

Town of Hampton
Board of Finance
Special Monthly Meeting
Tuesday, August 20, 2013
7pm
Hampton Town Hall

Meeting Minutes

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:02pm by Chair Rheo Brouillard.

Members present: Rheo Brouillard, Stan Crawford, Margaret Haraghey, Luciann Norton.

Alternates present: Dan Meade, Jeff Clermont.

Members/alternates absent: Paul Wakely, Penny Newbury.

Dan was seated for Paul and Jeff for Penny.

Others present: Selectman Bob Grindle, Recording Clerk Kathi Newcombe and a few audience members.

Citizen Comments: Mark Becker thought that there was little support from the Board of Finance for the Board of Education despite the fact that the Board of Education has met all the Board of Finance's directives in cutting the budget to this point. He expressed concern that the cuts will be detrimental to the education of the students. He wanted perspective of the Board of Finance. Rheo responded that the Board of Finance was acting in response to the referendum and to the expressed views of the citizens who have attended Board of Finance meetings and expressed their opinion that changes should be made to certain line items or that transportation should be reduced. It's up to the Board of Education to make the cuts in the least painful way possible.

Mark said that he understood the Board of Finance position and the responsibility of the Board of Education but thought it was important to keep in mind that the information flyers disseminated does not tell the whole picture. Rheo stated that he has tried to share the facts with the public at the Town Meetings and via the Gazette each step of the way, as to what the Board of Finance was having to address and why they made the decisions they had.

Luci stated that the publication to which Mark had referred had nothing to do with the Board of Finance. The Board of Finance was pleased with the \$41,109 in cuts that the Board of Education had made, but citizens were looking for cuts to employees' salaries and benefits, not to cut resources for students. Citizens didn't get the cuts in the areas requested. The Board of Finance has no control over what citizens want, can only react to it.

Stan mentioned that the Board of Education members are going to track the bus routes.

Rheo stated that it's the responsibility of the Board of Education, not the Board of Finance, to determine how and where to make the cuts. It's the responsibility of the Board of Finance to manage the town budget. Everyone on the Board of Finance values education, but it's their job to manage the town finances. Ultimately, the HES budget is being affected by the increased assessment to Hampton for the RD11 budget.

Dan spoke about the increase in the assessment from RD11 would be raising the baseline that the town is required to fund for education at that higher level, not just for this year, but all future years as well.

Jeff talked about what would happen if the RD11 census drops and the elementary school census climbs; there will be a real problem at HES.

Rheo thought that the MBR statute was a flawed statute, but because of its restrictions, if the town does not reduce the budget when it has a chance it could be spending more on education than the schools need in the future. If the town votes down even this latest cut, the Board of Finance has a dilemma – must it cut the full amount to drop the budget to the minimum MBR or are people voting “no” because they think it’s now too low.

Luci wondered what would happen if the HES budget never passes. Rheo explained that the Board of Education can only spend as much as the Board of Finance allocates to them.

Luci praised Mark for attending and speaking, since the Board of Finance has only heard from citizens on the other side of the issue. Mark went on to say that Hampton needs a population boost, and families with children will only move to a town that is perceived to have good schools.

Dan encouraged everyone to write their legislator and tell him/her what they think of the MBR.

Approval of Minutes: **Margaret moved and Stan seconded to approve the minutes of the 7/9/13 meeting and the 7/30/13 meeting; motion passed unanimously.**

Reports/Action:

- First Selectman: None
- Tax Collector:
The monthly Tax Collector’s reports had been distributed previously to members via email. There were no questions. Tax bills have been sent out and are due by September 1.
 - Tax Abatement: **Margaret moved and Dan seconded to abate \$440.94 on the Vadnais property for past due taxes;** Rheo noted that the Board of Selectmen had previously voted to waive the taxes as part of the purchase agreement for the property; **motion passed unanimously.**
- Treasurer:
The monthly Treasurer’s reported had been distributed previously to members via email. There were no questions.
 - Transfer request: **Margaret moved and Dan seconded to authorize the following transfers for the 2012-13:**
\$56.50 from # 6001-02 Tax Collector Assistant to # 6001-04 Tax Collector Mileage,
\$108.75 from # 6006-04 Assessor Education to # 6006-01 Assessor Salary,
\$1045.15 from # 6201-02 Road Maintenance payroll to # 6201-01 Road Maintenance,
\$1287.01 from # 6201-04 Gasoline to # 6201-01 Road Maintenance;
motion passed unanimously.
- Board of Education:
The monthly Board of Education reports had been distributed previously to members via email. There were no questions on the reports.
 - Action on Appropriation of funds for 1st quarter 2013-14 fiscal year: **Dan moved and Margaret seconded to approve the HES Superintendent’s request for \$188,015.66 per month for the first three months of the 2013-14 fiscal year for operation of the elementary school;** this is 1/12 of the previous year’s budget per month; **motion passed unanimously.**
- Board of Finance Committees
 - HR Committee: Margaret reported that the Committee is almost done with job descriptions.

- Other: None.

Correspondence: CCM conference for October 2, 2013.

Old Business: None.

New Business: None.

Citizen Comments: Mark asked if the Board of Education is bound by the amount currently allocated by the Board of Finance for the 2013-14 fiscal year; Rheo answered in the affirmative, that the Board of Education cannot spend more than is approved by the Board of Finance. By statute, the Board of Education is limited to spending only what the Board of Finance has allocated. Bob Grindle asked what would happen if the budget is defeated, since many who supported the budget in the past will vote it down this time because of the cuts required. What will the Board of Finance do? What judgment call will be made? How will the Board of Finance react to people who vote against the budget because it's too low as opposed to those who vote no because it's too low.

Mark Becker suggested the town meeting may give some indication as to how people feel, or that perhaps a question could be added to the vote. It was noted that the legal notice had already been published with the question on the ballot and absentee ballots may have been distributed.

Dan suggested an exit poll be conducted at the referendum.

Stan said that at the last Board of Selectmen meeting, it was suggested that the Youth Sports Committee may be absorbed back under the Rec Commission again, but Youth Sports has never come before the Board of Finance to explain how they satisfy internal controls.

Bob Grindle reported that the Rec Commission currently is in need of officers, and that Hampton kids are currently signing up for soccer through the Chaplin Rec Commission. He also reported that the Board of Selectmen will be having a special meeting just prior to the town meeting on the 27th.

Rheo asked how the other members feel about an exit poll at the referendum and what it should be.

Margaret suggested that the poll be done as a written question. Luci suggested that voters be asked only if they think the budget is too high or too low. Rheo will reach out to the HES Superintendent to gauge the possibility of the poll being "sponsored" by both the Board of Finance and Board of Education.

Suggestions for Agenda of next monthly meeting:

Presentation by the Zoning Office Manager

Ordinance change

Conflict of interest/Code of ethics

Margaret noted that the Board of Selectmen minutes of August are not posted on the website.

Stan is representing the Board of Finance at negotiations, and reviewed the negotiations process.

Margaret suggested that Stan get information from the 1st Selectman on the town's ability to pay.

Set the Date, Time and Place of next meeting: The next meeting will be the regular monthly meeting, to be held at 7pm on Tuesday, September 10th in the Town Hall Community Room.

Adjourn: Meeting was adjourned at 7:42pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathi Newcombe,
Board of Finance Recording Clerk