

Minutes

Board of Finance Meeting

March 8, 2011

Town Hall Auditorium 7:30 PM

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Liz Mao at 7:34 PM. All members of the Board of Finance were present. Also in attendance was Kate Clarke Buch, Finance Director. The meeting was broadcast over Channel 79.

PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED FY 2011-2012 BOARD OF EDUCATION BUDGET

Members of the public offered commentary and recommendations on the proposed Board of Education budget for 2011-2012. Speakers included student leaders of The Depot, Tammy Sload, Laurie Orem, Brianne Schneider, Susan Vogel, Victoria Beiler, Colleen Lyons, Cathy Finnegan, Nicole Granath, Sandra MacVicar, Arjun Krishnamalhar, Rob Marsh, Jim McIlree, Nick Branca and John Sini.

SPECIAL APPROPRIATIONS & TRANSFERS

Board of Education – Middlesex Gym Floor

Kim Westcott, Chairman of the Board of Education, presented a request for funding of repairs and renovation of the Middlesex gymnasium floor. The proposal included \$210,000 for replacing the floor, \$67,000 for new bleachers, \$22,000 for replacing the partition door with a curtain and \$15,000 to replace backboard units, for a total of \$314,000.

Ms. Westcott indicated that \$37,000 in unspent capital funds were available to support the project, including \$24,000 from Ox Ridge Boiler capital account. As a result, the project would require only \$277,000 in new capital funds.

After a brief debate, Murry Stegelmann made the following motion:

The Board of Finance recommends to the RTM that it approve an appropriation of \$277,000 from the General Fund for the renovation of the Middlesex Gym Floor, including the installation of new backboards, new bleachers and a curtain.

The motion passed 7-0. Separately, Mr. Stegelmann moved transferring the \$37,000 from the unspent capital accounts to the project. This motion passed 7-0.

Board of Selectmen – Architect Fees

The Board continued its discussion of the architect fees required to support design work for the relocation of the Senior Center and BOE Central Office (the “Shuffle”), which will total \$325,000 for Phases I-V of the project.

First Selectman David Campbell proposed approval of architect fees for Phases I and II of the design work, which would total \$120,000 (the proposal that failed on a 3-3 vote at the March 1st meeting was for Phase I fees only). He indicated that the funds were need to ensure a complete and thorough presentation of the Shuffle to the RTM.

Murry Stegelmann reviewed a near-term timeline for the project:

- Approval of \$120,000 from contingency now
- Project update to the RTM later in March
- Balance of \$205,000 assuming the RTM approves the project in April
- Late May bonding for the project (special RTM meeting required)

Considerable debate ensued. Martha Banks, Gwen Mogenson and Lori Bora all expressed reservations, including:

- Project is costly when the value of the 35 Leroy is properly included in the cost of the project (35 Leroy is not a sunk cost)
- Project is based on an incomplete analysis of facility options
 - A significant cost driver of the project is that both the Senior Center and the BOE have asked for large increases in space
 - Current individual use of the senior center has not been documented
 - Location of the BOE at 35 Leroy does not occupy the entire building – the possibly locating other town offices in this facility has been mentioned and this would result in creep of town office space
- The funds would be wasted if the RTM does not approve the Shuffle
- The funds should not be drawn from contingency
- The Board of Finance was not given enough time to review additional information submitted by the Board of Selectmen

In addition, Selectman David Bayne reviewed arguments against the overall project, including concerns about space planning and cost.

Murry Stegelmann moved the transfer of \$120,000 from contingency to fund Phase I and Phase II architect fees. The motion passed 4-3.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Gwen Mogenson made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded and approved 7-0 at 10:03 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jon Zagrodzky
Clerk