

Finance Committee Meeting
December 11, 2012

Members Present: Steve Noone, Doug Tindal, Mary Ann Ashton, Paulina Knibbe, Herman akoff, Bob Evans, Mike Majors, Bill Mullin, Pat Clifford

Chair Tindal called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

I. Public Comment. None

II. Minutes.

Pat Clifford moves to approve minutes of Oct 23rd and Nov 27th. Bill Mullin seconds. Passed unanimously.

III. Regionalization Study

Outstanding issues:

- a. how would Acton students in grade schools benefit ?
- b. how much money will be saved (and what are the risks)?
- c. how much will be saved in administrative efficiency?
- d. governance concerns

Concerns:

Over time the population of the local schools will shrink more rapidly in Boxborough than in Acton. This results in Acton taking on a larger share of the costs.

Transferring the school buildings to the region for a nominal fee results in a shift in the ratio of assets to liabilities. The will worsen for the town and improve for the region. In theory this could impact future bonding. However, all bonding is backed by the full faith and credit of the town so it is likely to not be a meaningful difference.

There may be some additional savings in SPED expenses due to ability to keep more students in district.

Most remaining questions are more properly directed to the school committee(s) rather than the regionalization study committee.

**Acton Item: Doug Tindal will work with Mary Ann Ashton and Bob Evans to draft such a letter. The letter should be delivered as soon as possible so that the school committee can address the questions in a useful time period.

IV. ALG Meeting

The ALG is in agreement on revenue forecasts. Still significant disagreement on the appropriate use of reserves. All have agreed to delay further discussion on this issue until the proposed budgets have been published.

Next meeting of ALG will be on Dec 13th at 5 p.m.

Governor has proposed changes to this year's local aid. This will impact the school's more than the municipal budget. SPED circuit breaker funding has been cut, regional transportation is likely to be cut.

V. Budget Process

Dates:

- Dec 17th – Town Manager presents budget to the BoS
- Jan 5th – Budget Saturday (municipal)
- Jan 8th – School Superintendent presents AB budget to SC
- Jan 17th – School Superintendent presents APS budget to SC
- Jan 26th – Budget Review (schools)

FinCom Members assigned to take detailed looks at the following sections of the municipal budget:

- Pat – Health / Nursing / Transportation
- Bill – Natural Resources / Rec/ Cemetary
- Steve – Fire
- Herman – Police
- Bob – Finance
- Mike – Planning
- Paulina – Libraries / COA
- Doug – Municipal Buildings / Engineering / Building
- Mary Ann – Manager's Budget / IT / HR / Legal

**Action Item. Doug Tindal to request enterprise budgets, FTE counts, prior year actuals, status of revolving accounts, and summary of old warrant articles before Budget Saturday.

Use of one time funds. FinCom members reiterated their desire to see a breakdown of use of reserves.

**Action Item. Doug Tindal to write a letter requesting this data.

VI. Status Reports

a. Morrison Farm

Bill Mullin presented the current state of the plan. The BoS has voted to recommend this plan to the CPC.

b. OPEB Working Group

Preliminary report has been given to ALG.

Recommendation for this year's budget - \$800K.

The state OPEB committee concludes that the most promising way to limit the growth of the liabilities is to increase the number of years of service that are required. Their report will be published on Dec 20th and will recommend options for local communities.

VII. Committee Updates

- Pat Clifford. The South Action Train Station ground breaking will be on Dec 30th. The space need study report will be presented to the BoS in mid February.
- Doug Tindal. EDC is discussing Kelley's corner's plans with 2020 Committee.
- Mary Ann Ashton. The ABR SC has adopted the OPEB Trust Document and intends to ask for a representative from the FinCom to serve on the trust.
- Herman Kabakoff. CPC. BoS has change their priority requests for CPC projects, elevating the Morrison Farm project and removing the bottom 4 projects
- Mike Majors. Planning. The Planning Board is discussing Kelley's Corner improvements with the 2020 Committee

Herman Kabakoff moved to adjourn

Steve Noone seconded

Vote: unanimous

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm

Approved on Jan 8, 2013