

GREAT BARRINGTON FINANCE COMMITTEE
SELECTMEN'S MEETING ROOM
TOWN HALL
334 MAIN STREET, GREAT BARRINGTON, MA
MAY 24, 2012
5:30 P.M.

FINANCE COMMITTEE:
THOMAS BLAUVELT, CHAIRMAN
MARK LEFENFELD
SHARON GREGORY
WALTER ATWOOD - ABSENT
ANDREW MORO

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

RE-ORGANIZATION:

CHAIRMAN:

MOTION: Mr. Lefenfeld to nominate Thomas Blauvelt as Chairman.

SECOND: Mr. Moro

VOTE: 4-0 - Mr. Blauvelt accepted the nomination

VICE CHAIRMAN:

MOTION: Mr. Moro to nominate Mr. Lefenfeld as Vice Chairman.

SECOND: Ms. Gregory

VOTE: 4-0 – Mr. Lefenfeld accepted the nomination.

1. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

A. **Minutes from the February 2, 2012 meeting**

MOTION: Mr. Moro to approve.

SECOND: Mr. Lefenfeld

VOTE: 3-0-1 (Ms. Gregory Abstained)

B. **Minutes from March 28, 2012 – Public Hearing FY 13 Budget - Joint meeting with the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee.**

MOTION: Mr. Moro to approve.

SECOND: Mr. Lefenfeld

VOTE: 3-0-1 (Ms. Gregory Abstained)

Ms. Gregory questioned the \$150,000 that was budgeted for the side streets. It was noted that it was used for additional engineering and construction costs for the Main Street project. She also noted that she is concerned about all the capital projects and would like the Finance Committee to be a major proponent of discussing and making recommendations prior to the joint meetings. It was suggested that the Finance Committee start the budget cycle in August or September to encapsulate what the issues are and then we can present our recommendations to the Town Manager and the Board of

Selectmen. It was suggested to develop some metrics and come up with some larger category numbers so we are not just focusing on line items. We can take the operating budget and capital improvements parts of the pie chart and look at each section. Ms. Gregory said other towns budgets of similar size should be looked at. The operating costs, personnel expenses, school budget and C.I.P. need to be separate from other expenses. We can take labor, labor contracts and insurance and make them a separate category. Ms. Gregory said she will send a request to the Chairman to request a five year history of past operating budgets and capital expenses with the operating budget broken down between salary and other expenses. We also need to look at what are the Retirement costs coming forward. We should review the useful life of our equipment and be able to make recommendations. We need to have the department heads make presentations of their budgets. There was a general discussion if the wastewater treatment plant could be scaled back. Also how are we going to fund fire trucks in the future? Stockbridge puts away \$70,000 for an investment. Maybe in the off years, we can put some away. It was noted that sewer and water should be billed by gallons. It was decided that recommendations be sent to Mr. Blauvelt for discussion. Ms. Gregory noted that she would forward a request through the Chairman to request the school committee come up with metrics on the costs of students vs. special needs students. We also need to look at the fire department and decide if we want to continue as it is with the Fire Chief/Inspector position if the fire chief retires.

At 6:15 a motion was made by Andy Moro and seconded by Sharon to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,



Carolyn Wichmann
Secretary