

Town of Williamsburg

Minutes of the Finance Committee Williamsburg Town Offices 13 September 2017

Members Present: Jacqueline Dufresne, Paul Wetzel, Linda Rowley, Richard Kisloski, Charlie Heath, Gil Loud

Members absent: Charles Dudek, Steven Romanowski, Eric Cerreta (came last five minutes of meeting)

The meeting was called to order by co-chair Paul Wetzel at 5:10 p.m.

The Committee needed to fill two vacancies on the Capital Planning Committee. These were one year appointments. L. Rowley made a motion to appoint R. Kisloski and G. Loud as Committee representatives to the Capital Planning Committee. C. Heath seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The Committee discussed a draft version of Article 1 on the special Town Meeting warrant planned for October. In summary, the article asks the Town to approve money to develop design drawings for several options for the construction of a safety complex and to hire an owner's project manager (OPM). Although the amount of money was not stated on the draft version of the article, these services are expected to cost between \$380,000 and \$575,000. It is recognized that one way to save money on the safety complex is to incorporate some of the administrative offices for the Police and Fire Departments into the renovation of the Helen James School, which requires the renovation of that building, and increases the overall project cost.

The Committee discussed the project and its cost extensively. The Committee is concerned that financing an approximately \$4 million dollar debt and spending \$1 million from the combined stabilization/free cash funds will increase taxes to unacceptable levels and remove all flexibility from the budget for six to eight years. Many members found that the proposed building was over designed for the needs of the community and financing it would come at a time when approved debt payments by the Town are at their peak; a peak payment schedule that will not be reduced until about 2021.

At the same time, the Committee recognized the need for new fire and police buildings and for the Town to reduce the number of buildings that it owns. The opportunity to remove three old buildings from the Town's responsibility and efficiently use the James School is very attractive. The Committee was also aware that the school will need substantial repairs (i.e. a new roof) in the near future whether it is used for Town purposes or not.

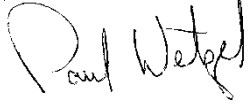
J. Dufresne moved to support Article 1 on the warrant as a way to determine the most cost effective design for the facilities that are needed. L. Rowley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The Committee's strong concern for the financial soundness of constructing the proposed safety complex and James school renovation as proposed resulted in the suggestion that the Committee craft a letter to the Select Board and citizens. Finance Committee members were tasked with writing their concerns down and bringing those thoughts to the next Committee meeting. Members were reminded that they could not discuss any of these writings among themselves until the Committee met.

The next meeting of the Committee was scheduled for 25 September 2017 at 5:00 pm.

There being no further business before the Committee, J. Dufresne moved to adjourn the meeting and the motion was seconded by L. Rowley. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 6:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Wetzel". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "P" and a long, sweeping underline.

Paul R. Wetzel