



# Meeting Minutes

## FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

Judge Welsh Meeting Room – 10:00 a.m.

September 15, 2014

**Members Present:** Duane Steele, Mike Canizales, Mark Hatch, Doug Cliggott, Clarence Walker

**Others Present:** Dan Hoort, Finance Director

Meeting opened with Kathleen Cote questioning our process of assessing, residence requirements, and property owner's exemptions. Mike explained that the assessors and the Finance Director discuss the availability of taxes to be levied on homeowners. This year residential exemption was discussed as a reallocation of funds. Exemptions include veterans, senior citizens, year round rentals, etc. The Finance Director, the Finance Committee, with the help of Peter Petas, has compiled data to look at exemptions. Ultimately it was decided to do nothing about a residential exemption this year, and the idea was tabled.

Doug Cliggott asked Dan Hoort to explain the budgeting process for OPEB. Doug states that we have slightly over a million dollars leaving our OPEB with a 21 million dollar liability. He is quoting the Segal figures which are done every two years.

Dan Hoort stated that every other year we join with Barnstable County and pay for our own study regarding our OPEB liability. Dan feels that pension liabilities are as important as other liabilities, and states that at this point, the town employees 14 – 15 people for every 21 on retirement health care and benefits.

Doug Cliggott states that our rating from Standard and Poors is lower than any town, other than Falmouth, on the Cape. Twenty percent of our budget goes to debt service. We must include debt service, OPEB, and retiree health plans to have a clear picture of our finances.

Hiring a lobbyist was discussed. The discussion reflected the need to have someone on Beacon Hill, paid by the town, to deal specifically with Provincetown's issues (condo transfer taxes, room taxes, etc). Mike Canizales moves and Mark Hatch seconds to put an article on the warrant to pay \$30,000 to a lobbyist for Provincetown. Motion was tabled without a vote for more discussion.

The CIP discussion was continued with discussion of articles on the warrant. The demolition of the VFW building was discussed briefly, as was the Finance Committee's letter to the voters. Mike feels that the DPW garage and new police station are unnecessary expenses at this time.

From the audience, Louise Venden commented that an employment study could possibly make our government function more efficiently. She suggested hiring a professional to study town jobs, new technologies, and employee positions and efficiency.

Kathleen Cote commented that managers and directors of departments need to investigate decreasing payroll costs.

The Police Chief, Town Manager, and DPW Director residency requirement was discussed. The Board of Selectmen are including this on the warrant. Clarence Walker questions the supervision of the police chief by the town manager. The general discussion was that the Board of Selectmen should supervise both the Police Chief and the Town Council. The Town Manager should be responsible for billable hours to Town Council. Duane Steele, Mike Canizales, and Clarence Walker discussed the possibility of law suits impacting our budget and our billable hours.

Paul Kelly of 22 Brewster Street, recommended that the Finance Committee should study the police department, and the DPW garage.

Acting Police Chief Golden commented that the proposed building of 19,000 square feet has been reduced to \$13,400 square feet. His commented that a new building is needed, and that the longer we leave this undone, the more it will cost.

*more*

**The meeting was adjourned at 12:18 p.m.**

**Respectfully submitted:**

**Maghi Geary**