

February 26, 2007

Present:

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

Alternates: Liddy Adams, Jim Brinton

Selectmen: Richard Sears, Nicholas Solley

Tax Collector: Tanya Wescott

Seating: Alternates Liddy Adams and Jim Brinton were seated for this meeting.

Minutes: Minutes of the January 22, 2007 meeting were accepted.

Tax Collector's Report: Tanya reported 94.1% of the current year's taxes had been received as of January 31 and prior years receivables are down to about \$150,000. Clarification between actual bank deposits and her monthly "batches" was discussed. Tanya reported her batches (or reports) do not include overpayments, returned check fees, duplicate bills fees, interest write-offs, or overpayments and underpayments, which all are shown on the bank deposits. If an overpayment has been made, taxpayers and banks are notified and funds are returned once acknowledged by the payer. Payments over or under \$2.00 are neither returned nor collected. Notification of automatic deposits from payers are included in her reports; however, they may not show as receipts by the local bank until they are actually received a day or two later. Most delinquent taxpayers have been good about adhering to a tax payment plan. The Board commended Tanya on her collections and appreciated the clarification between the two reports.

Treasurer's Report: Question was raised again about the large sum in a lower interest-bearing account at the end of the month. The Treasurer will be asked to make these transfers before the end of the month.

Purchasing Procedure: A discussion was held on the importance of following established procedures when making Town purchases. A recent purchase had been made, anticipating reimbursement from next year's capital budget. While the Finance Board agreed to the necessity of the equipment, approval should be obtained from the Boards of Selectmen and Finance prior to the purchase. All town income and expense is audited. Entities outside of town government provide individual audits for the Finance Board's review. The Board recognized the varied services provided by all town and town-affiliated boards. The Finance Board and Selectmen recognized the many services provided and noted their appreciation of the volunteer efforts from all boards and commission. However, they did feel it is their responsibility to ensure that due diligence is followed in the use of the taxpayer funds.

Selectman's Report: Dick attended the recent Inter Municipal Agreement meeting in Roxbury. While Bridgewater and Roxbury continue to work on build-to-suit options for their town, Washington's plan has been complete for some time. There is currently no guarantee for state reimbursement through a build-to-suit program. The present and prior superintendents of school met with the State Department of Education to investigate this further. It is felt a Special Act from the legislature would be required to approve reimbursement in this case.

Employee Health Benefit Fund: Efforts continue in an attempt to reduce costs in the employee insurance areas of the budget. The Board previously reviewed the Policy and Procedure Guidelines establishing an Employee Benefits Account and the past two year's experience had been excellent. Dick suggested consideration be given to extending the Town's coverage to co-pays and dental costs in an

additional effort to reduce costs. Rex cautioned against this, noting experience will be different because usage will be different. He felt employees should pay a portion of their medical expenses. Discussion continued and it was suggested that data be obtained on previous use of the dental insurance and co-pays of employees. If it is recommended that options in addition to the current out-patient deductible be considered, a close accounting will be kept for review. The Town's broker will be asked to attend the next meeting to make recommendations for lowering costs. Michael Jackson made a motion that the Policy and Procedure Guidelines be approved. Jack Boyer seconded the motion. Motion unanimously passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 6 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Gollow, Secretary