

# May 21, 2007

## **Present:**

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

Alternates: Liddy Adams, John Allen

Selectmen: Richard Sears, Nicholas Solley, Mark Lyon

Treasurer: Linda McGarr

Jack Field chaired the meeting in the absence of Chairman Michael Jackson.

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

**Tax Collector's Report:** Suggested report could be minimized to show total collections to date. Continued compliments to the Tax Collector on the excellent collection rate. Estimated collection of 99.3% is anticipated. Accepted as submitted.

Financials: Accepted as submitted.

## **Selectman's Report:**

### **General Fund Budget:**

**Insurance:** Dick noted overall employee insurances will decrease from \$298,929 in 2006-07 to \$286,000 for 2007-08, -4.3%. This is due to the following:

- While health insurance costs will increase 6% in the coming year, costs were not available at the 2006-07 budget time and had been overestimated. The line item will be reduced from \$243,000 to \$231,000 and will result in a -4.9% cost in this area.
- A change in dental benefits will be made. Rather than company benefits being paid at the current \$1,000/person for a total line item of \$28,000, a flat \$500 will be available for each person covered under the dental plan, which equates to \$27,000. These costs will be paid by the Town from a specific fund after receiving approval through the Town's insurance agency.

**Fire Marshal:** An increase in salary from \$18,000 to \$23,000 was recommended by the Selectmen after determining the Fire Marshal's salary is very low as compared to others. In addition to an increased workload and responsibilities, the State requires 30 hours of training annually. Mr. Etherington has covered these costs himself and is not reimbursed for use of his vehicle. His duties are defined by the State Fire Marshal's Office and he is a certified professional. It was agreed a job description will be created for the future. Mr. Etherington will be invited to the September meeting.

**Jack Boyer made a motion that the 2007-08 General Fund expenditures be presented at town meeting in the amount of \$3,789,094. Barbara Brown seconded the motion. Motion unanimously passed.**

**Barbara Brown made a motion that the Nonrecurring Capital Fund Expenditures be presented at town meeting in the amount of \$1,069,603. Jack Boyer seconded the motion. Motion unanimously**

**passed.**

**Mill Rate:** Extensive discussion was held on whether to take a specific mill rate to the town meeting. It was suggested the Board's assumptions could be discussed and certain mill rates could be anticipated by the voters. It was felt that the vote is based on a specific amount for expenditures from both the General and the Capital Funds. Jack Field suggested out of deference to the chairman, the Board should continue with its practice of setting the mill rate at the meeting immediately following the town meeting. This was the consensus of the Board.

**Education:** At the previous meeting it was agreed that the Board would present a clear picture explaining the various outcomes from the school construction vote via an explanatory notice to the voters. Again, it would not advocate which way to vote. The notice would be sent by the Town Clerk, labeled on the outside that it is an explanatory note and is authorized by the Board of Selectmen. It would be written as a statement from both the Boards of Selectmen and Finance. Jack asked the Board to review a draft he had prepared to insure that it would not be advocating a position nor be judgmental. It was agreed to send the draft to the Secretary of State's Office for review prior to mailing. Jack asked for comments prior to the May 24th town meeting.

**Ex-Budget Appropriation:** Dick requested an ex-budget appropriation be considered for legal and technical assistance regarding the pending cell tower application. John Allen questioned the necessity of this expenditure. Dick reported the Selectmen felt it would be in the best interest of the Town to have experts review the cell tower company's information, as the Siting Council's decisions are based on very technical material. He noted this would not be opposing the proposal but rather would set the Town's parameters to challenge information. Jack Boyer made a motion to approve an ex-budget expenditure not to exceed \$10,000 for legal and technical assistance regarding the proposed cell tower(s). Rex Swain seconded the motion. Motion passed 4-1. For: Boyer, Swain, Field, Brown. Against: Schoon.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Gollow, Secretary