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Finance Committee Minutes 03-20-2002

ARLINGTON FINANCE COMMITTEE
 MINUTES OF MEETING
 7:30 PM O'Neill room Community Safety Building
 3/20/02

ATTENDEES:

Janowitz*	Feinleib	Kocur*	O'Neill*	Mahoney
DeCoursey*	Connors	Simmons*	Morrisette*	
Tosti*	Foskett*	Deyst*	Ronan	
Piandes*	Franclemont*		Olsen*	
DuBois*	Howard*	Fanning	Tosi*	Kneeland*

* Indicates present

VISITORS: Selectmen Charlie Lyons (Chair), Diane Mahon; Town Manager Phil Farrington, Deputy Town Manager Nancy Galkowski, Town Counsel John Maher, Planning Director Alan McClennen, Members of Transportation Study Committee Ed Starr (Chair), Ralph Ell.

MINUTES of 3/13/02 approved as printed. Unanimous. Minutes of 3/11 amended to state that fire budget was reduced "...by an amount equal to the 2 vacant positions...."

GENERAL: Tosti provided an updated budget summary showing the effect of last weeks budget changes and revised local receipts estimates. The deficit is now over \$1.7 million. He also reviewed the current Finance Committee "lean and mean" budget objective for the visitors and reviewed the Finance Committee plan to delay a budget proposal until early June. This will allow as much time as possible to obtain a good estimate of state aid. He also suggested "naming rights" as a new revenue source and provided a relevant handout.

He announced that the Permanent Town Building Committee will come to the March 25 meeting with requests for additional funds for Peirce (\$175k), Hardy (\$125k), and Brackett (\$50k).

SELECTMAN & MANAGER ARTICLES: Farrington and his staff together with Lyons and Mahon discussed the following articles using a handout.

ARTICLE 19 REQUEST FOR LEGISLATION/SYMMES: It may be better to wait until the planning process is finished and details are settled before requesting legislation. The Board of Selectmen still intend find a way to refund voters for acquisition costs. Creating an independent development /operation authority seems unlikely. There is also opposition to an independent authority within the Finance Committee. Foskett promised to keep Finance Committee informed.

ARTICLE 20 REQUEST FOR LEGISLATION/POLICE & FIRE SERVICES: The object is to improve morale by eliminating the community safety department and converting the department heads to civil service chiefs. Finance Committee members expressed concern w/ Towns ability to fill these positions in the future w/ qualified people via civil service. The only identified financial impact is the raise for the new inspection department director.

ARTICLE 21 ROOM OCCUPANCY TAX: Recommended by Board of Selectmen (4-0). VOTED to support Board of Selectmen. Unanimous.

ARTICLE 34 APPROPRIATION/LIGHT & POWER CO: Board of Selectmen plans to establish a study committee. VOTED to support Board of Selectmen (11-2).

ARTICLE 37 REVOLVING FUNDS: Board of Selectmen plans to earmark \$25k for private way revolving fund seed money. These funds will be repaid by street abutters.

ARTICLE 41-49 COLLECTIVE BARGAINING: No settlements yet. Uniformed personnel pay said to be low compared to surrounding towns.

Others are near average because of pay plan review . Finance Committee members urged Board of Selectmen to consider the economic conditions before granting substantial increases. \$330k is available from previous pay increase set-asides that could be applied to the \$600k estimate for Article 49.

ARTICLE 59 RIGHT OF FIRST REFUSAL/CEMETERY: \$20k requested to purchase this right from adjoining properties perhaps for a 90 day period. Finance Committee believes this to be a poor use of funds. There is no legal requirement to provide cemetery space. VOTED no action. Unanimous.

ARTICLE 60 APPROPRIATION/TOWN CELEBRATIONS: No increases requested.

ARTICLE 61 APPROPRIATION/MISCELLANEOUS: No increases requested.

ARTICLE 66 APPROPRIATION/TRANSPORTATION STUDY: Starr, using a handout, reviewed progress this year and explained how the \$50k request would be used to continue improvements.

ARTICLE 67 & 68 APPROPRIATION/WATER & SEWER: If no interest loan funds are available this year, the Town will borrow as in past.

M SCHEDULE POLICY: Farrington, using a handout, stated that those above midpoint have performed very well, and all received \$2,000. He hopes to regularize this process by awarding at midyear to become effective 7/1. Article 47 COLAs may be on top of these increases. Finance Committee members request the Manager & Board of Selectmen to consider include these increases in their budget control efforts. Janowitz to review M Sched spreadsheet w/ Galkowski. Lyons believes that the problem is revenues, not expenditures (except for insurance, school renovation and SPED). He hopes the economy will recover in time to solve the problem.

Retirement of the Comptroller provides an opportunity to reconsider Town financial organization. The Board of Selectmen has created a subcommittee (Lyons, Dias) to consider alternatives. Foskett to appoint at least one Finance Committee Fiscal Subcommittee member to participate.

RESERVE FUND BALANCE: \$231,272

Peter B. Howard, Secretary

Budget & Article Action Summary

Bud #	Date of presentation	Date of vote	\$	Vote	Art#	Date of presentation	Date of vote	\$	Vote/ assigned to
1	2/4	2/4	11257	Unanimous	19				
2					20				
3	2/20	2/20	308314	Unanimous	21	3/20	3/20	Supp BOS	Unanimous
4					22	3/11	3/11	informal	Support
5	3/13	3/13	888929	Unanimous	24	2/11,3/12			No report
6	3/13	3/13	558638	Unanimous	21				

7	3/13	3/13	154733	Unanimous	32				
8	3/13	3/13	265702	Tabled	33				
9	2/20	2/20	693368	Unanimous	34	1/28	3/20	Supp BOS	11-2
10	2/20	2/20	190595	Unanimous	35	2/11		BOS	
11	2/20	2/20	91838	Unanimous	38	1/28,3/13	2/4	No report	Unanimous
12	3/13	3/13	77645	Unanimous	39	1/28			Foskett
13					40	1/28			
14	2/20	2/20	340727	Unanimous	41				No settle
15	2/20	2/20	19570	Unanimous	42				No settle
16					43				No settle
17a	3/11	3/11	291028	Unanimous	44				No settle
17b	3/11	3/11	4856628	Unanimous	45				No settle
17c	3/11	3/11	4757069	Unanimous	46				No settle
17d	3/11	3/11	728035	Unanimous	47				No settle
18a					48				No settle
18b	3/11	3/11	422500	Unanimous	49	3/20			
19					50				
20	2/20	2/20	1616142	Unanimous	52	2/27	2/27	7209284	Unanimous
21a	2/20	2/20	103030	Unanimous	53	1/28	2/4	Approve	Unanimous
21b	2/20	2/20	187045	Unanimous	54	3/6			
21c	2/20	2/20	175726	Unanimous	55				
21d	2/20	2/20	146692	Unanimous	56				
22					59	3/20	3/20	No action	Unanimous
23					60	3/20			
24					61	3/20			
25	2/11		9866370	Tabled	62	2/20	2/20	Favor Act	Unanimous
26					63				
WS					64	3/13		no plan	tabled
Rec	2/20	2/20	-9071	Unanimous	65		2/11	No action	Unanimous
Rnk	2/20	2/20	-77	Unanimous	66	3/20		\$50k	
COA	2/20	2/20	-2150	Unanimous	67	3/20			No info
YS	2/20	2/20	263844	Unanimous	68	3/20			No info
					69				
					70				
					71				
					72				
					73				