

Minutes of the Longmeadow Finance Committee
Wednesday March 15, 2006 @ 7:30 PM – Longmeadow Police Department

Members Present:	<u>Y</u>	<u>N</u>
Judd Peskin - Chairperson	x	
Carla Gunn - Vice Chairperson	x	
Mark Barowsky	x	
Steven Marantz		x
Jerry Nolet	x	
Suresh Samant		x
Deborah Wilson	x	

Also Present: Robin Crosbie, Paul Pasterczyk, Christopher Kulig, Geoff Weigand,
Jim Nittoli, Paul Santinello, Scott Andersen

The Finance Committee met to review the Fiscal Year 2007 budget that was approved by the Select Board at their meeting on Monday, March 13, 2006.

The first question on the budget was the number of full-time equivalents (FTEs) that were listed. The number of FTEs had increased from 138 in FY05 to 149 in FY06 and 147 in FY07. Finance Director Paul Pasterczyk explained that this was due to several vacant positions being filled (including one full-time position in the Treasurer/Collector's office), the transfer of 2 positions from the School Bookkeeping Office to the Accounting Department, the hiring of a Purchasing Coordinator (to consolidate the Town's purchasing functions as dictated by the Charter), and 4 new positions (Mechanic, Water/Sewer Supervisor, Building Maintenance Director, and Engineering Coordinator) in the DPW (one of which is part of the contingent budget).

The new position of Engineering Coordinator in the DPW (to be funded 50/25/25 between the General Fund, Water Fund, & Sewer Fund as part of the contingent budget) was proposed in order to coordinate the various compliance issues that the Town was charged with by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). DPW Superintendent Mike Wrabel explained that this individual would be in charge of coordinating with all Town Departments (including Police, Fire, School Maintenance, Conservation Commission, and DPW) to compile information and insure timely and accurate reporting to all Federal and State entities regarding the Town's compliance with and progress toward all applicable statutes. Currently this function is being handled by Mike Wrabel in conjunction with Building Maintenance Supervisor Steve Carignan. The amount of time spent on coordination and reporting continues to increase and is taking up the time normally spent on running their respective departments. The Finance Committee agreed that this position was important but felt that since it was part of the contingent budget, it was not necessary to recommend that funding be added to create this new position at this time.

In their meeting on March 13, 2006, the Select Board voted to present a balanced budget at Town Meeting that reflected the amounts presented by Town Manager Robin Crosbie.

The Select Board did not recommend the contingent budget. Since this was the case, the Finance Committee was concerned with whether or not the School Committee would be funded at level-service. After comparing the calculation of the School Committee's level service budget and the Town Manager's level service budget, it was determined that the School Department would be short by \$352,141.00. The Finance Committee encouraged the School Committee to reinstate the School Choice program for FY07, which would raise an additional \$130,000 in funds for the School Department. The Finance Committee was in agreement to make a formal recommendation (at a future meeting) to the Select Board to add \$222,141.00 to the School Department's FY07 budget from either Free Cash or the Operating Stabilization Fund.

It was noted that the School Department level service budgets presented by both the School Committee and Town Manager made no provisions for step increases due to School Department employees once their collective bargaining agreement was signed. The contingent budget presented by the Town Manager was intended to fund those increases for the next three years, but it was unclear as to whether it actually would last that long since the negotiations with the LEA were not yet complete. It was agreed that funding for salary increases would have to come from some other source at the fall Town Meeting and any suggested override should be presented after the impact of all collective bargaining agreements and the final consolidation between the DPW and the School Building Maintenance Department were known.

A Reserve Fund Request in the amount of \$40,000 was approved to repair leaks in the roof of the Longmeadow Police Department.

The Committee voted to adjourn at 10:05pm.

Respectfully submitted

Christopher Kulig
Assistant Town Accountant