

Finance Committee Meeting
April, 30, 2007
Dennis Town Hall, Hearing Room
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Attendees: Finance Committee: Jim Plath, Peter McDowell, Ted Dumas, Bill Crowell, Robert Prall and Michael Brennan. Board of Selectmen: Jane Otis, Charlie Crowell, Sheryl McMahan, Paul McCormick and Heidi Schadt. Town Administrator Robert Canevazzi and Assistant Town Administrator Sandra Fife.

(Rachel Baroni was absent.)

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Library Position Discussion

Jane Otis stated that we have passed the library budget, and now we are thinking of reorganizing the staff at the library. Jane Otis stated that we have bounced around a few ideas. Perhaps what we can do is put a full time Library Director at the Dennisport Public Library and add a part-time Library Manager at the Library. Recently the Board of Selectmen voted to put a full time Director at the library with a revised job description. We are asking the Finance Committee to support this concept with the budget that has already been approved.

Jim Plath stated that the idea of the Dennis Public Library having their own Director is a great idea, but can we do this within the existing appropriation. As long as we can stay within the appropriation we will be all right.

Robert Canevazzi stated that this will take some flushing out. This will put a burden on the existing staff. We need to consider the needs of the Dennis Public Library.

Jane Otis stated that we need to meet with the staff at the library and discuss the options.

Bill Crowell asked at what time the job description would be ready.

Jane Otis stated that we have job applications and a lot of interest.

Sheryl McMahan stated that she doesn't totally understand the workings of the library system. How does the interrelationship work within the masterplan. The job has been advertised already. This wouldn't be fair to those folks that have already applied for the position.

Jim Plath stated that we would need to re-advertise the position as it has been revised.

Jane Otis stated that it was agreed that we would contact those people that have applied and ask them if they are still interested.

Peter McDowell stated he has some concerns that the budget would be changed between Town meetings. However, if you can do this within the existing budget, he would support the concept.

Heidi Schadt stated that it would be unfair to not readvertise this position.

Shirley Barron stated that she will miss Dennis, the beaches are great. She added that she is concerned that the Board is considering taking money away from the part-time personnel. This position will be very difficult to fill if you are looking for someone part-time. She supports the concept, but they both need to be full time. Yarmouth has a great model. The Board may want to look at Yarmouths model. We can not run a library with just volunteers. She stated that she doesn't want to see the Town once again become uncertified.

Bob Lynch, resident of W. Dennis and President of the Friends of the Dennis Public Library addressed the Selectmen and Finance Committee. He stated that we are very concerned about the summer season. We just put together a summer lecture series. 70 people recently attend the first lecture.

Bill Regan, Chairman of the Jacob Sears Library addressed the attendees. He stated that the Library Director definitely has to have a MLS. The Town is trying to get blood out of a stone for \$60,000.00 a year. It is completely unreasonable to think you can have someone run this library system with part-time staff.

Peter McDowell stated that if what Mr. Bill Regan says is true, then the Selectmen need to reconsider this reorganization.

Bill Regan stated that this is not a library system that is shrinking. You are wasting your time if all you have to offer is \$60,000.00.

Jim Plath stated that the Selectmen and Bob Canevazzi will be looking this over the next few weeks.

Jack Sheedy, Reference Librarian at the Dennis Public Library addressed the panel. If you are talking about eliminating positions, this will leave us seriously short handed. The library is a busy place. He added that he hopes the Town will not eliminate any position in order to accommodate this reorganization.

Article 24-100F (Unpaid Medical Bills)

Fire Chief Mark Dellner stated that this Article is for unpaid medical bills for a fire fighter that was injured while on duty. Basically this was a serious injury. The treatment

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has taken about a year. The injury occurred on 2/21/2005. The right knee was almost twisted,

as he landed with full gear and air pack on. The firefighter attended therapy. Eventually the firefighter started to experience pain in the left knee. The Town's insurance company stated that the pain was not caused by the injury.

We then moved forward with an independent opinion. The independent opinion stated that the injury was directly related to the injury. There is currently \$27,000.00 worth of unpaid medical bills. Chief Dellner stated that he has currently sent \$5,000.00 worth of bills to be rated by independent Council. Chief Dellner stated that this has been reviewed by the Selectmen during the Executive Session.

Bill Crowell stated that we should request Town Council go to the insurance company for payment. Peter McDowell agreed with Bill Crowell.

Bob Canevazzi stated that this has happened, in the past. Do we want to spend our money paying Town Council or do we pay the bills. One way or another we are going to have to pay the money. These workmen's compensation issues are always negotiated.

Jim Plath stated that we need to pursue the old insurance company. He added that he is inclined to pay the bills that have been rated.

Chief Dellner stated that some of these bills are two years old.

Sheryl McMahon stated that it's not fair to the employee to have to deal with a collection agency.

Motion:

Michael Brennan moved to recommend to transfer \$27,000.00 from free cash to pay for 100 of Section 41. Bill Crowell seconded. The Finance Committee voted 6-0-0. The motion was carried.

Article 43 Housing Use By-Law

Robert Canevazzi stated that the Finance Committee should have a memo from the Board of Health requesting that the Article be withdrawn.

Motion:

Ted Dumas moved to indefinitely postpone Article 43. Michael Brennan seconded. The Finance Committee voted 6-0-0. The motion was carried.

Article 45 Connect CTY

Jim Plath stated that this is a request for \$25,000.00.

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Bob Canevazzi stated that this is a request for \$25,000.00 for an emergency response program. This program has been well received in communities that already have it.

This program also provide text messaging, however an elderly household would need a cell phone or a computer. Connect CTY is the leader in this type of program. Barnstable is going forward with this program. The vendor has agreed to a 3-year contract at \$25,000.00 per year. There is no commitment to the Town after 3-years.

Chief Whalen stated that he has spoken with the Police Chief in Westwood and they are using cable funds to purchase the program. Their Town met the requirements in order to use these funds for this purpose.

Peter McDowell stated that Westwood probably has no idea what kind of contract the Town of Dennis has concerning the cable funds. This is not just \$25,000.00 this year. Mr. McDowell asked for the Chief to explain what type of emergencies would require this type of system.

Chief Whalen stated that the December 9th storm came up in 15 minutes and most towns with the exception of Dennis were without power for several hours. During a recent storm residents east of the Lighthouse Inn had to be removed by boat. During the Blizzard of 2005 the program would have been very useful. Chief Dellner stated when people do not leave because a of storm we need to be able to contact our residents. Chief Whalen stated that when the power goes out, you don't have television or a radio.

Peter McDowell stated that this doesn't make sense. This is a last minute request in the amount of \$25,000.00. We haven't needed this type of system in the past.

Michael Brennan stated some type of communication system is required.

Sheryl McMahon pointed out several incidents where a communication system would have been helpful at the Dennis Water District.

Motion:

Michael Brennan moved to table the Article until such time we learn more about the cable funding. Ted Dumas seconded. The Finance Committee voted 4-2-0 (PM & BP). The motion was carried.

Article 40 SCHED By-Law

There was a motion to indefinitely postpone the article.

The Selectmen stated that they have not heard from the Historic Commission.

Bill Crowell stated that this issue really doesn't have a financial impact on the budget.

Sheryl McMahon stated that having to make repairs and improvements can be very expensive and cost prohibitive in a historic area. Technology is making enormous improvements when it comes to modern technologies. She added that she wouldn't like to see future materials totally exempt. She added that she personally would not support this legislation.

Henry Kelley said if there is no compelling need to make a decision tonight. The Commission may want to add a special category for certain types fencing. You make want to wait until you have more information.

The Chairperson may want to come forward after they have their hearing.

Bill Crowell stated that this issue really doesn't impact the Town's budget.

Motion:

Peter McDowell moved to table the Article. Michael Brennan seconded. The Finance Committee voted 6-0-0. The motion was carried.

Article 44 Demolition By-Law

Peter McDowell requested the attendees to read various portions of the By-Law. He stated that he is not comfortable with portions of the wording as it related to the time frame.

Henry Kelley stated that it seems to be a bit ambiguous.

Robert Canevazzi asked Mr. McDowell if he would like to take a few days to work on the language.

Mr. McDowell stated that he would work with Mr. Kelley in formulating some answers to the questions.

Reserve Fund Transfers

Building Demolition

Mr. Canevazzi explained that the Building Commissioner has met with both the Police Dept. and Fire Dept. and this building is a public safety concern. It is the recommendation of Brian Florence to demolish the building. The cost to the Town will be \$7,000.00.

Motion:

Michael Brennan moved to approve the reserve fund transfer in the amount of \$7,000.00. Ted Dumas seconded. The Finance Committee voted 6-0-0. The motion was carried.

Bill Crowell stated that if we tear down the building we may not be able to rebuild on the property. The property is in tax title and this will cost the Town \$7,000.00. We may never be able to get our money back.

Ted Dumas stated that this building was a mess 15-years ago. It should have been condemned back then.

Disabilities Commission Request

Motion:

Peter McDowell moved to approve a \$600.00 transfer for the cart reporter. Bill Crowell seconded. The Finance Committee voted 6-0-0. The motion was carried.

Demolition Delay By-Law

Burton Derick addressed the attendees. He stated that several meetings have been held concerning this by-law. This by-law is the 12th draft. He added that here we are at the 11th hour with another problem. One person on this panel has a problem with this by-law and he is a realtor. Burton Derick stated that if you sit and read this by-law you will see that the 12 month time frame stands within the by-law.

Peter McDowell stated that you can change the law at any time during the process. If this is crystal clear, then we should go with it. However, if there are questions we need to answer them now.

Henry Kelley stated that after reviewing the by-law, the by-law does state a period of 12 months from the date of application. Mr. Kelley stated that the language is plain and clear. Mr. Kelley requested the panel take the time to review the by-law.

Jim Plath read from Section H of the by-law.

Peter McDowell stated that if it's crystal clear that it will not take longer than 12 months, than he would be satisfied.

Motion:

Michael Brennan moved to recommend the Article as printed. Bill Crowell seconded. The Finance Committee voted 6-0-0. The motion was carried.

Jim Plath stated that he appreciates all the work that went into writing the by-law. He thanked Mr. Derick for coming to the meeting. He stated that he feels that the Selectmen and the Finance Committee don't always appreciate the work and the recommendations of their committee members. Mr. Derick stated that if this Board has taken the time to read this by-law prior to this meeting, this type of situation wouldn't have occurred.

Motion:

Ted Dumas moved to adjourn. Michael Brennan seconded. The Finance Committee voted 6-0-0. The motion was carried.

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