

MINUTES
OPC MEETING
JANUARY 21, 2010

First Selectman David Campbell called the meeting to order at 8:11 a.m. in Room 206 at Town Hall.

Present were Selectman, David Campbell; Selectwoman, Jayme Stevenson, Selectman, Jerry Nielsen, RTM Moderator, Karen Armour; Board of Finance Chairman, Murry Stegelmann, Board of Education Chairman, Kim Westcott, and Administrative Officer, Karl Kilduff.

Board of Finance

Mr. Stegelmann mentioned that the Board of Finance will meet next week to discuss the possibility of refinancing some bonds. Short term interest rates are especially low. We are currently paying off \$6,000,000 in debt per year. He would like to see a multi-year debt schedule.

Mr. Stegelmann mentioned that the Board of Selectmen and the Tax Assessor should have some say in the concept of open space and its value. He also stated that the lawyers for the country clubs can initiate their own request to amend the plan for open space.

The group discussed a request made of the Board of Finance to determine the impact of the Affordable Housing Tax Abatement Ordinance.

Board of Education

Mrs. Westcott stated that the Board of Education is addressing three main concerns with regards to its budget: health insurance being raised for the first time in 18 months (24% increase = \$1.7 million), an increase in enrollment, and a decrease in State funding.

Additionally, she noted the ESC Grant of \$230,000 was offset by the State's decrease in Special Education funds by the same amount and the reimbursement for Special Education is coming in at a much slower rate than had been expected. With regards to the Board of Education's budget, an increase of 7.7% is needed to keep the status quo.

Also discussed were the new boiler needed at Holmes School. The Board of Education is looking into a dual fuel boiler. It is anticipated that the bid for the new boiler will go out in March and installation will occur over the summer. Holmes School is also experiencing an over enrollment situation which could result in an additional portable. A proposal to alleviate the over enrollment will be addressed at a Public Hearing on February 2, 2010. The proposal is to send the children from Avalon to the Tokeneke School, which has space available. The estimated savings is \$300,000.

Mrs. Westcott stated that the 35 Leroy Ave. site is on the Board of Education's agenda for next Tuesday to discuss its use for Central Office. With regards to the search for a new superintendant, Mrs. Westcott said they are in the first steps of their search.

Representative Town Meeting

Moderator Armour conveyed a concern over having RTM members vote on Affordable Housing Tax Abatement Ordinance next week, because she feels members need more clarification about the amendment before they vote on it. It could be addressed in a Special Meeting or at the March 15th meeting.

Selectwoman Stevenson

Mrs. Stevenson stated that the Facility Study Task Force will ask the Board of Finance for funding to complete one additional study concerning moving the Senior Center to Town Hall.

Selectman Nielsen

Mr. Nielsen expressed a desire to prioritize the Town's list of needs considering there a number of large projects being considered.

Town Administrator

Mr. Kilduff stated that the Town Budget will be presented at next Monday's Board of Selectmen meeting. He also mentioned that the Board of Selectmen will be acting on Lease Amendment 6 for cell towers and refer to the RTM.

First Selectman

Mr. Campbell commented that he has asked the Police Department for today's pricing on its proposed new building since building costs have come down since it was originally proposed a few years ago. Now may be a good time to bid a building project.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 18, 2010 at 8:00 a.m. in Room 206.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:23 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda O'Leary
Recording Secretary