

**Needham Finance Committee
Minutes of Meeting of October 5, 2016**

The meeting of the Finance Committee was called to order by the Chair, Rick Zimbone, at approximately 6:30 pm in the Selectmen's Chambers at the Town Hall.

Present from the Finance Committee:

Rick Zimbone, Chair; Dick Reilly, Vice Chair

Members: Barry Coffman, Tom Jacob, Rick Lunetta, Louise Miller, John Connelly, Ken Lavery, Carol Smith-Fachetti (arrived at Town Meeting)

Others present:

David Davison, Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director

Citizen Requests

There were no requests to address the Committee.

Update

Mr. Davison stated that there are motions to amend three Special Town Meeting articles at the request of the Moderator. The language regarding borrowing has been removed to avoid confusion.

Prepare for/Discuss Capital Summit

Mr. Zimbone asked for thoughts on capital planning in advance of the upcoming summit with the shareholders in Town. He stated that different boards have expressed different priorities. The School Committee recently discussed its draft capital request; some members are concerned that the High School expansion has been pushed back and that the Memorial Park building project has been prioritized ahead of it. He stated that the High School expansion feasibility has been delayed which will cause a one-year delay in the project. The Pollard School project is now very far out.

Mr. Jacob stated that Park and Recreation is still determining its capital priorities. The Rosemary Pool and Cricket Field House project are high priorities. The longer term plan includes maintaining and renovating fields, as well as adding a Little League diamond with lights.

Mr. Reilly noted that the School capital request uses a 5% annual inflator, as determined by Steve Popper, rather than 3.8% used previously, which will have a dramatic impact. Prioritization of capital projects will be a major issue among the stakeholders. Mr. Coffman stated that Mr. Popper has said that the increased inflator is reflective of what they are seeing with cost estimates. Mr. Connelly stated that the method is too conservative and is tying up more money than needed.

Ms. Miller stated that she has asked for a cost/benefit analysis which is necessary before considering adding a second ambulance at Fire Station 2. Mr. Lunetta stated that there are currently two ambulances in active duty, and the plan would only move the location of the second ambulance. He added that a cost analysis would still be useful. Mr. Zimbone asked him to ask the Fire Chief about a cost analysis. Ms. Miller stated that a phased approach should be considered for the new Police/Fire headquarters in order to avoid the need for swing space as much as possible. She stated that Fire Department swing space is particularly expensive. Mr. Zimbone stated that they have not yet finalized the approach that the project will take.

Mr. Lunetta stated that the Town should more mixed use and consolidation of facilities for better use of funds. Mr. Coffman stated that it would be helpful to have debt tables at the summit meeting in order to help guide the discussion of priorities and possibilities. Mr. Lunetta stated that using an outside facilitator could be useful.

Recess

MOVED: By Mr. Jacob that the Finance Committee meeting be recessed for the Special Town Meeting. Ms. Miller seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion was approved by a vote of 8-0, at approximately 7:30 p.m.

Adjournment

MOVED: By Mr. Reilly that the Finance Committee meeting be adjourned, as there was no further business. Mr. Lunetta seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion was approved by a vote of 8-0, at approximately 10:45 pm. (Ms. Miller was no longer in attendance.)

Documents: October 5, 2016 Special Town Meeting warrant

Respectfully submitted,

Louise Mizgerd
Staff Analyst

Approved December 14, 2016