

Minutes of the Acton Finance Committee Meeting
October 23, 2012 7:30 pm –
Faulkner Room, Acton Town Hall

Pursuant to a notice duly posted with the Town Clerk and with a quorum of members present, the Acton Finance Committee convened at 7:30 p.m. on October 23, 2012, to review various matters.

Members Present: Mary Ann Ashton, Patricia Clifford, Herman Kabakoff, Bill Mullin, Steve Noone, and Doug Tindal.

Members Not Present: Paulina Knibbe, Bob Evans, Mike Majors

Others Present: Steve Barrett, Finance Director

Public Participation: None

Minutes: Mr. Noone moved approval of the Minutes of October 11. Mr. Kabakoff seconded the motion which was unanimously adopted with the exception of Mr. Mullin who abstained.

Three Boards Meeting: The Chair thanked Mrs. Ashton for organizing the meeting of the three boards to discuss the Long Range Plan. Members expressed their satisfaction with the groundwork accomplished and willingness to participate in another meeting in the January timeframe. It was agreed that the meeting should have a specific purpose related to adoption of the LRP and that the participants should be Acton members.

ALG Model / POV: Mrs. Ashton presented both the ALG model and the draft POV. At the ALG meeting the major discussion focused on revenues and the split, which is expected to remain unchanged from as FY13. Revenue assumptions are far apart as Don Aicardi has a model that calculates a 7 percent increase in state aid vs. the Finance Committee's 2.5 percent estimate. The Reserve use number in the POV surprised the other committees; the expectation was there would be more generosity in recognition of turnbacks. Mr. Noone asked the Chair to request the Town Manager and the Superintendent provide actual reserve use numbers for the past three years.

Following a discussion of expense reduction approaches, Mr. Noone moved the LRP expense assumptions incorporated in the POV be changed from the "most likely" to the "favorable" case. Mr. Kabakoff seconded. In speaking to his motion, Mr. Noone said that the sustainability of the LRP works with a revenue increase of 3 to 3.5 percent annually combined with managed spending intended to support that level of growth. Mrs. Ashton stated that the POV numbers actually created a hybrid set of numbers and suggested the motion change from the FinCom POV assumptions to the favorable case.

The Chair observed that since ALG has the Draft POV for comments and summarized the committee's concern regarding the vetting of expenses. Mrs. Ashton felt changing the POV would not be appropriate before the comment period passed. Mr. Noone and Mr. Kabakoff agreed to withdraw their motion.

Mr. Noone then moved to reject the 5 percent growth in expenses in the ALG plan and instruct the FinCom reps to request that change at the next meeting. Mr. Kabakoff seconded. The vote was 2 ayes (Noone, Kabakoff) 2 noes (Tindal, Mullin) and 2 abstentions (Ashton, Clifford).

Updates and Committee Reports

Morrison Farm (Mullin) strong momentum; 50% design level to BOS on October 29; still negotiating with Cemetery Committee.

OPEB Working Group (Noone) staff/committee conference call with Segal 11/7; deliverable in late November will depend on State OPEB committee action.

Regionalization (Ashton): There is an agreement in principal with school committees; aggressive outreach program planned to reach a revised regional agreement in January.

CPC (Kabakoff) reviewing proposals; November deadline

ACHC (Clifford) Regional Housing Office involvement increasing with Planning staff and ACHC

APS (Ashton) Budget process continuing; Aicardi look back presentation on historic spending and Superintendent's look ahead presentation both on website for review.

At 9:00 Mr. Kabakoff moved adjournment which was unanimously adopted.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Clifford
Acting Clerk

Minutes approved on Dec 11, 2012