

**Town of Wenham
Finance & Advisory Committee
Board of Selectmen
Joint Meeting of March 7, 2014
Town Hall, 138 Main Street**

Pursuant to the Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. Chapter 30 A, §§ 18-25, written notice posted by the Town Clerk delivered to all Committee members, a Joint Meeting of the Finance & Advisory Committee and the Wenham Board of Selectmen was held on Friday, March 7, 2014 at 7 AM in the Selectmen Chambers.
This meeting was recorded with permission by HWCAM.

1. Call Meeting to Order

With a quorum present, Chairman Lucy called the FAC meeting to order at 7:03 AM
Committee Members Present: Michael Lucy, Chair; Hilliard Ebling, Kevin Lech, Jeff Fotta, Rick Quinn
Not Present: Kathryn Mansfield

With a quorum present, Chairman Whittaker called the BOS meeting to order at 7:03 AM
Selectmen Present: Selectmen Ken Whittaker, Chair; Jack Wilhelm, Clerk
Not Present: Patrick Wilson, Vice Chair

Also Present: Mark Andrews, Town Administrator; David Genereux, Finance Director; Catherine Tinsley, Minutes Secretary

Abbreviations used:

FAC Finance & Advisory Committee
BOS Board of Selectmen
FY Fiscal Year

Public Information:

Agenda
Minutes: February 19, 2014 / February 26, 2014
Wenham Fire Department Incident Report 2013
Transition Plan for Town Clerk's Office
FY15 Budget

2. Minutes: February 19, 2014 / February 26, 2014

*Vote: Mr. Fotta moved, and it was seconded to approve meeting minutes of **February 19, 2014**. The motion carried unanimously.*

*Vote: Mr. Wilhelm moved, and it was seconded to approve meeting minutes of **February 19, 2014**. The motion carried unanimously.*

*Vote: Mr. Quinn moved, and it was seconded to approve meeting minutes of **February 26, 2014**. The motion carried unanimously.*

*Vote: Mr. Wilhelm moved, and it was seconded to approve meeting minutes of **February 26, 2014**. The motion carried unanimously.*

3. Reports: Town Administrator & Finance Director

Town Clerk

The Town Clerk has given her notice to leave the position at the end of the day on March 14, 2014.

Mr. Andrews talked about an interim plan for office coverage saying he is contacting and interviewing retired Town Clerks to assist the Town. The part time assistant has agreed to increase her hours. He assured the Board/Committee that the election times (local, state) would be appropriately staffed.

Mr. Whittaker noted this is currently an elected position. The BOS will seek a vote at Town Meeting to make this a Selectmen appointed position. Because of the uncertainty of the future of the office, Mr. Genereux reported that a conservative approach was taken in the FY 15 budget. For the remainder of FY 14 (through June 30, 2014) an additional \$19,320 will be requested through a Reserve Fund Transfer; this will be presented to the FAC for consideration at the next meeting.

The FY 15 Budget was increased by \$30,800 in anticipation of additional coverage/training needed, for a total budget of \$98,383. This includes a \$5,000 salary increase. It was noted that the salary could be adjusted, but only if this is an appointed position.

Mr. Ebling suggested that the Town seek a person that is Certified by the Massachusetts Town Clerk Association, or that the person agrees to attain certification within a certain period of time.

4. FY2015 Budget Discussion & Votes

161 Town Clerk

Vote: Mr. Fotta moved, and it was seconded, to adopt the Town Clerk's Budget of \$98,383. The motion carried unanimously.

Vote: Mr. Wilhelm moved, and it was seconded, to approve the Town Clerk's Budget of \$98,383. The motion carried unanimously.

320 Regional Vocational School District

Superintendent O'Connell was unable to provide the Town with VoTech final budget figures as of the meeting as they are still being developed and reviewed at the state level. Seven students are enrolled at the Regional Vocational School and \$35,000 is being carried for debt service. Mr. Genereux recommended the numbers being used as the placeholder in the draft budget be voted at this time until we are advised otherwise.

Vote: Mr. Quinn moved, and it was seconded, to adopt the Regional Vocational School District Budget of \$179,688. The motion carried unanimously.

Vote: Mr. Wilhelm moved, and it was seconded, to approve the Regional Vocational School District Budget of \$179,688. The motion carried unanimously.

640 Joint Recreation Program

Vote: Mr. Quinn moved, and it was seconded, to adopt the Joint Recreation Budget of \$57,431. Under discussion: There was a brief discussion regarding the 10% administrative fee paid to Hamilton as the "lead town" in the FY 15 budget. Recently, the administration fee paid by the Town of Hamilton to Wenham as the lead town of the joint library was recalculated from 10% to 5.5%. This is under advisement by the Town of Hamilton and is anticipated to be resolved by the Town Meeting. It was agreed to vote the budget with a 5.5% administration fee.

The motion was amended to adopt the budget, with an adjusted administration fee of 5.5% as agreed between Wenham and Hamilton, reducing the total budget for the Joint Recreation Program to \$56,000. The motion carried unanimously.

Vote: Mr. Wilhelm moved, and it was seconded, to accept the Joint Recreation Program Budget of \$56,000. The motion carried unanimously.

5. Any other Department and/or Program

There were none.

Mr. Fotta had to leave the meeting at 7:34 AM due to a scheduling conflict.

Based on the approved budget (as it stands on March 7) for FY 15, Mr. Genereux reported the tax rate for FY 15 would be \$19.12. This represents a \$.25 increase (1.33%) over last year's rate.

6. HWRSD FY 2013 – Excess & Deficiency giveback update

The School Committee's (SC) March 6, 2014 meeting agenda included taking action to vote to return money to the Towns. There was no official update available at the time of this meeting as to the action they took (it was learned later that the SC had indeed approved the refund).

FC Approved 3.12.14
BOS Approved 3.17.14

Wenham's share is (approximately) \$475,000. If approved by the SC, the Town would receive \$475,000.

It has been agreed that the plan for the money would be to use it as needed over the next couple of years to address increases in educational costs in the FY15, FY 16 and FY 17 budgets.

A Special Town Meeting will be called immediately before the Annual Town Meeting at 1:00 PM on April 5, 2014 to request the money be put into a special Educational Stabilization Fund and that \$155,000 be used for the FY15 budget.

It was noted that any additional funds returned to the Town from the school could also be into this fund.

There will be an article on the warrant to use \$155,000 of the revenue to reduce the FY15 tax rate, A two-thirds vote is required.

Vote: Mr. Wilhelm moved, and it was seconded, that the Selectmen call a Special Town Meeting on April 5, 2014, at 1 PM for the purpose of addressing a single warrant article to create a stabilization fund. The motion carried unanimously.

7. Other Matters

The Selectmen will meet Monday, March 10, 2014 at 2 PM.

The Finance Committee will meet March 12, 2014 at 6:30 PM to take positions on the warrant articles for the ATM, as presented from BOS.

The Warrant Hearing for the Town Meeting is March 31, 2014 at 6:30 PM.

8. Adjournment

Vote: Mr. Quinn moved the Finance Committee adjourn at 7:50 AM and it was unanimous to do so.

Vote: Mr. Wilhelm moved the Board of Selectmen adjourn at 7:50 AM and it was unanimous to do so.

Respectfully submitted by

Catherine Tinsley
3.8.14