

LANESBOROUGH FINANCE COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

May 22, 2013

Members Present: W. Stevens, A. Terranova, C. Galib, G. Wolf

Guests Present: Paul Sieloff, Town Administrator

Bob Barton, Betty Ward, Early Childhood Services Committee

Meeting called to order at 6:00 PM in the Selectmen's Office

The articles for the Annual Town Meeting were brought up for discussion and approval by the Finance Committee:

**Article 17:** Early Childhood Initiatives. The Article was to create a new line item account entitled Early Childhood Initiatives with an amount of \$25,000. AS discussed this was to provide the necessary funds to bring the physical limitations at the LES up to standard to meet the criteria for Pre-K instruction. W. Stevens stated that this should be a 'one-time' capital expense, and should not be a line item in the operating budget. Also any future expenditures for Pre-K should be absorbed into the LES Budget. Also, line item would be funded by a raise and appropriate, and we do not have the funds to cover this without exceeding the levy limit, and would need to use free cash to meet the budget. After further discussion, it was decided to re-write the Article to transfer the \$25,000 from Free Cash for the expenses to bring the school into compliance. The Finance Committee will not vote on recommendation without the Article being presented in its final form. It can be discussed further during the next scheduled Finance Committee meeting on June 3.

**Article 2:** To fix compensation of all elected Town Officers, etc. Voted to recommend 4-0.

**Article 3:** \$10,000 for OPEB, which is to put money into a trust fund to eventually fund the cost of the retirees benefits. Voted to recommend 4-0.

**Article 4:** \$35,000 to replace the back roof on the Town Hall. Voted to recommend 4-0

**Article 5:** \$180,000 to purchase a new Dump Truck for the Highway Department, with a trade in and to borrow the money. Voted to recommend 4-0

**Article 6:** \$50,000 to purchase a new Forestry Pick up Truck. Voted to recommend 4-0

**Article 7:** \$35,000 to purchase a new vehicle for the Fire Chief. There was considerable discussion regarding 'budget creep' whereas, the original vehicle for the Fire Chief was a donation with the Town paying for Insurance, maintenance, etc. Now that it is in need of replacement, we now 'need' the Fire Chief vehicle. The town survived for many years without a vehicle specifically for the Fire Chief, and now that we have the free vehicle, it is now considered a requirement, i.e. budget creep. On the other side, the vehicle takes considerable wear and tear, and the Chief has stated that he is able to respond to

emergencies more safely with a properly marked vehicle, and his personal vehicle is not taking the wear and tear. This was voted 2 vote to recommend and 2 votes to not recommend the article. Therefore, there will be no recommendation from the Finance Committee at the Annual Town Meeting.

**Article 8:** Transportation Bond Bill authorization (Chapter 90). Voted to recommend 4-0

**Article 9:** Revolving Funds: Voted to recommend 4-0

**Article 10:** Ambulance Enterprise Fund, \$52,782. Voted to recommend 4-0

**Article 11:** Sewer Enterprise Fund, \$33,119. Voted to recommend 4-0

**Article 12:** BHRD \$225,028. Voted to recommend 4-0

**Article 13:** This article is inserted for a 'just in case' scenario. No vote by Finance Committee

**Article 14:** This article is inserted for a 'just in case' scenario. No vote by Finance Committee

**Article 15:** \$500,000 for constructing facility to be owned by the Town and managed by a private partner(s) for a carousel and other uses and accessory uses for the building at Laston Park. This also generated considerable discussion. W. Stevens noted that he was told that the Carousel partners would pay an annual lease to the Town to repay the loan, but there is no mention of any pay-back in the article as written. Also noted that the Finance Committee has seen no indication of any financial statement by the group to demonstrate the financial stability of the project. Paul Sieloff stated that he could provide the pro-forma information and would also schedule the representatives of Berkshire Carousel to attend the next Finance Committee meeting on June 3, to answer questions. No vote was taken by the Finance Committee on this article as written.

**Article 16:** Solar Lease Article. Paul Sieloff stated that this article was approved by the Selectmen on Monday 5/20, and the solar installation would not encroach upon the plans for the construction of Senior Housing and a Senior Center in the future. It is estimated that the installation of the solar panels will result in income and savings to the town of about \$53,000 annually. Voted to recommend 4-0

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM

Respectively submitted,

William V. Stevens, Chairman