

## **Longmeadow Finance Committee**

Our mission, as taken from the town charter: The finance committee shall be an advisory committee to the town meeting ...shall have jurisdiction over the reserve fund... shall conduct long range fiscal planning...shall advise on fiscal policy... shall direct the budget review process...and shall advise the town's voters on budget suitability to meet town services needs.

### Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting of October 28, 2009

#### Meeting held in the Fire Department Meeting Room

Start time: 7:07pm

Members present: Mark Barowsky, Chairperson; Peter Greenberg; James Law; Richard Liasse; Kevin Ryczek ; Edward (Ned) Steiger; Roger Wojcik, Clerk

Members Absent: none

Others in Attendance: Joseph Occhiuti; Paul Santaniello; Ernest Welker

The minutes of the meeting of October 14, 2009 were corrected and approved unanimously.

The ATFC meeting of October 24, 2009.

Richard Liasse provided feedback from his attending the Association of Town Finance Committees (ATFC) meeting of last Saturday. (ATFC is a part of the MMA.) He gave the Committee handouts addressing sound financial policies, revenue and expense forecasting, services regionalization, improving town services and debt management. Meeting discussion included comments that suggested that state will have to cut 10 to 30% of its expenditures in the next fiscal year, including those monies awarded to towns and cities.

It was noted that the town has not paid dues for the AFFC.

The annual MMA meeting in Boston in January, 2010 is open to Select Board and Finance Committee members.

## Discussion of the developing FY2011 budget

The Committee and all others in attendance discussed at length a number of issues which may have impact on actual expenses this fiscal year and on the budget for FY2011. Among them...

- A line item in this year's school budget which sets aside \$250,000 for a study of school building utility costs. Current status is that there will be no contract this year to spend these dollars and that by removing this line item from future school budgets these budgets can be reduced by \$250,000 per year.
- A recently signed contract with our natural gas supplier which will save 25% of the town's natural gas costs, about \$160,000 per year, for each of the next two years starting in 2010.
- The matter of developing the FY2011 budget based on the FY2010 budget approved at town meeting *versus* developing it based on a 'revised' FY2010 budget (one which includes changes made during the current fiscal year).
- The matter of regionalization of services.
- The utility of using a zero based budgeting process for town services budget preparation.
- The issue of "level services" funding, including the definition of level services (i.e. the dollar cost of work done *versus* the kinds and amounts of work done).
- Special education in the schools.

A list of needed data about the operations of several town departments was developed for use in budget review; Mark Barowsky will obtain this information.

### Next Meeting

Wednesday, November 10, 2009 at 7:00pm – Police Department Meeting Room.

This meeting adjourned at 9:12pm.

Minutes prepared by Roger Wojcik, Clerk