

Minutes of the Longmeadow Finance Committee
Wednesday June 28, 2006 @ 7:00 PM – Longmeadow Fire 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: Paul Pasterczyk, Christopher Kulig, Michael Kallock, Robert Leclair,
Carl Sturgis, Jim Nittoli

The Appointing Committee composed of Finance Director Paul Pasterczyk, Town Moderator Mike Kallock, and Finance Committee Chair Judd Peskin announced that Carla Gunn and Deborah Wilson were both re-appointed to 3-year terms on the Finance Committee.

The Finance Committee opened discussion on a Reserve Fund Request in the amount of \$10,000 from the Parks Department budget. The shortfall in this budget was due to significant increases in the cost of land development for the Boundless Playground that was recently installed at Bliss Park. Parks Superintendent Mike McCarty was not available to attend the meeting due to family commitments, but relayed via letter that he had exhausted his donation accounts, used funds from the recreation revolving fund and parks general fund budgets, and obtained grants in an attempt to completely cover the costs of developing the land for the playground structure. It was noted that although Mr. McCarty made a tremendous effort to cover the costs within his own department, the Committee felt that he should have notified them about his potential deficit up front and not at the last minute. The Committee voted 4-1 (Nolet) to approve this request.

Storrs Library Director Carl Sturgis was present to provide information regarding his request for a transfer of \$3,050 from his Staff Salary line item to his Expense line item and \$500 to the Books & Periodicals line item. An increase in postage costs, mileage reimbursement, and the need to advertise for unanticipated personnel vacancies caused his Expense line item to be depleted before the end of the fiscal year. The proposed transfer would cover the costs of mailing out delinquency notices as well as the cost of annual HVAC maintenance. The additional transfer of \$500 to Books & Periodicals is required to meet the 15% minimum budgetary expense requirement set forth by the Commonwealth of MA for all libraries. The Committee voted 5-0 to approve these transfers.

Assistant Assessor Robert Leclair was present to answer the questions of the Committee with regards to his Reserve Fund request of \$8,000. This request was made to cover legal fees associated with a court case regarding assessment values and also to pay for the time of an expert witness for the Town's defense. The Board of Assessors and Mr. Leclair feel that they have a very strong case and are confident of a favorable decision by the courts. The Finance Committee voted 5-0 to approve the transfer of \$8,000 to the Assessor's Expense Account. The Committee also "strongly recommended" that if the owner of the property decides to settle this dispute out of court, a long-term settlement be made which would prohibit the owner of challenging the valuation for a period of no less than 10 years.

The Finance Committee voted 5-0 to make several transfers between Town budgetary lines (item numbers 1-4 & 7 on the spreadsheet distributed by Mr. Pasterczyk) in order to balance the budget and facilitate the FY06 year-end close. These transfers were authorized by Chapter 77 of the Acts of 2006. The Select Board had previously approved these transfers as required by Ch. 77.

The Finance Committee voted 5-0 to authorize the Committee Chair to approve Reserve Fund Requests during the summer months.

The Committee decided to re-organize at their first fall meeting scheduled for Wednesday, September 20, 2006. They also stated they would set up a regular meeting schedule for the fall months in preparation for the Special Town Meeting and the FY08 budget cycle at this time.

Mark Barowsky asked that the Town Accountant's Office provide the Committee with a reformatted budget that included a cost analysis of each Town department including departmental receipts, overhead, insurance and benefits, and all other related costs. He asked that this be done for the fiscal years 2005 – 2007 and the report be updated and distributed to the Committee on a quarterly basis. Mr. Pasterczyk and Mr. Kulig said that they would meet with Mr. Barowsky over the summer months to get all the details of what he was looking for and explore the feasibility of this report.

The Committee voted to adjourn at 9:14pm.

Respectfully submitted

Christopher Kulig
Assistant Town Accountant