

Provincetown Finance Committee

Corrected Minutes - on December 15th

December 13, 2004

3:30 p.m.

Members

Present:

Members

Absent:

**Also in
attendance:**

Sue Buerkel, Gary Delius, Ruth Gilbert (Chair), Mark Leach, Virginia Ross, Thomas Thurston, and Robert Vetrick.

Matthew Clark and Gail Enos (both excused)

Three candidates for alternate Fin Com positions: Ed Gage, Martin Huey, and Walt Winnowski

The meeting was called to order promptly at 3:30 p.m.

Ruth Gilbert announced that Ann Maguire had resigned from the Committee two or three weeks ago. Ann's health was the reason for her reluctant resignation and she will be recuperating in Florida for the entire winter. Her resignation was accepted and very shortly thereafter Betty Steele-Jeffers appointed Gary Delius to fill the vacancy on December 2

Interview applicants for current Finance Committee vacancies

The three candidates are listed above under "Also in attendance."

Ruth asked each candidate to tell the Committee a little bit about themselves and why they might be interested in being appointed to the FinCom.

Walt Winnowski began by saying he has been a year round resident for the past 15 years and a "semi" year round resident for the past 30 years. He and his partner had run a guest house and then they went into a retail business. He decided he was not made for the retail business. He currently works for the Lobster Pot doing analytical work for them. Mr. Winnowski's background was in the savings & loan industry. He was a Vice President for Workingmen's Coop and then became a

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consultant for banking businesses. He felt that the FinCom would be a natural for his interest and skills. He is currently not on any other committees and has the time and wants to do this.

Ed Gage has lived here full time for about 5 years but has been coming here for 40 years or more. He and wife now live here full time. Mr. Gage had a small business in New Hampshire and was on the Board of Directors for Cornerstone, BayBank, and Bank of Boston. He has worked part time at Executive Residence. On occasion he helps his son in New Hampshire since the son has taken over Ed's business. He's never applied for any other committee in town but he has been attending our town meetings forever. (First in the: balcony and then graduating to the floor.) He's very interested in the Finance Committee.

Martin Huey has lived in Town full time since 2001 and is a relative newcomer. Mr. Huey retired as a Vice President from Phoenix Insurance Co. and did all the budgeting and financial planning for that entity. He also said he was knowledgeable about financial planning and is an actuary. When asked what an actuary is, he described the expertise as being "an engineer for forecasting - life and death." Since insurance is a financial industry, he specialized in this. He also said he worked closely with Coopers' office in Connecticut. Mr. Huey continued saying he has been involved in the financial side of life insurance for 43 years. To add to his work history he told the Committee that he had worked for past 4 summers as a seasonal part time Harbormaster but he feels he can make a greater contribution to the Town as a member of the FinCom. He continued saying he had done systems for the Harbormaster's office. He also said he had been a candidate for Director of Finance and Town Accountant and then KAB redefined the position. He has a strong background in cost accounting. He concluded by saying that this is a challenging town.

Mark Leach told the candidates that there were several issues that are paramount and - if any of them are selected — they can expect to walk into the grocery store in the winter and - as a member of the FinCom - be bombarded by locals who are sick about taxes.

Ruth Gilbert also cautioned that - as a FinCom member - it seems that you get approached by more of the citizenry than most others. "We simply advise - we don't create the tax bills." You get a lot of phone calls and e-mails on these issues. This is just a warning about what to expect as a member. Also, the meeting

schedule is not a set schedule and we get together and try to accommodate everyone but late January and the first week in February are heavy meeting schedules and then we meet at least weekly up until town meeting. — These meetings can be almost 2 to 3 hours. E-Mail makes Ruth's job much easier for scheduling. It used to take hours of phone calls but now it is much easier to schedule. - E-mail is not essential for FinCom members but it certainly is a consideration. A quorum is 5 people for the FinCom. We have 3 applicants and only 2 alternates available. Gail Enos will be leaving in a short time because of term limitations. One of the alternates will be asked to move into a full time position.

Robert Vetrick told the candidates that the FinCom* s role is simply advisory thus it can be very frustrating. We are fighting the same battles we fought 13 or 14 years ago. There are times when no one seems to listen to us so it can be a very frustrating committee. None of us have any vested interests so the committee is very objective,

Tom Thurston reiterated the advisory and said the group became famous for not approving some budgets until groups came back with more information. This was difficult for all involved.

Sue Buerkel felt the Committee has gained a lot of respect over the last few years. People have started to realize that our advice of years ago has proven valid. So even though the Committee is only advisory they have gained respect from the voters.

Virginia Ross said she was impressed with the FinCom last year because they have asked the hard questions and have made the Board of Selectmen (BoS) look at the budget in a finite way. She asked, "Do the alternates get all the information we do?" Answer: "yes." Ruth said she will push for televised meetings of the FinCom because she feels that the hard questions are answered if there is coverage. Up to now the meetings are posted and sometimes the cameras show up and sometimes they don't.

Gary Delius asked the candidates to describe what experience they've had in either working for municipal government, or serving on Boards or Commissions in municipal government?

Walt Winnowski said he was on the Assessors Board.

Ed Gage said he had been on the Board of Alderman which represented merchants and he attended all their meetings, ,

Marty Huey said he was a resident in Granby, CT but had never been on a Board. He has participated in local town meetings here for the last 5 years and has printed out information from Town's web site. He started with the Harbormaster's office in 2001.

Robert Vetrick said he was very impressed with all applicants.

Ruth Gilbert said that the interview portion will be closed for alternates and by the end of the meeting a decision will be made and they'll be informed of the Committee's decision.

The FinCom then welcomed Gary Delius into their ranks.

Quick announcements from the Chair: On January 7th & 8th there will be a program in Boston put on by the Massachusetts Municipal Association. Ruth would like to go but may not be able to. Robert Vetrick , Gary Delius, and Virginia Ross will definitely attend. If Tom Thurston attends he would have to fly up to Boston on Saturday morning.

Review Minutes

The October 12th minutes were presented to the group but they did not seem to include the revisions that had been made by both Tom Thurston and Matthew Clark thus the following motion was made:

Motion: Robert Vetrick made a motion to accept the October 12th minutes as revised by Tom Thurston and Matthew Clark. Tom Thurston seconded the motion and it passed 4-0-3 abstentions (GD, VR, and SB).

The August 9th minutes were then discussed. Matthew Clark took the minutes and there were two changes to do with going into Executive Session. Evidently RV made a motion to go into Exec.

Session and MAC 2nd it. **Motion: Mark Leach made a motion to accept the minutes as amended. Tom Thurston seconded the motion and it was approved 4-0-3 abstentions (GD, VR, SB)**

Other business

RFPs for the Cape End Manor were opened in the Town Hall on Friday; there was only one response, New England Deaconess. Outer Cape is already associated with the Deaconess. Many in the FinCom wondered why - of the 3 entities who had professed a great deal of interest - only one had submitted a proposal? Tom Thurston felt that a simple map of the demographics told the entire story! The proposal is going to be presented and discussed at a meeting to be held on Thursday, December 16th at 6:30 p.m. Ruth Gilbert said she has discomfort regarding the lack of proposals.

Gary Delius said that the Deaconess would be the logical bidder but now there's no competition. He had expected to have 3 proposals.

A discussion regarding the alternates took place:

After discussing the applicants, the following motion was made:

Motion: Tom Thurston made a motion to appoint Ed Gage and Walter Winnowski to the alternate positions on the Finance Committee. Robert Vetrick seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously 7-0-0.

School Committee - KAB had informed the Finance Committee that the School Committee had presented a preliminary budget and it's \$12K down from last year. Gary told the group that the Superintendent was planning to eliminate the Technical Director's position and that the position will not be refilled. It's a \$65K saving.

They then discussed the report on the School Department that had been written in detail in the local paper. Details on the study/consultant who made a determination to move the offices out of the annex and into the elementary school.

It was suggested that perhaps Mr. Boxer could become the High School Principal/ Superintendent and the elementary school principal could also handle overseeing the special education position.

Robert Vetrick told the group that in some states when the enrollment drops to a certain level then regionalization is mandated - but not here.

Ruth would like people's vacation schedules so she can schedule meetings.

The meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m. Respectfully submitted,

Evelyn Rogers Gaudiano

Approved by _____ **on** _____, 2004 Ruth Gilbert