

HAMILTON FINANCE AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Minutes of Meeting
May 24, 2017

Members Present: Darcy Dale, John Pruellage, Phil Stearns, Nick Tensen, and David Wanger (Chair)

Others Present: Marisa Batista and Jeff Hubbard

This Hamilton Finance and Advisory Committee meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm at the Hamilton Public Safety Building.

Public Comments

None

Discuss FinCom Projects

Intern. David Wanger reported that he had contacted Peter Lombardi, who had given him leads. Mr. Wanger distributed the position description. Mr. Wanger had contacted Gordon College, Salem State University, Suffolk University, Endicott College, and Northeastern University. Endicott College responded that they would only post the internship as a part time job position so the listing was on hold. Northeastern University and Suffolk University had not returned calls. Salem State University and Gordon College would post. Nick Tensen wondered if Harvard College could be contacted. Darcy Dale suggested high school seniors with a business interest. Phil Stearns would contact Boston College.

Marisa Batista said the FinCom reserve could not pay for the intern. The FinCom reserve fund did not submit requests for DOR approval, but the intern expense would be picked out by DOR. Nick Tensen thought it could be a thesis project for a school year. UMASS Lowell and Boston would be contacted. Ms. Batista suggested using a senior from the senior work-off program. Phil Stearns thought it was an excellent suggestion. One senior work-off candidate had a master's degree and was looking for a few more hours of work. John Pruellage noted the need for computer knowledge, especially Excel.

PILOT. No one knew if Bill Wilson had met with Gordon Conwell since the last meeting. John Pruellage developed a framework for the intern to study PILOT.

Fees, fines, and interest. Marijuana. Darcy Dale said everyone was waiting for Mr. Galvin to file legislation to clarify the process in adopting various measures. Recreational pot questions could be placed on local ballots even though Mr. Galvin's legislation had not yet been passed. Ms. Dale was still working on the 2% local fee.

Waste-related revenues and expenditures. Marisa Batista said the Waste Enterprise Fund would be dissolved. Measuring the trash was discussed. The fee was set for large item pick up at \$25. It was up to the DPW Director to advertise the sale of stickers and notify the vendor not to pick

up items without a sticker. Waste would be code 433, which mirrored the accounting in every other department, according to Ms. Batista. If the hauler had the statistics as to the waste versus recycling, that number should be provided to the Committee.

Nick Tensen wanted to determine if there was a shift from recycling to trash. If there was a shift, then how would the Town incent people to recycle. The bag revenue had decreased because the weekly pickup removed the need for purchasing bags versus buying bags for additional trash when picked up every other week. Phil Stearns said blue bag revenue had decreased and compost had decreased as well, because residents could put compostable items into the trash.

David Wanger said it was a societal issue as well as a financial issue. Mr. Wanger added the FinCom could make the recommendation to do away with weekly trash. John Pruellage said the Committee should analyze the data and make a recommendation. Phil Stearns said nothing changed behavior more than affecting someone's wallet. Other towns used stickers, bags, or transfer stations where residents weigh their trash. The Selectmen would make a policy.

Inter-community comparison format. The topic would be considered after the intern was in place.

Shared services/costs and regionalization. The topic would be resumed after the new Board was formed July 1, 2017.

Solar Power. Darcy Dale announced that she had made contact with the Energy Manager of Hamilton and Wenham, who said there was a new grant program for technical assistance for solar feasibility, which might work for the high school roof. Ms. Dale thought if solar panels were installed on school buildings, the Town could make money. At the next meeting, a residential municipal specialist would be present to make a presentation with the Energy Specialist and a designee from the Schools present.

Discussion of capital budget and forecast

Michael Lombardo, Marisa Batista, and Department Heads would have the first chance to review the Capital Budget and Forecast, but David Wanger wanted a concurrent participatory role as was done during the Budget process. Ms. Batista thought usually the process was to have Department Heads submit with the FinCom and Town Manager for review. Department Heads requests would be collected by the end of May. The Capital Improvement Plan could be completed based on discussions between the Department Heads and the Town Manager. Mr. Wanger wanted to see the requests and noted the FinCom participation in the Budget process as he didn't want to be pushed back to a reactive role rather than a participatory role.

Phil Stearns said if Department Heads were reporting to the Town Manager, the Town Manager would want to review the requests before it went to the public realm, which would be the FinCom. Nick Tensen added that if the FinCom saw all the requests, the FinCom might be critical of requests that might be weeded out. Mr. Stearns added that by the time the FinCom saw the Budget, it was a fete complete but the Town Manager should have a chance to work with his Department Heads. David Wanger recalled that the FinCom became involved reviewing the prior year and upcoming Budget while Michael Lombardo was on leave. John Pruellage envisioned having the same meetings, but wouldn't assume that it would be the first meeting between the Town Manager and Department Heads.

David Wanger asked if there was support for the FinCom being included in the initial round with Department Heads and at what point they should be involved. Nick Tensen recalled that the Department Heads had a relationship with their FinCom liaison and the liaison could ask what their goals would be for capital expenditures over the next couple of years, but not to go into the detail of giving background without commenting on specific requests. John Pruellage wanted to have an idea of what would be requested informally before the fall and wanted to avoid Fall

Town Meeting asking for the Town to spend money without a good look into the next five years.

Phil Stearns asked if Marisa Batista would return to the Town Manager and ask if the FinCom could review the Capital Improvement Plan before it would be presented to the Selectmen so they could support the Town Manager in his plan. Ms. Batista said she did not think the Capital Improvement Plan would be ready by Fall Town Meeting. In Ms. Batista's past experience, the process started with the Department Head requests, which would go to the Town Manager, who presented his Budget to the FinCom, and the FinCom would present the Budget to the Selectmen. Most capital expenditures were related to the DPW, according to Ms. Batista.

The School Committee was in the process of reviewing and content of and funding sources for the School's Capital Improvement Plan. Nick Tensen noted that the plan for FY18 through FY21 were less than \$2M each, but suddenly in FY22, there was an increase to \$13M of which, \$9M was turf fields, which may not come to fruition. Mr. Tensen wanted to know how to fund that request. David Wanger suggested having a discussion with the Wenham FinCom once the Committee was formed. Phil Stearns said some of the requests were maintenance, including the sprinkler system at Winthrop School. John Pruellage suggested categorizing the requests into what was a wanted request versus have to have request. Mr. Stearns wanted to get more information about what the line items would be. The Committee thought it was acceptable to go straight to administration while copying the Chair of the School Committee asking for information.

Discussion of HWRSD Agreement, negotiation as to proposed amendments and FinCom's role.

A committee would be formed to study the amendments to the Agreement with a FinCom member on the working group. The apportionment was the main piece (households, students, term), non taxable land, and the number of member representation would be discussed by the sub-committee. Nick Tensen noted the philosophy between what would be best for the Town versus what would be best for the Schools. Phil Stearns said there was a natural conflict between the Towns. Jeff Hubbard said the ultimate goal was to create a more leveling tool for the swings in enrollment. Nick Tensen said that the Town might want to add in lost taxes for land dedicated to school use. David Wanger added infrastructure and emergency service costs and wondered how they would affect the dollar apportionment. The Selectwoman from Wenham reportedly did not think they were a factor for consideration. Jeff Hubbard said that was why there were members who were from Hamilton on the committee to ensure the best interest of the Town of Hamilton.

Darcy Dale suggested analyzing the basic value of what Hamilton was providing, split it down the middle with Wenham and then do the apportionment with enrollment. Phil Stearns said Wenham was in trouble already and not in a position to take the allocation further. David Wanger offered that there was room for Wenham to move on shared services in exchange for school services. Mr. Wanger wanted the Town to understand all the elements before negotiating with Wenham. John Pruellage added that the apportionment was the easiest to solve, but the land issue was part of a bigger issue. Jeff Hubbard would pursue the topic with the Selectmen.

Committee Member Comments Reports

Phil Stearns had a follow up on affordable housing after his discussion with Dorr Fox regarding properties at Gordon Conwell or Asbury Grove. They were not considered affordable housing because they were not deed restricted, but were considered a category entitled seasonal housing. According to Mr. Stearns, the categorization had already been considered in the indices for the 10% required, of which Hamilton had 3.8% at the time of the meeting. An older person living in their home could not be deemed affordable unless they put a deed restriction on the unit.

David Wanger wondered if the friendly 40B developers would proceed with an unfriendly development and suggested that community dispute mediation services were available with a mediator resolving competing interest between neighbors and the Town. Refuge could no longer be claimed under the Host Community Agreement. Darcy Dale wanted to know where the Urban Research Institute Study, wherein the townspeople said they wanted to do smaller projects around town, was located. Mr. Dale noted the future of development was in smaller self-sufficient projects that were not isolated from the rest of the Town. Ms. Darcy referred to the Senior Center as a great place for the proposed development. David Wanger recalled the whole neighborhood against the project and that those stakeholders could be grouped and mediated for a potential solution.

David Wanger asked if the FinCom had an interest in undertaking trying to put together a recommendation. The Senior Center, which was Town owned land might provide a cluster of 15-20 or 30 to 40 units. Phil Stearns suggested calling Bill Wilson (Chair of Selectmen and member of Affordable Housing Trust) and Russ Tanzer (Chair of the Affordable Housing Trust) to ask if the FinCom could help and make a recommendation or if they would be duplicating the efforts of the Affordable Housing Trust.

The Town Hall Committee had been formed and Phil Stearns would be the liaison. Jeff Hubbard said the previous telephone meeting reviewed the charge to develop a concept for remodeling Town Hall. The needs would be determined and then funds would be requested. An engineering study would be done on the building. The Patton property, space above the Public Safety Building, space above the COA, and land behind Town Hall were available for Town Hall use.

John Purellage said the Planning Board was in the process of changing the Willow Street Overlay District, Estate Overlay District, and Cottage By-laws.

Determine and discuss meeting schedule for summer 2017.

The Committee decided to meet twice a month. Phil Stearns suggested putting all issues that concerned Marisa Batista at the beginning of the meeting, so she could be relieved of her presence afterwards.

Discuss agenda for next meeting.

Solar emphasis would be listed. John Pruellage wanted to check in with the Recreation Department to determine the status of pool passes and include the Wenham FinCom. Nick Tensen said as liaison, he would follow up.

Other topics not reasonably anticipated as determined by the Chair.

Marisa Batista was unable to put the Town Report on the website. A link was sent to the Selectmen and FinCom regarding Financial Policies for other towns that had been created by Local Services. Ms. Batista was pursuing the grant. Local Services would come in free of charge and prepare the Financial Policies. Even though the Town was late, Ms. Batista and Michael Lombardo were working on the grant. The grant would save the Town \$25,000. The DOR Division of Local Services could perform the review of the Financial Policies or the funds could be spent on whomever the Town hired. The FinCom recommended having the State prepare the policies.

David Wanger referred to the gift from Gordon Conwell that had not been received yet but was part of the revenue for FY17. Marisa Batista said Michael Lombardo had a meeting with a Seminary representative planned.

Adjournment

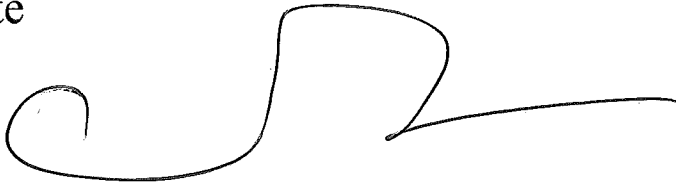
John Pruellage made motion to adjourn the meeting.
Seconded by Darcy Dale
Vote Unanimous to adjourn at 9:14 pm.

Prepared by:

Marcie
Ricker
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Attest

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7/20/17