

February 23, 2009

The following minutes of the Board of Finance meeting are submitted subject to approval at the next meeting.

As Revised

Present: Jack Field, Michael Jackson, Craig Schoon, Jack Boyer

Alternates: Liddy Adams, A.J. DuBois

Selectmen: Mark Lyon, Nick Solley

Treasurer: Linda McGarr

Guests: Tony Bedini, Valerie Friedman, Dick Carey, Ken Cornet, Joe Mustich

Chairman, Michael Jackson called the meeting to order at 5:00pm.

Minutes: Minutes were accepted as submitted.

Tax Collector's Report:

Report accepted as submitted.

Treasurer's Report:

The Board asked the Treasurer to look into moving the smaller accounts into the Trust account. Report accepted as submitted.

Alternate Vacancy:

No action taken.

A.J. DuBois arrived at 5:10pm. Mark Lyon and Liddy Adams arrived at 5:15pm.

Financials:

Mark Lyon noted that the Town has used 80% of the winter maintenance budget at only 60% through the season. Mr. Lyon went on to state that the Tax Collector is on target with collections. Mark spoke about the reevaluation, the Town is still holding back half of the company's payment until the work to be completed is acceptable. Barbara Johnson, Tax Assessor expects to file the grand list by Friday (February 27th), she will continue working with the reevaluation company on adjustments. Taxpayers who have met with the reevaluation company should be receiving updated reevaluations this week and future adjustments will be made by the Assessor. Work will continue through the Board of Assessment Appeals. Ken Cornet spoke about his feeling that the whole reevaluation should be thrown out; he feels that the work was statistically off the mark.

Nick Solley arrived at 5:25pm.

Michael Jackson asked Mark Lyon if he felt the entire reevaluation was flawed. Mr. Lyon answered that in discussions with Barbara Johnson, the Tax Assessor, she is unhappy with the process but feels it can be corrected and that there is nothing to gain by starting over again. Mark went on to say that part of the problem was that the reevaluation company was behind schedule and the assessor did not have the opportunity to review assessments before they were sent out to people. Valerie Friedman felt that people

were just looking for a fair and consistent reevaluation.

Education:

Jack Field began discussion on the new leases for the three elementary schools and the proposal to attach a list of necessary repairs to the leases. There appears to be no mechanism in place to follow up once the leases are signed as to whether the work has been completed. Mr. Field stated that there would be little state reimbursement, if any, on repairs done at the school since repairs are included as part of the Operating budget.

Tony Bedini picked up this discussion by circulating a list of needed repairs to Burnham School as an example of an add-on to the lease. He noted the pricing is estimated and has not been vetted to bids. Mr. Bedini presented a slideshow showing some of the work/repairs needed at Washington Primary School. Michael Jackson asked who was responsible for the obvious lack of attention to this maintenance. Jack Field noted the schools are a Town asset and are leased to the Region. The Board of Education is in charge, via the Superintendent, Business Manager, and down to the maintenance personnel. Tony Bedini felt that everything is handled by reaction, things are not done proactively. He felt the building deterioration was due to lack of maintenance and willful destruction of the building. Jack Field went on to say that Region 12 is the only region in which the towns own the school buildings. He circulated a document entitled “Unbundling” of Region Budget for 2008-9. He felt the 20-year school leases should not be signed as they don’t adequately address maintenance issues. Michael Jackson agreed and suggested a one-year rollover lease. Town Attorney David Miles is reviewing the leases.

Meeting adjourned at 6:50pm.

Submitted subject to approval,

Pamela L. Osborne, Acting Secretary