



Town of Acton Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: July 26th, 2016

Acton Town Hall • Room 204 • 7:30 pm

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Members in attendance: Bob Evans, Mike Majors, Margaret Busse (Chair), Roland Bourdon, Shuyu Lee, David Wellinghoff (Clerk), John Benson (Associate), Doug Tindal (Vice-chair), Steve Noone

Members absent: Jason Cole

Other: Brian McMullen, Janet Adachi (BoS), Peter Berry (BoS), Peter Ashton (Moderator), Rachel Sagan (UWAB)

Chair Busse called meeting to order at 7:33

Public participation – None.

Approve minutes – Motion to approve July 12th minutes, all affirmative except Wellinghoff who abstains. Motion to approve March 21st minutes, all affirmative.

United Way Community Needs Assessment – Rachel Sagan introduces United Way. She presents Community Needs presentation to raise awareness of the most pressing human service needs. Themes include that 20% of residents in both towns (Acton/Boxborough) are struggling economically. Substance abuse (opiates) prevalent among young adults noting that once one leaves high school, they leave the support network at the school. There are also teen mental health/stress related issues and how to pay for college. The presentation notes that birthrates have halved in Acton and by a third in Boxborough from 2000 to 2013. Overall a very thorough presentation relating to issues in the community. Question regarding what would need to be done to help solve these issues given we live in a rather affluent community with the response being that money is helpful but social policy is important as well. Can issues be addressed at local, state, and federal level given many of these issues are not unique to Acton? UWAB annual budget is \$225,000.

Moderator's overview – Peter Ashton recommends reviewing the entire UWAB report put together by Carlyle. Suggests upcoming time period may be similar to mid-90s when significant capital needs were needed. Moderator role includes appointing Finance Committee members. Notes that Acton's Finance Committee is limited more than other towns given it does not present a budget due to bylaws. Recommends members become experts in particular subject matters. Recommends taking advantage of all available resources in the town. Moderator also moderates Town Meetings. Would like to make Town Meeting shorter by providing a more informative Warrant that is provided for committee review by January 31st. Also is looking at electronic voting at Town Meetings. Privacy of this voting mechanism might add to town meeting attendance. Would also be more accurate and expedient given the instant counting of votes.

Overview of Collective Bargaining – Steve Noone and Peter Berry present CBA presentation. Teacher's contract is currently under negotiation. Negotiations with unions are done in good faith on both sides. "Past practices" are norms that have developed over time that are not written into contracts but must be negotiated if they are to be changed. Reviews "impasse" when proposals are changed without following the process correctly. Consequences of not agreeing with the union results in labor unrest. Suggest reviewing <http://www.mass.gov/lwd/labor-relations/> and <http://www.abschools.org/school-committee/contracts-evaluations>. PoV document helpful in driving discussions.

Review committee updates – With respect to the Economic Development Committee, Larry has assembled a database of local businesses (location, type, etc) that make it easier to approach businesses about local development as well as for businesses to evaluate what currently exists and how/when to choose Acton. With respect to the Minuteman committee, September 20th is the date for towns to approve the building project, voting from 12-8pm at the RJ Grey Jr High School.

Chair's minute – September 8th has been proposed as the date for the 3-board social with a November 8th more detailed followup. There is the possibility of getting another Associate member.

Next Meeting August 9th.

Meeting adjourned at 9:43pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Dave Wellinghoff
Finance Committee Clerk

Documents referenced:
ABUW Community Needs Assessment (CNA Executive Summary 12-1-15.pptx)