acres out of the Town's acreage of 12.61. Next week, two individuals will report on their examination of the stable building. They will make their recommendations regarding the land area that should go with barn.

Mr. Kelley said that when this land was taken for land bank purposes, one of the purposes was recreation and that will still take place. The barn is in surprisingly good condition and structurally sounds.

MOTION:

Peter McDowell moved and Brian Sullivan seconded and Committee voted 6-0-1: (Ted Dumas)

The Finance Committee voted to recommend Articles 38 and 39.

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Article 19-Bass River

Margaret Kane, Chair of the Bass River Park Use Committee said that public has been very supportive. Ms. Kane is here this evening to ask for \$15,000.00 for the site plan. The demolition aspect is not being asked for this evening.

On April 12, 2006 the Committee met with the Board of Selectmen in a joint meeting trying to analyze what is needed for a site plan.

The original request was for \$23,000.00 and at the April 12 meeting this total was whittled down. Some things such as signage and repairs were taken out. Ms. Kane said Committee would have to go out to bid for this site plan. Part of the funding was a state grant and there is an opportunity for up to \$500,000.00 that the Town could apply for. The deadline for this grant is August 1, 2006.

We have volunteers that will demolish the building and enough of the foundation to put it to grade level. The Committee is in the process of finding out what restrictions will be imposed on the property. Robert Canevazzi said we don't know the full parameter of what we can and can't do. They may have a concern regarding activities on the property that involve commercial monies.

Peter McDowell thanked Margaret Kane for all of her work.

MOTION:

William Crowell moved and Michael Brennan seconded and Committee voted 7-0-0:
The Finance Committee voted to recommend the sum of \$15,000.00 from Free Cash for this Article.

Article 35-Community Preservation Funding

Henry Kelley said this is the first year for a budget under the Community Preservation Act. The estimated income is for \$1,500,000.00. The Debt Service is 968,000.00, Committee Expense is \$25,000.00, 0 for Special Purpose Projects, 10% Reserve-Open Space is \$150,000.00, 10% Reserve-Historic Resources is \$150,000.00, 10% Reserve-Community Housing and Reserved for Labor Appropriation is \$57,000.00.

Proposals are now being entertained by Committee and will be reported to Town Administrator no later than August 1, 2006 thus enabling Committee to do this fall, what they could not do this spring.

Henry Kelley then discussed the matching situation. This money arrives by October 15 of each year and is a one-time payment.

MOTION:

Michael Brennan moved and Brian Sullivan seconded and Committee voted 7-0-0:
The Finance Committee recommended report as presented. (Clarified by Peter McDowell)

Article 24-Town Clerk Fees

Robert Canevazzi spoke about this Article. This is more of a corrective action from the 1982 Annual Town Meeting.

MOTION:

Robert Prall moved and Brian Sullivan seconded and Committee voted 7-0-0:
The Finance Committee voted to recommend the Article as printed.

Article 10-Tax Rate

MOTION:

Peter McDowell moved and William Crowell seconded and Committee voted 7-0-0:
Committee voted to recommend the Article as printed.

Article 41-Litter By-Law

Chair Plath read the Article. Peter McDowell said that there are only certain items listed in this Article. Donald Trepte said this is a worthwhile way to start the process and is enforceable. Is there a burden of proof to prove that it is hand-held? Paul McCormick asked if it was too late to remove the hand-held part?

Committee agreed to the following changes: the hand-held would be removed (all six) and it will read, "litter includes, but is not limited to". The Board of Selectmen will make these changes at their, April 14, 2006 Warrant Signing Meeting.

MOTION:

Peter McDowell moved and Michael Brennan seconded and Committee voted 7-0-0:
The Finance Committee voted to recommend this By-Laws with discussed changes.

Article 21-The Police Sergeant's Contract

Robert Canevazzi distributed a memorandum to Finance Committee. The Board of Selectmen agreed to approve this contract at their April 11, 2006 Meeting. Mr. Canevazzi reviewed the details of this contract.

Discussion of the salary lines ensued. Michael Brennan said that a public forum of the drivers that move the operating budget might be a good idea to get the details out and clarified before they are presented at Town Meeting. Chair Plath said that this contract is only for 7 employees, but that some of the contracts involve 20 plus people and that a yearly explanation of the financial implications of a contract (over the life of the contract) would be helpful.

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Chair Plath asked if the Board of Selectmen give the Town Administrator staff a target number when the Town goes into negotiations. Donald Trepte said they give counsel and guidance based on the Town Administrator's recommendations. The Town Administrator also presents standards and numbers from like Towns. Mr. Trepte said that moving negotiating groups into less costly health insurance options has been strength of Robert Canevazzi's during negotiations.

MOTION:

Michael Brennan moved and William Crowell seconded and Committee voted 7-0-0:

The Finance Committee voted to transfer the \$30,000.00 for the purpose of the Article.

Chair Plath addressed a letter from Nancy Thacher Reid. Peter McDowell said that the timeframe is not what was agreed to. This Article was rescheduled to the April 27, 2006 Finance Committee Meeting.

Article 20-Bargaining Agreement for AFSCME

Robert Canevazzi said that we will not have a settlement for this Town Meeting.

MOTION:

William Crowell moved and Michael Brennan seconded and Committee voted 7-0-0:

The Finance Committee voted to postpone Article 20.

Article 23-Unpaid Bills

Sandra Fife said there are no unpaid bills

MOTION:

William Crowell moved and Peter McDowell seconded and Committee voted 7-0-0:

The Finance Committee voted to indefinitely postpone Article 23.

Finalization of Operational Budget

141 Assessors-two changes-reduce budget by \$750.00, the new line item 3-1 will read \$64, 250.00, with a name change to Scott Fahle. The new total of Budget 51100 will be \$262,554.00. The next change is in longevity need to increase by \$175.00 so line item will now be \$525.00. Total longevity will be 1525.00. The total budget is \$277,407.00.

MOTION:

Ted Dumas moved and William Crowell seconded and Committee voted 7-0-0:

The Finance Committee voted to accept changes.

147-Treasurer/Collector

Change name to Richard Buffington and the dollar amount is \$62,250.00.

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Longevity increased to \$525.00. Total amended budget is \$226,493.00

MOTION:

Robert Prall moved and William Crowell seconded and Committee voted 7-0-0:

The Finance Committee voted to accept amended budget.

193-Property Liabilities

The total is now \$341,550.00.

MOTION:

Ted Dumas moved and Michael Brennan seconded and Committee voted 7-0-0:

The Finance Committee voted to accept amended budget.

610-Library Budget

There is a name change to Shirley Barron with new total of \$59,250.00.

The Library budget total is \$410,416.00

MOTION:

Michael Brennan moved and Ted Dumas seconded and Committee voted 7-0-0:

The Finance Committee voted to accept the amended Library budget.

Raise and Appropriate new total is \$23,069,506.00 and total budget amount is \$25,106,480.00.

MOTION:

Michael Brennan moved and Robert Prall seconded and Committee voted 7-0-0:

The Finance Committee voted to accept the total budget amount of \$25,106,480.00.

Peter McDowell asked that the Committee give serious consideration to having the Town haul off its own waste and discussed this suggestion.

MOTION:

Peter McDowell moved and William Crowell seconded and Committee voted 7-0-0

The Finance Committee voted approval as written on the Warrant.

Adjournment took place at 11:35PM.