**Board of Finance**

**May 19, 2014**

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

**Present:** Members: Jack Boyer, Barbara Brown, Michael Jackson, Craig Schoon, Rex Swain

Alternates: Liddy Adams, Ted Bent,

Selectmen: Mark Lyon, Richard Carey, Jay Hubelbank

Treasurer: Linda McGarr

Guests: Tony Bedini, Region 12 Board of Education

**Minutes:** Minutes of the April 21st meeting were corrected with regard to the Housing Commission request.

**Tax Collector’s Report**: Approved as submitted.

**Treasurer’s Report:** Approved as submitted.

**Education:** Mark Lyon noted the Region is proceeding forward with the results of the Education vote as it is and will proceed for a referendum on repairs to the middle-high school. They may confer with the Board’s counsel to insure the correct process is being followed and the three First Selectmen are scheduled to meet with the Superintendent on May 23rd. Since elementary school consolidation is off the table other scenarios should be explored; i.e. requesting the cost estimates for each town’s buildings, with each Town paying the expenses on their own facilities and sharing the cost of Regional facilities. He noted we are still paying over 46% of the costs of a system we have voted to change and have always continued to support the Regional budget. There have been many years that the positive vote in Washington has passed the budget Region’s budget and perhaps that may change.

Questions were raised if anyone has actually suggested de-regionalizing the school district and if there have been inquiries to the State level about de-regionalization. It was noted most likely the State does not want to abolish a small Region by making smaller schools. Now that the referendum has failed, question was also raised if the State would perhaps allow us to join with another region since the same problems exist in other small regions. Consolidation in some form seems to be the only answer to this question and would it be possible to get the Board of Ed to enter into these discussions.

**Current Town Budget:** Mark Lyon noted there are some overages in the year-to-date General Fund expenses. i.e. The Winter Maintenance area exceeded the budgeted line item by $92,000 due to winter costs. The Tax Collector and Assessor’s areas are also over based on the fact that both are new positions and additional coverage is required while they attend classes. It is anticipated that most areas will come in around budget and is where we expect it to be at this time of the year; however, it may be necessary to make an additional appropriation at a town meeting at the end of the fiscal year in June.

**Proposed 2014-2015 Mill Rate:** The Board reviewed the proposed budget estimate sheets. The new Grand List is listed at $1,095,276,210 according to the Board of Assessment Appeals and a 98% collection rate is used. The Board discussed the proposal in its entirety and noted they are being cautious as opposed to aggressive. Michael Jackson made the suggestion to approve a 13.5 mill rate for the 2014-2015 fiscal year, with the majority of the Board in agreement. Rex Swain suggested a 13.25 mill rate. The mill rate for the 2014-2015 fiscal year at 13.5 was approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Gollow, Selectman’s Ass’t.