

**Town of Lakeville
Finance Committee
Thursday, November 10, 2011
7:00 PM – Town Office Building**

On November 10, 2011, the Finance Committee held a meeting at 7:00 PM. The Meeting was called to order by Chairman Petruzzo at 7:00 PM. Members present: Michael Petruzzo, Donna Winters, and Melissa Hopkins. Norman Orrall and Ted Bunn were absent. Also present were: Christine Weston (enter 7:15 PM), Recording Secretary, Cindy McRae, Town Accountant and Daniel Hopkins, Fire Chief. There was no one recording the meeting this evening.

Meet with Fire Chief to discuss equipment needs and request for a Reserve Fund Transfer

The Finance Committee began a tour of the Fire Station equipment/vehicles with Chief Hopkins and Deputy Chief Goodfellow. The status of the three (3) pumper trucks was provided by Deputy Chief Goodfellow. At this time, the Fire Department has only one (1) pumper in service. Chief Hopkins then sat and met with the Finance Committee to present some solutions of obtaining a newer pump truck for the Fire Department. It was conveyed that the Board of Selectmen had approved the Finance Committee to spend up to \$24,999.00 from the Reserve Fund, for emergency purposes for a used pumper. It had been the understanding of the Fire Chief that the Fire Department would be getting an older pumper truck to hold them over to the year 2014 when the debt was down considerably, and a new one could be purchased. The older truck is a 1985 with a price of \$17,000.00. However, now the debt may not be down as much as previously thought, and that new or almost new pumper may not be taking place. The Fire Department had looked at a few pumper trucks in the area recently which would be appropriate for the next two (2) or three (3) years, however, now that it appears that the holdover time may be longer. It would then be in the best interest of the Fire Department to obtain a pumper truck that could last another four (4) to seven (7) years longer. He will be going to Pennsylvania on Monday to look at a truck. The truck is a 1991, and the price being asked is \$26,000. Maybe the Town could purchase it for \$20,000.

A new pumper truck for the Fire Department was scheduled on the Capital Plan to come up recently; however, it got taken off the table due to the dismal financial picture of the Town. It recently cost \$15,000 to fix one of the pumps. The other two (2) pumps did not pass their recent pump test. One failed to pump at all, and the other one lost pressure when trying to pump. The Fire Department, with support from the Town, needs to come up with a plan of what will be done to provide the necessary heavy duty equipment/vehicles for the Fire Department. There is also another pumper for sale. It is a 1995, however, the cost is \$45,000. Chief Hopkins stated that there are other options for consideration such as leasing one (1) pumper and paying another one off. That is something that has been done with the vehicles of the Fire Department in the past. However, it appears that the Board of Selectmen does not want to borrow right now. A much newer pumper, in the 2000 year range, would cost more like \$190,000.00. Another option is since the ambulance fees were raised last year, and this has been requested of the Selectmen, that the additional fees be put into an account so that the Fire Department can be self-sufficient. When a new ambulance is needed, these set aside funds can purchase a new one. This would just be a portion of the fees taken in each year. It is understood that the majority of the monies received would go to the Town. Ms. Hopkins stated that she was in favor of earmarking some of the funds for a separate account, and if the entire Committee was comfortable with this, she

would support recommending this to the Board of Selectmen. She also stated that the Finance Committee should also be looking at the position of items on the Capital Plan. Chief Hopkins explained that any pumper that is being looked into for purchase will need a pump test done, which costs \$275.00, so that it is certified. It will also need to be inspected, and when it receives an inspection sticker, it is then approved by the State through the DOT (Department of Transportation) for use.

Upon a motion made by Ms. Hopkins; seconded by Ms. Winters, it was:

VOTED: To recommend that an amount not to exceed \$24,999.00 be approved for transfer from the Reserve Fund for the purchase of a pumper for the Fire Department.
Unanimous in favor.

Review FY 2012 Budget year to date

Ms. McRae was asked for any updates. She reported that the repair contract for the painting of the Town Office building had taken place. Also, the parking lot at the Police Station has been paved. Kudos to the numerous volunteers that aided in that Police Station renovation project. The Town has had its first snow storm, thus monies have been spent from the snow and ice budget for repairing the equipment and plowing. Chris Peck, Superintendent of Streets, recently met with the drivers to discuss the upcoming plans for the winter.

The secretary briefly mentioned that several other topics had been covered by the Board of Selectmen at their meeting on Monday night (November 7, 2011). The Superintendent of Schools met with the Board of Selectmen to discuss three topics. The first was in regards to sanding and plowing. Who would plow the Assawompset School parking lot, and how would the cost be appropriated? During that discussion many other pertinent items were discussed. Mr. Peck, Superintendent of Streets, will be working on a pricing sheet for when plowing takes place by his Department. The costs will then be charged back to the Regional School Department.

The second topic that was discussed was the amount of \$10,000 which is needed to pay the longevity for two (2) teachers that recently retired. The difficulty with this is that the teachers were Lakeville teachers, however, the Town did not budget for this since it was part of the School Department budget. The costs should be paid for by the Region since the Region has assumed all liability when the transition occurred. Mr. McCarthy has told the Selectmen that this would be more money that is taken out of the school budget in general, which would then be leaving less for the schools. Chairman Olivier had conveyed to the Superintendent the fact that the Town of Lakeville had put all available funds into the process of Regionalizing leaving no funds for the Town for raises, etc.

The third topic that was been discussed with the Selectmen and the Superintendent was the fact that the Town paid the debt off for the school vans. These vehicles are now being used by the Region. The cost was \$31,000, which needs to be reimbursed to the Town of Lakeville. It was noted that Freetown's fleet of vehicles had been taken into consideration prior to Regionalization. At this time, all the vehicles have been transferred over to the Region from Lakeville, and the Town would like to be reimbursed for the funds that were expended to pay off the debt.

Review historical data and discuss methodology for FY 2012

Chairman Petruzzo stated that he is still working on the historical data and trying to determine an appropriate way to present it. He has been unable to meet with Ms. Winters on this since he had been very sick since the past meeting of the committee. He stated that he had been in contact with Mike Ward, Business Manager for the Region, and he is supposed to provide some data before the meeting that will take place with the Region on the 16th.

Chairman Petruzzo suggested that any member of the Finance Committee who was interested should attend the meeting of the Regional Finance Committee on Wednesday, November 16, 2011 at 6:30 PM at the IMC. Discussion took place of how the school budget is increasing more than the 2 ½%. If the School Department receives more than that amount, then the public safety of the Town is sacrificed. Ms. McRae pointed out that there is a lot of information on the DOR (Department of Revenue)'s website. Possibly the Chairman and Ms. Winters could visit the site and determine if there is information there worthwhile to download to share to the public in order to convey the message that there needs to be some sort of balance between the School and Town funds.

Schedule next meeting

The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, November 16 at 6:30 PM.

The Open Meeting Law materials and Conflict of Interest Law information was distributed to the Members by Chairman Petruzzo.

Adjournment

Upon a motion made by Mrs. Hopkins; seconded by Ms. Winters it was:

VOTED: To adjourn the Meeting at 8:22 PM.
 Unanimous in favor.