

September 15, 2008

Present:

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

B/F Alternates: Liddy Adams, Arthur DuBois, Jr.

Selectmen: Jim Brinton, Mark Lyon, Nick Solley

Tax Collector: Tanya Wescott

Treasurer: Linda McGarr

Guests: Tony Bedini

Chairman Michael Jackson called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Minutes:

The minutes of the 8/4/08 meeting were approved as revised.

Tax Collector's Report:

Tanya reported 51.5% of the 2008-09 anticipated taxes have been collected. All outstanding taxes prior to the 2004 Grand List have been cleared up. Property owners in arrears for two or more years, who have not made and followed through on payment arrangements, are sent to the State Marshal for collection. The Marshal has the authority to remove funds from the accounts of overdue taxpayers. While the Tax Collector does not have this authority, she does have the authority to foreclose on properties. The monthly report was amended to include total collections for all Grand Lists including collectibles, outstanding and collected.

Treasurer's Report:

The Board discussed the current financial status of the country due to recent major occurrences. Town funds are mainly invested in federal securities.

Financials:

Accounts were reviewed. Rex Swain made a motion to transfer \$475,000. from the Town Aid Road Fund to the Nonrecurring Capital Fund to reimburse funding for road project costs for 2005/06, 2006/07 and 2007/08.:

	SPENT:	TRANSFER:
2005-06: PAVING & DRAINAGE	\$150,000	\$100,000
2006-07: PAVING & DRAINAGE	\$46,210	
ROAD RECLAIMING	\$145,000	
	\$191,210	\$150,000
2007-08: RECLAIMING/REPAVING	\$150,000	
CHIPSEALING	\$69,965	
CULVERTS & CATCHBASINS	<u>\$5,581</u>	
	\$ 225,546	<u>\$225,000</u>
		\$475,000

Jack Boyer seconded the motion. Motion unanimously passed.

Jack Boyer made a motion to transfer funds remaining from the following completed capital projects in the Nonrecurring Capital Fund in the amount of \$20,451.90 to the General Fund:

04-05	T - STAINED SALT BLDG.	241.00
	U - EAST ASPETUCK RETAINING WALL	545.00
05-06	F - HIGHWAY TRUCK	45.00
	Q - GENERATOR	13,464.99
06-07	J - HWY. ASPHALT ROLLER	0.32
	X - NP FIREHOUSE ROOF REPAIR	200.00
	Y - FILE CABINETS	61.00
07-08	C FIRE C. TRIPOD SPOTLIGHT	57.79
	F FIRE PAGERS	5.08
	K HWY. WOOD CHIPPER	2,749.32
	Q-HWY. GARAGE CONCRETE FLOOR	<u>3,082.40</u>
		20,451.90

Rex Swain seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously passed.

Education:

WPS Lease:

Tony Bedini reported B/E members Jim Hirschfield and Alan Brown are reviewing the primary school leases on behalf of the Board of Ed. Once complete, a copy will be sent to each First Selectman for reconsideration.

WPS Repairs:

Tony reported Paul Szymanski of A.H. Howland & Associates had offered to review the entire drainage system at WPS at no cost. Many problems were found: constant flooding in the basement, water returning to the basement after being pumped, broken drainage pipes leading to the river, etc. Paul has been asked to provide an RFP in an attempt to determine costs for necessary repairs. He noted, however, that obtaining costs will still not solve the problems in the basement. They had begun investigating which items were eligible for reimbursement from the State. They have found the State list is constantly changing and the reimbursements are not available for many items, with roofs as an exception. The rush to complete the leases seems to have dwindled as the reimbursements are not what had been anticipated. The spreader system was also investigated by Charlie Boucher who found that water cannot drain from the gym roof because of clogged gutters. The remainder, a copper system in pretty good shape, does not need to be replaced. Tony acknowledged there are four different buildings in the Region, all of different ages with different requirements. There is no maintenance plan and a lack of maintenance and knowledge of the problems exists. A review by a qualified person, conversant with the building and engineering, would be beneficial. The Board agreed the systems should be reviewed regularly and a plan established. The plan should include not only the maintenance and repairs necessary, but also a timetable for completion. The items should be discussed during budget work sessions rather than just setting the usual percentage increase each year. Tony suggested a separate lease and maintenance agreement be initiated. He urged the Board of Selectmen not sign the current lease because of these concerns. If de-regionalization were to result, question would remain if it would be worthwhile to continue to fund this building. This would require \$400,000-500,000 for drainage work, it would remain in a floodplain, the problems of basement flooding would not be alleviated, the heating system needs to be addressed, the school is huge and not conducive for small children, and the building is not efficient by any means. The Board noted their appreciation of Tony's efforts on behalf of the Town.

De-regionalization:

It was reported the Bridgewater Selectmen had requested a committee be established by the Board of Ed to investigate de-regionalization on behalf of Bridgewater . It was requested that Board of Ed members and State personnel be seated on this committee. State law requires all three towns reach agreement to consider this matter. Tony reported educators are not interested in doing this and have informed Bridgewater it would be illegal to do this on their own.

Land Use Consultant:

Mark reported the Selectmen are in the process of interviewing consultants to review office functions, responsibilities and staffing levels in the Land Use office. Fees for consultants range from \$2,000-5,000. While this expense was not included in the current budget, the Selectmen feel the review is warranted and would be money well spent. For funding, the Selectmen have considered use of the consultant line item in each Commission's budget; noting, however, that these had already been reduced at budget time. The Board agreed an ex-budget appropriation not to exceed \$5,000 would be more appropriate and approved same.

Vacancy:

A replacement for alternate John Allen will be sought, whose shoes will be hard to fill.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy Gollow, Secretary