

# December 20, 2006

## **Present:**

Finance Board: Jack Boyer, Barbara Brown, Jack Field, Michael Jackson, Craig Schoon, Rex Swain

Alternates: Liddy Adams, John Allen

Selectmen: Richard Sears, Nicholas Solley

Treasurer: Linda McGarr

**Minutes:** Minutes of the November 20th, 2006 meeting were accepted as submitted with the addition of Valerie Friedman as attending.

**Treasurer's Report:** Accepted as submitted.

**Tax Collector's Report:** Accepted as submitted.

**Financials:** Accepted as submitted.

## **Old Business:**

**Education Construction:** Jack Field updated the Board on recent school construction issues.

- The lawsuit filed against the Region 12 Board of Education by the Bridgewater Board of Ed members and the First Selectman has not prevented the investigation of property on Wakelee Road and Route 199 in Roxbury as a potential school site. If found to be positive, the next phase would include core drilling and testing; however, this would not begin unless the Board had an option to purchase.
- Bridgewater will continue to verify a design on their building.
- Roxbury has approved funding to validate their plans.
- Washington's plans had previously been defined by Turner Construction and S/L/A/M.
- If the "build to suit" concept becomes a viable option for the Board of Ed, a referendum would be necessary for a one vs. three school case. If the Board of Ed chooses to eliminate "build to suit," a referendum would be held on a single school case. The Board of Ed is anticipating a referendum could be held in the spring of 2007.
- Question was raised if the Board of Ed had sufficient funds to pay an option price on a piece of land. While there is no budgeted contingency line in the Education budget, the Board of Ed does have the flexibility within their budget to make these decisions.
- It was noted if the "build to suit" option is chosen and reimbursement from the State is not available, there are still many issues to be handled. Rex questioned if each town were to hold a separate referendum, would all three towns have to agree. Statutes state that all public money spent on public education must go through the Region.
- Question was raised if funds due to the Region from the Town of Bridgewater could put the Region into default and affect the Board's credit rating as well as that of the other two towns for bonding.

Answers will be sought regarding the obligations under this agreement.

The Board recognized Jack Field for his intelligent and factual response letter to Mr. Wainright's recent letter in the recent Press. Praise was also offered to Barbara Henry and Gary Lord for maintaining order in the discussions at their recent public meetings on this emotional topic.

**New Business:**

**2007 Meeting Dates:** Approved as submitted. (Attached)

**Education Construction Meeting:** A Town informational meeting will be scheduled for mid-January to answer questions and provide as much information as possible to town residents regarding the various construction possibilities and what effect the various plans will have on the Town. All members of the Boards of Selectmen and Finance and the Washington Board of Ed members will be asked to attend. A Board of Education meeting is also scheduled on January 8 to discuss build-to-suit.

**Election of Officers:** Craig Schoon made a motion to elect Michael Jackson and Jack Field as Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board of Finance, respectively, for the 2007 calendar year. Jack Field seconded the motion. Motion unanimously passed.

**Health Benefits Account:** Draft guidelines of policies and procedures to be used for an Employee Health Benefit account in the General Fund were presented to the Finance Board for review. (attached) The Selectmen will continue to work with the Town's agent to compare various options available to hold costs down.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Gollow, Secretary