



## Finance Committee

# Meeting Minutes

Judge Welsh Meeting Room - 1:01 p.m.  
October 16, 2013

**Members Present:** Mike Canizales, Doug Cliggott, , Raphael Richter, Catherine Russo, Duane Steele, Clarence Walker, Stan Sikorski, and alternate Sean Patrick Harrington

**Others Present:** Mary Jo Avellar, Town Moderator, Dan Hoort, Finance Director, Austin Knight, and Tom Donegan, Board of Selectmen

### Public Comments:

Paul Lavance? (speaker not clear on his name)\_90 Carnes Lane in town, spoke regarding the sale of the VFW Post. He stated that as past member of the VFW (2007-2010), he is opposed to the sale of the property. Mike asked Austin Knight, who stated that the Town Council felt that the Finance Committee could decide to buy the property, but that the purchase could not take place without a clear deed. This only gives authorization, but the process will continue. If the special town meeting gives authorization to purchase, there will be 2 to 3 months of due diligence.

Paul Mendes, an active member of the VFW spoke. He stated the Post must be sold. He discussed that the feeling was that the veterans would want to have Provincetown be given the first opportunity to purchase. He stated that a vote was taken to sell the property for \$900,000 to the Town of Provincetown. He stated the asking price would be 1.2 million otherwise. He stated that Monday is the opportunity for the vote. Clarence Walker inquired if there was any transfer of funds, and Paul Mendes replied that there was no transfer of funds.

Wayne Martin from Pleasant Street in town, feels that the vote taken by VFW members was illegal, and he feels that there are members who would be willing to work to maintain their Post.

### Member Statements:

Sean Patrick Harrington made no statements.

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**Catherine Russo stated she was disturbed by the information presented, and she feels that the Post is one of the last places left that the working class can go and afford.**

**Doug Cliggott asked where the proceeds of the \$900,000 would go, and how much would go to Seamen's Bank. Paul Mendes stated that the money would be used to help veterans as well as the town. He admits the Post is facing foreclosure, but refused to respond to the mortgage situation.**

**Clarence Walker stated that more information on the delinquency (or not) is needed. Clarence went on to state that the recorder should be paid up as it is in our budget. She started out behind, and was not familiar with the process. He feels there should be an increase.**

**Mike Canizales asked if there was a possibility of paying the recorder the 50% for more time than it takes to transcribe the meetings from PTV. Mike stated that they want to keep Maghi, and he will put in a request with Sharon.**

**Dan Hoort stated they pay for minutes when minutes are posted, and that the minimum pay is for 2 ½ hours. Dan recommended not to increase as all recorders are paid the same. He stated that the recorder knew the issues when accepting the position. (OTR, the recorder disagrees).**

**Mary Jo Avellar stated that the minutes are always behind, and that no one is there taking minutes. She feels that the meetings should be in the evening, and that it was not fair to Maghi as she has her own business, and is unable to attend in the afternoon. Clarence Walker and other Board members were not in favor of changing meeting times, but they did agree to make a priority of a possible time change at the next meeting.**

**Clarence Walker stated that there is no time limit for public statements, and his assigned task is to check payment processes which are ongoing. He is collaborating with Dr. Murray, and will follow up with a report.**

**Duane Steele stated that he believes that buying the VFW property is a good idea. However, he is disturbed by the arguments among the VFW members, and feels that due diligence should be paid before agreeing to buy the property.**

**Mike Canizales commended the BOS for their decision on both items, especially stating that anonymous communication received at town hall should not have to be dealt with by employees. There is a discussion of "drug money". He states that a joint meeting with the Selectmen is necessary, and requested a meeting following the**

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next Spring Town Meeting. He feels that Finance Committee Members and the Board of Selectmen should have at least two meetings with a two hour time frame. He stated that the BOS deferred making a recommendation on the 5 year plan, and the Finance Committee will lobby them to continue discussing it.

#### Warrant Articles:

Article 2 – the town reports on prior year bills. Prior year bills total \$3,458.46. There is \$22,000 left over from old article on fireworks, and Raphael Richter recommended that prior year bills be paid with that money. Sean Patrick Harrington made a motion which was seconded by Clarence Walker and passed 7-0.

Article 3 – Contribution to Liability Fund and Prescription Drug Fund. Mike asked if anyone wanted to reconsider. No one asked to reconsider.

Article 4 – Mike asked that this article be reconsidered. Raphael Richter made the motion which was seconded by Duane Steele. Duane then recused himself. Mike stated we match or accept the amount inserted by BOS. The consensus is worth celebrating. Prioritize OPED in future budgets. Vote was taken and passed 7-0-1.

Article 5 – The Reserve Fund. No questions were raised on this article.

Article 6 – Purchase of the VFW Building. Raphael Richter made a motion to match the selectmen's motion to recommend that we purchase the property for \$900,000 from free cash. The motion was seconded by Doug Cliggott. Catherine stated she was uncomfortable and would have to vote against the purchase. Sean feels that the property could be lost to Seamen's Bank if not purchased by the town. Mike, addressing Catherine's response, stated that he does not feel the building can be revived as is, and he urged Catherine to reconsider. Duane stated it will be a long process involving due diligence, and the decision about the final disposition or use of the property. Doug stated he would vote to approve, but he addressed other issues. He feels there should be a sequence of meetings with the BOS, and he discussed money going into OPED. He stated there is a need for a new police station, the pier needs major repair, and our former community center is in disrepair. He stated there is a need for a plan to manage assets. Mike asked for a vote which passed 6-1-0 (Catherine Russo opposed).

Article 7 – Police Station Design Services – same vote.

Article 8 – same vote

## **Article 9 – same vote**

**Article 17 – Finance Committee Warrant Article 17 asked the town in a non-binding resolution to endorse our budget recommendations including a 2 ½ % annual growth rate inclusive of everything. This would require some retooling of the Capital Improvement Plan as well as the Operating Plan. Putting OPED as the number one priority in the budget process to ensure that we are fully funding it should be the town’s first charge. Doug discussed the health care budget. Mike read the Peter Petas letter (see attached) regarding OPED expenses. Clarence asked Selectmen Knight and Donegan for clarification on their thoughts regarding Article 17. Tom Donegan stated he voted for Article 17 because he likes stretch goals. He stressed the need of town boards working together. He complimented the Finance Committee, and stated that the plan needs to be presented at the Town Meeting. Mike agreed on the advantages of working together to meet goals and facilitate planning. He stated he is not totally against Article 17, and that he also supports a working group. Raphael suggested that the Chairman discuss possible members of the group. Mike discussed the**

**2 ½ % growth rate, and his concerns about debt services. He stated that following the right path will give money for future investments. Stan discussed the revenue side, and decisions being made to limit revenue. He stated the need for balance growth, and the right cuts. Mike asked for a motion to reconsider Article 17 and to take out Point E which is no longer relevant. Raphael made the motion which was seconded by Duane. Doug read points in the Article several times for members to discuss the correct language. Legal recommendations were discussed, and Raphael asked for clarity for Town Meeting. There was much discussion among members on the presentation to Town Meeting. Mike asked Myra Gold and Vince Currier whether they felt that Doug’s wording would cause confusion. Vince recommended keeping it simple. Members discussed funding needs, leaving in the 25 (?) year goal wording. Mike asked for a contingency vote on preferred language and approval to work with the Town Council to get it. There was a motion to substitute language in Article 17 as printed in the warrant, striking out E as well as the last two sentences in B. The vote passed 6-0-1 (Duane abstained).**

**(Mike asked for a 5 minute break but tape did not continue.)**

**Respectfully submitted:  
Maghi Geary**

