

**Needham Finance Committee  
Minutes of Meeting of July 22, 2009**

The meeting of the Finance Committee was called to order by the Chair, Lisa Zappala, at approximately 7:00 pm in the Selectmen's Meeting Room at Town Hall.

Present from the Finance Committee:	Lisa Zappala, Chair Richard Zimbone, Vice Chair Richard Creem	Richard Reilly Steven Rosenstock Michael Taggart
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Also Present: David Davison, Assistant Town Manager – Finance Director  
Kate Fitzpatrick, Town Manager

There were no citizen requests to address the Finance Committee.

**Finance Committee Goals for FY 2010:** The Finance Committee discussed its draft Finance Committee goals. The Finance Committee discussed its goals for capital planning, which fall roughly into three categories, short-term capital needs, maintenance of existing facilities, and long-term planning including Community Preservation funding. The Finance Committee identified operating budget goals, including supporting management initiatives for energy conservation, negotiation of sustainable labor contracts balanced by the need for good employees, and outsourcing of certain operating functions. The Finance Committee also identified the goal of improving education of Town Meeting members on issues that Town Meeting votes. There was a discussion of the specificity of the goals and how the Finance Committee would measure its success in achieving its goals. The Finance Committee assigned to Mr. Zimbone and Ms. Miller the task of drafting the Finance Committee's goals for presentation to the Board of Selectmen at the Board of Selectmen's goals summit. The Finance Committee designated Mr. Zimbone as its representative to present the Finance Committee's goals and to comment on the Board of Selectmen's goals at the summit.

**FY 2010 Budget Update:** Mr. Davison stated that the revenue assumptions for FY 2010 still hold. He stated that there are three items of note for the Finance Committee: 1. The overlay needs to be shored up. Mr. Davison is concerned about an increase in abatement requests and a decrease in the amount that will be available for free cash resulting in less cash capital funding. 2. There may be some 9C cuts in the same range as the FY 2009 9C cuts - \$200,000 to \$250,000. 3. The Board of Selectmen has brought up the possibility of adopting a meals tax in Needham. The earliest that this could have an impact on revenue is April 2010 if Town Meeting were to approve the tax at the Special Town Meeting in November 2009. There was a brief discussion of the Town leaving positions open rather than filling them immediately in order to save salary. Mr. Davison stated that the Town has been slower in its hiring process. This slower process is only on the municipal side, not the school side.

**Newman School Repairs Update:** Schematics will be submitted to the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) on September 4. The MSBA is meeting on September 30 and will vote that day the amount of funding provided for the Newman School repairs. The Finance Committee stated that it would be helpful to have the items that will possibly be included in a Newman building override be separated into three categories: 1. items that are related to the HVAC repairs at the school; 2. other structural or functional items that will allow the building another thirty years of useful life; and 3. additional items that would improve the building and property surrounding the building, such as the fields, the auditorium, and the kitchen.

**Accept Minutes of Prior Meetings:** Mr. Rosenstock moved that the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting of June 17, 2009 be approved as submitted. Mr. Taggart seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a vote of 5-0-1 (Mr. Reilly abstained).

**Finance Committee Updates:** The Board of Selectmen will be discussing a possible change to the starting time of Town Meeting from 7:30 pm to 7:00 pm at the next Board of Selectmen meeting. The Finance Committee discussed whether it would take a position as a Committee. The Finance Committee decided not to take a position. Individual Finance Committee members may voice their personal opinions to the Board of Selectmen.

Pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 39, section 23b, Mr. Creem moved that the Finance Committee enter into executive session under subsection (3) in order to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation for the reason that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the Town, or to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel, or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel, not to return to open session prior to adjournment. Mr. Rosenstock seconded the motion. Discussion: none. On a roll call vote, Mr. Reilly voted in favor of the motion, Mr. Taggart voted in favor of the motion, Mr. Creem voted in favor of the motion, Ms. Zappala voted in favor of the motion, Mr. Zimbone voted in favor of the motion. Mr. Rosenstock voted in favor of the motion.

Respectfully submitted,

Louise Miller,  
Executive Secretary