



Town of Arlington, Massachusetts
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Meeting Minutes 09/20/2007

ARLINGTON FINANCE COMMITTEE
 MINUTES OF MEETING
 7:30 PM TOWN HALL HEARING ROOM
 9/20/07

ATTENDEES:

McGaffigan*		Dunn*	O'Neill*	Mahoney
DeCoursey	Connors*	Simmons*	Bayer*	
Tosti*	Foskett*	Deyst*	Ronan	
Ferrara*	Franclemont*	Jones*	Olsen*	
DuBois*	Howard*	Fanning*	Carman*	Kneeland*

* Indicates present

VISITORS: Town Manager Brian Sullivan, Deputy Town Manager Nancy Galkowski, Minuteman Superintendent Ed MacMillin

FIVE YEAR PLAN: Sullivan, using a spreadsheet covering FY08 through FY13, reviewed his latest budget projections and discussed recent changes. The plan shows the override money lasting through FY10 with a relatively small \$1.8m deficit in FY11. He reduced the annual increase in State Aid to \$500k or 3% based on the disappointing increase this year. Because of some school construction audits were finally completed, the school construction aid is up this year by \$277k or 12%. The DOR has directed that Medicare Part D revenue be put into the general fund and then appropriated by Town Meeting which changes local receipts & warrant article line items in FY09. There was somewhat more new growth than predicted. The MWRA debt shift included in the tax bills was frozen by the BoS which affects future years since any increases will be covered by the water bills.

HEALTH INSURANCE: Sullivan believes that the state plan, GIC, would cost considerably less. He has called a meeting with all the unions to discuss the savings & to hopefully convince them to join. There are aspects of GIC that employees may find unattractive such as no BC/BS, higher copays, state control of copays, inability to leave GIC w/o agreement between all unions & management.

REGIONALIZATION: Sullivan met w/ Winchester & proposed operating an ambulance from the Winchester fire station near the Arlington border to service both Winchester & Morning Side. A review of costs based on advance life support service and 3d party revenue made this unattractive.

PEIRCE FIELD: Negotiations continue. Sullivan still feels optimistic about the outcome. The cost of repairing the vandalized turf was \$10k.

SYMMES: Foskett backed by Sullivan reviewed the current situation. Fish has purchased the property for \$7.7m but at a reduced rate because the height limitation reduced the value. The Town will have to cover the balance of the \$12m. He still expects that the cost will be covered by revenue. The BoS & Treasurer must decide the term of the bonds. A longer term would make some of the income available short term though the total cost would be greater. The living units will be built as condos but initially rented. Fish is expected to sell them as condos as soon as the

market permits since Fish makes a bigger profit on sales, than rental. Foskett estimates the delay caused by the abutters suit has cost the Town \$1.5 to \$2m.

MINUTEMAN TECH: MacMillin, the new superintendent, described the situation as he sees it and encouraged questions from the committee. He believes the student/teacher ration is too low to be affordable. He is reviewing all the programs. He has met twice w/ Levenson. He is encouraging students to go to Minuteman part time and part time to their local high school. Members requested a more straightforward per pupil cost. Members expressed respect for the school but frustration with the heavy expense compared to AHS.

ELECTIONS: All officers were reelected unanimously. Chair Allan Tosti; CoChairs Richard C. Fanning, Charles T. Foskett, Alan Jones; Secretary Peter B. Howard.

ASSOCIATION OF TOWN FINANCE COMMITTEES: The annual meeting of the ATFC will be 11/3 at the Westford Regency. Let Kneeland and know if you want to attend.

COMMITTEE: Kneeland & O'Neill are resigning after many years of service. Kneeland has agreed to stay on until a replacement is found. Both received a round of applause in appreciation from the committee. Fey, not present, has also resigned. There are now vacancies in Pcts 6, 16, 17 as well as Executive Secretary. Suggest candidates to Kneeland.

RESERVE FUND BALANCE:

Peter B Howard Secretary 9/22/07

cc FinCom Members, Selectmen, Town Manager, Comptroller, Library File, Town Web Site FinCom Web Site