

April 13, 2006

Present: First Selectman Richard C. Sears, Selectmen Nicholas N. Solley and Mark E. Lyon.

Public: Jack Field, Valerie Andersen, Valerie Friedman, Frank Adams

Call to Order: First Selectman Sears called the meeting to order at 5:05p.m.

BOARD OF FINANCE MAILING:

Dick Sears explained that Washington's Board of Finance has prepared a letter to go to the residents of Washington regarding the upcoming referendum vote dealing with the renovation of the three primary schools in Region #12.

Jack Field of the Board of Finance explained that in order to insure neutrality, the State Elections and Enforcement Commission's primary attorney has agreed to review the letter prior to it's mailing.

Motion: To approve the mailing of information as provided by the Board of Finance to the citizens of the Town regarding the Operating Expense forecast regarding the April 25th, 2006 Referendum. By Dick Sears, seconded by Mark Lyon.

Discussion: Nick Solley felt that the amount of monies being voted on in the referendum will have a significant tax impact and felt comfortable with the information being presented to the townspeople for their information and knowledge. Mark Lyon expressed his approval of the letter being reviewed by the State Elections Commission to guarantee it's unbiased opinion and he is in support of the mailing once it meets the approval of the Commission. Without this approval he felt it possible to be construed as the Board of Finance taking a position that would be biased. Jack Field felt the Board has been very careful not to put itself in a position of appearing to support one option over another by sending out an earlier mailing that clearly outlined the cost of the consolidation project and the cost of the three school renovation project. Valerie Andersen felt that the letter should also include some "discussion" of the Town's income by including information on the growth in the grand list as well as the Town's surplus. She feels that although expenses are rising, so is the income and does not want to think the voters will be scared by this mailing. Jack felt the letter did attempt to provide some of this information as well.

Valerie Friedman expressed her gratitude to the Board of Finance and Jack Field by stating she could not understand people's concern about the issue of bias - she thinks the letter could not be more fair.

Dick asked to **Amend the Motion to read:** To **authorize** the mailing of information as provided by the Board of Finance to the citizens of the Town regarding the Operating Expense forecast regarding the April 25th, 2006 Referendum. Mark Lyon agreed to this amendment. This mailing would be done in accordance with CGS 9-369b. The motion was passed unanimously.

Adjournment: Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 5:22p.m. as there was no further business for discussion. By Nick Solley, seconded by Dick Sears and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Anne Greene

Selectmen's Secretary