Wellfleet Finance Committee

**June 7th, 2017, 7:00PM**

**Wellfleet Senior Center, 715 Old Kings Hwy**

**Present**: Stephen Polowczyk, Kathy Granlund, Arlene Kirsch, Janet Loewenstein, Linda Pellegrino, Fred McGee, Robert Wallace

**Others Present**: Dan Hoort (Town Administrator), Suzanne Thomas (Director, Community Services)

**Regrets**: Ira Wood

Chair Stephen Polowczyk called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

**Board Reorganization:**

Chair Stephen Polowczyk announced he will no longer be Chair of the Finance Committee, and asked the members to nominate and take a vote for a new Chair and Vice Chair.

Kirsch nominated VC Janet Loewenstein, McGee Seconded the nomination.

All in favor, Loewenstein abstained.

6-0-1

Polowczyk nominated Arlene Kirsch for Vice Chair, Pellegrino seconded, all in favor. The Committee thanks Polowczyk for his dedication and hard work as Chair for the Finance Committee.

6-0-1

**Transfers:**

Chair Loewenstein opened with the Beach ATV transfer, coming from the Reserve Fund containing 80K**.** Polowczyk explained how the Fund is used:

*The Finance Committee can authorize transfers from the Reserve Fund for “extraordinary and unforeseen expenses”. It is distributed through transfers approved by the Finance Committee. How the funds are dispersed depends on communities’ interpretation of the terms “extraordinary” or “unforeseen”. Some towns assume a very conservative interpretation used upon for dire emergency, such as natural disasters. Other communities take a more liberal view and are willing to use the fund for less critical purposes not foreseen when the budget was approved. However, if Town Meeting has rejected the funding for particular items it cannot later be funded by the Reserve Fund. In general, extraordinary and unforeseen items, such as increased insurance premiums or replacing a damaged police cruiser are acceptable. Salary increases are generally not acceptable use for this fund. Finance Committees should adopt their own guidelines to supplement the state statute and provide other Town officials with a better understanding of the circumstances other communities are most likely to use the reserve fund.*

Suzanne Thomas was introduced to the Committee and she requested a Transfer of $18, 200.00 The present budget is $6800.00. She explained that the current style of ATV being used is an older model and is unsafe, then handed information sheets about the Ranger 1000xp to the Committee. Thomas explained that when she was doing the Capital Plan update, she was not aware that she had to upgrade the vehicle by July 1, 2017. She did not go each year and add the replacement value to the vehicle, or she would have had a larger budget, and can’t get the Reserve Fund because there isn’t enough in the operating budget.

She continued that White Crest is too steep for the current style vehicle and the new ATV would also be accessible on the flats. It is not legal for street-use, so it would have to be transported. The current vehicle has a value of about $1500.00 and the repairs would cost more than the value of the vehicle. She suggests that it could be used by the Transfer Station or Harbor.

Wallace spoke with a former head-lifeguard about the necessity of the new type of vehicle, and the response was that it is too excessive, and the current type of vehicle should be sufficient. A comparable replacement vehicle costing $8000.00 with a winch would be satisfactory. Polowczyk was in agreement with Wallace and thinks that since the Finance Committee set a tone at Town Meeting that the Committee would be scrutinizing budgets, shouldn’t spend any money until a Budget Task Force is created to look at expenses, and would recommend to not approve this Transfer.

Motion to not approve: Polowczyk

Second: Granlund

4-3, motion carries not to approve

Loewenstein asked what the new vehicle would be used for besides rescue. Thomas explains that when the birds are not nesting, it would be used for patrolling, and stored at the Fire Department off-season.

Kirsch mentioned to the Committee that there is $80,000 to date, and the funds would be available before the end of the fiscal year.

Granlund states that coming to the Finance Committee with this as an “extraordinary” measure isn’t necessary, and this expenditure should be something that can improve planning and improve an existing upgrade. If what the Town has isn’t working, it should have brought to Town Meeting as an issue people voted on rather regarded as an emergency, and this vehicle has to be in the right time and place to perform to its capacity.

Wallace’s recommendation of the 4-track equipped with a winch shouldn’t exceed $8,000, and $6800.0 was appropriated, amending the current amount of $6800.00 and adding $1200.00 from the reserve fund. This is a top of the line vehicle and should be substantial.

The Committee agrees that current type of vehicle makes more sense for the following reasons: it can be used more readily, doesn’t need to be trailered, and the Town won’t have to rely on storing it.

Chair Janet Loewenstein didn’t see it as an unusual request, and felt comfortable going ahead with the Transfer.

Polowczyk motioned to approve a different sum in the amount of $2000.00 from the Transfer Fund to the Reserve Fund

Magee seconded the motion.

All in favor and the amended motion carried 7-0.

**ATM Recap**

**Finance Committee discusses:**

Kirsch thinks that forcing a discussion helps create debate about the budget issues in the Town, and wants Town Meeting to pay attention to their budget and their money, and wants people to understand what they’re voting on.

Granlund thought it was important to be thoughtful about what is being passed on, being united and being protective of the budget. Wallace believes the population has always respected the Finance Committees as being a team representative.

Hoort would like to be on future agendas and return to discuss process with the Finance Committee. Loewenstein suggests having a meeting with the Selectmen and the moderator, and establishing a better process for everyone involved.

They discussed that it’s common to vote on bigger budgets with the Selectmen, but not as much in the Town Meeting setting. Magee suggested when FC reviews the annual process, the Committee should keep an eye out on what it implies for the two-year, three-year process, etc.

Hoort asked if the Committee if they would agree to be televised. Kirsch agreed televised meetings should be on the table.

The Committee was in agreement about, having different departments work together, working with the Moderator and being more prepared for the next Town Meeting.

**Capital Improvement Plan FY 2019:**

Dan Hoort expressed that he would like to work on more long-range planning, and would like to see wants vs. needs distinguished; perhaps a survey or documentation that the requested item is a necessity.

Magee said that after reading the numbers in the CIP that there appeared to be some guesstimating with figures. Some of the costs were high and doesn’t know the accuracy of the some of the estimates. Hoort responds that he will be citing the source of the estimations and attach them to the requests in the future.

The Committee discussed the way funds are apportioned for vehicles and whether there is a Facilities Capital Plan/Program and that would allow vehicle repair to happen in a timely fashion rather than all in one year. Hoort says that since the Plan is approved well in advance it can become more detailed as time goes on. Kirsch clarifies that isn’t up to the Finance Committee to approve, but to accept the Plan.

They reviewed and discussed the type of revenue the beaches acquire: manpower, shuttling, waste, and maintenance. Some of the questions that arose stem from off-hours operation: who pays for and benefits from beach shuttling, who manages and pays for waste management, as well as overseeing any manpower.

The Committee spoke of the Comprehensive Permitting Software for the Assessor’s Office. The way permitting is currently done is on paper, and the new system would allow a much more efficient process for the Department.

The drudging of Wellfleet Harbor is addressed. Kirsch asked if no one at the Federal level has been signing off on the grants, and where does that leave the Town? Hoort says there will be an upcoming meeting with the Massachusetts Secretary of Economic Development and Housing. The State has a MassWorks Program so the Town will ask: if the funding is available, will the Army Corps of Engineers either drudge the Harbor for the Town or permit the Town to drudge? The ACOE is the only roadblock, as permits have been lined up for this project. Hoort continues that he would like to meet with the Head of the ACOE and Senator Warren in Washington, D.C.

The Committee accepts receipt on the CIP, will keep it on future Agendas to continue to review and make recommendations.

**Budget Task Force**

Kirsch suggested dividing into teams and conducting research on other towns on how they grow revenue and save on expenses.

Magee recommended planning not be limited to the Finance Committee, but including the Town Administrator, Assistant Town Administrator, and Accounting personnel in the process. He volunteered to help the Committee come up with a framework to begin the procedure.

**Open House Meetings**

Kirsch suggested as part of the Committee’s regular meetings, they advertise a quarterly open session.

**Liaison Reports**

Magee spoke to Tom Conrad who would like to come and talk to the Finance Committee before the budget season regarding the direction of the school, where he thinks things are going, costs, etc. Polowczyk would like to see a detailed plan from Conrad showing a decrease in spending by administration. Loewenstein suggested a July meeting with Conrad.

**Correspondence**

-The Beacon was passed to Committee Members

-Police Quarterly Report

**Minutes**

Kirsch Motioned to approve the Minutes from 6/7/2017

Seconded by Loewenstein

All approve 7-0

Agenda-Public Hearing for June 28th Capital Improvement Plan 7:00 Conference room COA

**Agenda:**

CIP

Budget Task Force

Open House Meetings

Loewenstein adjourns the meeting at 8:50. All in favor. 7-0

**Public Record:** No Public Records to Note