

Swampscott Finance Committee
May 10, 2018

Attending: Marzie Galazka (Chair), Tim Dorsey (Vice-Chair), Mary Ellen Fletcher, Joan Hilario, William Jones, Jill Sullivan, Gail Rosenberg, Polly Titcomb

Also attending: Ron Mendes (ATA), Sean Fitzgerald (TA)

We will vote on Article 5 on May 21 and we will vote on Article 6 on Tuesday, May 15. We will take a look at Article 7 on Tuesday, May 15.

Article 8: Appropriation for PEG – this article reclassifies expenses that were charged to the PEG fund to the General Fund. This article makes the PEG fund whole and then appropriates funds needed for PEG expenses. Motion to approve: Sullivan/McNerney 9-0. Tim will speak on it.

Article 9: Approval of free cash: We will make a floor amendment increasing it to \$1,000,000. Jones/McNerney moved to amend the amount to \$1,000,000 9-0. Tim will speak on that.

Article 10: Will be moved for indefinite postponement. Jill

Article 11: There is a change in language on article 11. The funds will be used for conservation maintenance – not for Blytheswood. We will get language on the motion from town counsel. Hilario/Titcomb 9-0 Jill

Article 12: Creating revolving fund and adding the amounts for them. Ms. Fletcher remarked that she continues to feel that there is a problem with how money is spent and appropriated through the revolving fund for recreations. She also remarked that there are weekly farmer's markets but not weekly deposits. Mr Fitzgerald indicated that there is an audit in process and he will share the results with us. Ms. Fletcher feels that if there is a profit, it should be returned to the general fund. Mr. Fitzgerald indicated that usually with Revolving Funds, sometimes money builds up in the revolving fund and then is spent at different times. Ms. Fletcher is interested in understanding what shared costs there are that should be reconciled against the revolving account. Mr. Fitzgerald is astonished at how little we budget for recreation based on the size of the town. We agreed that the budget for the revolver needs to be more accountable. Fletcher/Hilario 9-0. Maryellen will speak.

Article 13: Chapter 90. Sullivan/Rosenberg 9-0 Gail will speak.

Article 14: Water mains: Jones/McNerney 9-0. Jones will speak.

Article 15: The feasibility study. McNerney will speak. Town Counsel agrees that we can look at the whole elementary educational program through this appropriation. Ms. Rosenberg asked if we can use some of what we did three years

ago instead of starting from scratch. Mr. Fitzgerald indicated that we will try to use all we can, but it is a superintendent driven project, because she has to articulate the program. We will vote on this at our meeting on May 15.

Article 16: Capital Improvement Plan. Ms. McNerney wanted to know if we were satisfied that \$140K is enough for seawall protection for this year. Mr. Fitzgerald reiterated that we need to wait to see if we have a shot to get some state money for the sea walls before we spend too much ourselves. There is a \$100,000,000 grant program for coastline sustainability – we are applying for a \$400K grant under that program. Ms. Fletcher is worried about our priorities. She stated as much as I too, like the thought of decorative lights especially ones designed by Elihu Thomson, I am very concerned about prioritizing the spending of over 200k when we have infrastructure that is failing and in disrepair.

On the Stacy Brook project, we need to keep faith with the consent decree we signed. Mr. Fitzgerald is going to work on making sure that the investments we're making are actually going to get the results we need.

Ms. Sullivan made a motion to restore the \$150,000 for line item 21, the Stanley school boilers. Seconded by Hilario. 9-0.

Mr. Jones wanted to reiterate need for money for the seawalls and the streets. We should not do the light pole project. Mr. Fitzgerald indicates that some investments are needed in quality of life infrastructure that help brand Swampscott for commercial development.

Ms. Sullivan recommended that the Finance Committee meet at least once every three weeks over the summer to discuss some larger questions we want to tackle in depth. These include capital priorities, debt management, and unused levy capacity. We agreed to find a consistent day of the week to have such meetings and we will discuss a schedule next week. Mr. Dorsey would like to make sure that we set some shared goals for each of these sessions so that we feel like they are productive.

Ms. Rosenberg would like to be helpful in developing the job description of the facilities manager so that we can get professional quality building assessments that we need in order to develop the list of priorities in capital spending.

Ms. Fletcher indicated that she is willing to allow someone else to be the finance committee representative to Article Six committee. Ms. Galazka says that the TriChair members agreed to do a better job sharing information between committees.

Motion to adjourn: Fletcher/Rosenberg 9-0