

Minutes – Acton Finance Committee  
March 3, 2009, 7:30 p.m.  
RJ Grey Junior High Faculty Dining Room

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 March 3, 2009 to review various matters.

**Members present for the meeting:** Steve Noone, Herman Kabakoff, Mary Ann Ashton, Pat Clifford, Pat Easterly, Bob Evans, Bill Mullin, Kent Sharp, Doug Tindal, Associate Member Maynard (Brandy) Brandon

**Others Present:** Doré Hunter, Lauren Rosenzweig, Charlie Kadlec, Ken Sghia-Hughes, Dick Calandrella, Bob Ingram, Bob Hertz, Sharon Smith McManus, Walter Foster, Paul Hoff

Chairman Steve Noone called the meeting to order and offered an overview of the agenda and a preview of upcoming meetings.

**Approval of Minutes**

Mary Ann Ashton presented minutes from the February 7 and 24, 2009 meetings. Bob Evans moved to approve, Bill Mullin seconded. Both sets were approved unanimously.

**Community Preservation Articles**

Ken Sghia-Hughes and Walter Foster reviewed the updated recommendations from the CPC meeting last Thursday, February 26. The CPC portfolio of projects for TM consideration will not include the Windsor Building, the Woodbury Lane house, and the Civil War Exhibit work already completed. The Committee also recommended funding the Cemeteries project at \$14,000, instead of the \$28,000 requested, and the new Civil War Exhibit work at \$8,000. The Historic Preservation Set-Aside has been increased to \$44,000 in order to meet the statutory requirement for 10 percent minimum funding. All remaining projects are recommended at the same levels as discussed at the February 24 meeting, and recommendations total \$955,155, leaving a fund balance of \$580,266 to carry over to next year.

Fincom questions and discussion focused on the funding for the Wright-Holden MHC form, the Robbins House request, and the Sachem Way project. Doug Tindal moved to approve all of the proposed CPC proposals, and Mary Ann Ashton seconded. Chairman Noone asked if anyone wished to hold any articles, and Bob Evans requests that Sachem Way and Robbins House be held. The committee unanimously approved the motion for all except these two proposals.

The committee continued to discuss the John Robbins House. Mr. Evans is concerned that this is a privately-owned house. Mr. Tindal strongly disagreed, and asked Mr. Sghia-Hughes to share the Community Preservation Committee's discussion about this project. CPC views this as a prominent building with a rich history in a visible location, with a clear community benefit. There are several preservation restrictions on the property already. As a condition of receiving CPC funding, there will be an additional town preservation restriction placed on the property. Roofing is considered preservation. Brandy Brandon asks whether the town already has money in this, and what assurance is there that there won't be further requests? Mr. Sghia-Hughes responds that there is no town money involved with this house. Doug Tindal moves to approve

the Robbins House proposal, and Bill Mullin seconds. The committee votes to approve 5-3-0 (Evans, Kabakoff, Sharp).

The committee discusses the predevelopment funds for Sachem Way. Mr. Evans is concerned about future funds, and how the \$152K would be spent. Mrs. Ashton responds that the project application details the budgeted items. After being moved and seconded, the committee approves the motion to recommend the Sachem Way proposal 7-1-0 (Evans).

### **Acton Voters Group Warrant Article and Resolutions**

Charlie Kadlec, member of the Acton Voters Group, presents to the Finance Committee about the three warrant articles and three resolutions that have been placed on the Annual Town Meeting warrant by citizen petition. The three articles deal with stabilization fund, transfer of funds to reduce the tax rate, and a proposal to provide a budget for the Finance Committee. The Finance Committee asks questions of Mr. Kadlec. The Acton Voters Group also has presented three resolutions, which deal with the adopting of a reserve policy, the provision to present debt and interest as separate articles to Town Meeting, and a resolution to present capital articles as separate items each year. The Finance Committee asked questions and offered comments. No votes to recommend the articles and resolutions were offered.

### **Town Budget Capital Article**

Lauren Rosenzweig, BOS Chair, and John Murray were available to answer questions. Mrs. Rosenzweig emphasized that this list has been pared down to a bare minimum, and distributed a handout with amounts and rationales for each item. Finance Committee members had several questions. Bill Mullin moved that the Finance Committee recommend the capital articles for the town, which total \$270,000, and Herman Kabakoff seconded. The committee voted to recommend unanimously.

Mr. Mullin moved that the Finance Committee recommend the pumper purchase, and Pat Clifford seconded. Mr. Evans is less concerned about pumper purchase and more concerned about FY11 projected expenditure for Rescue Truck (\$300K). Several other Fincom members urge the BOS and town administrators to pursue sharing backups among regional towns. The Fincom votes unanimously to recommend the pumper purchase article.

Mr. Mullin moved that the Finance Committee recommend the purchase of the excavator with NESWC funds, and Ms. Clifford seconded. The Finance Committee unanimously voted to recommend.

### **Discussion of Multi Year Plan**

The Finance Committee members discussed how to finalize the assumptions, and choose a format for a multi-year plan (choose traditional ALG format). The committee agrees with the chair that the plan should use no more than \$2 million in reserves for FY11 and FY12 each, and should solve percentage growth in budget (of approximately 3 percent or less) through use of reserves, stimulus money, and a slowing of budget growth.

Mr. Sharp moved to adjourn the committee at 10:27 p.m., which was seconded by Mr. Kabakoff and approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Ann Ashton, Clerk

Next Finance Committee Meetings: March 10  
ALG, March 9