

West Newbury Finance Committee
Minutes of the meeting
Monday, March 6, 2017

FinCom members met with the Board of Selectmen (BOS) and Whittier Technical High School Representatives at 7:00 p.m. in the first floor hearing room of the 1910 Building. Superintendent Maureen Lynch and Business Manager Kara Kosmes presented the school budget. Superintendent Lynch stated the School Board would vote on the budget on Tuesday, March 7, 2017.

Chairman Codair called the Finance Committee meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. in the second floor hearing room of the 1910 Building with Ms. Grammer, Mr. Ellis, Mr. Phillips, and Mr. Winch in attendance.

There being no public comment, the Committee considered its agenda.

Historical Commission—Demolition Delay Bylaw

Ms. Amy Friend and Mr. Jeff Clewley represented the Commission. Previously, the Bylaw, stating a delay in demolition of structures 100 years or older, was presented and withdrawn by the commission.

Mr. Ellis asked for a description of how the Historical Commission had revised the bylaws to accommodate issues identified in the meeting among the Selectmen, Building Inspector, Finance Committee, Town Counsel and Historical Commission last year. Ms. Friend stated that the only copy with the changes shown was in the possession of Mr. Janes, the Chairman of the Historical Commission, who was not present at this meeting. Ms. Friend and Mr. Clewley did note that the latest bylaws contain a new provision addressing circumstances when the property subject to a demolition delay is sold: the process starts all over with the new owner. They were not sure about other changes or issues that had been presented at that fall meeting, however.

Ms. Grammer stated she had carefully reviewed the document and suggested some changes and requested some clarifications. The Historical Commission agreed to make such changes. Ms. Grammer also confirmed that certain problems—such as the fact that the bylaw addressed only demolition, so that a complete change and eradication of items of historical value can still occur, as can destruction through decay.

Mr. Phillips inquired about this limitation causing adverse impacts on an ability to sell or obtain full value for a 100+ year old building. Ms. Friend stated that there would be no impact because virtually all the neighboring jurisdictions have demolition delay bylaws. Implementation of this bylaw, according to members of the Historical Commission, will send a message to prospective builders a bylaw is in place preventing immediate demolition of historical buildings.

Ms. Friend reported there is an approximate inventory of 300 structures over 100 years old in West Newbury. She stated the bylaw is one-step towards preservation. Ms. Grammer inquired about alternatives such as façade easement. Ms. Friend suggested façade easement is more homeowner

driven and can be found in historical districts as in the West Newbury Training Field. Ms. Friend indicated that it would be too much work for the volunteer Historical Commission to undertake. She also stated that her research led to a conclusion that such a contractual arrangement was precluded unless prerequisites such as Historic Registry status are met. Additionally, she indicated In the future, the high concentration of historic buildings on Main Street may suggest designating the area a historical district.

Mr. Clewley and Ms. Friend reported the commission has applied for the second phase of the grant inventorying buildings greater than 100 years of age. Ms. Friend and Mr. Clewley were not specifically aware of the enhanced applicant status Selectman Anderson referred to as lacking in West Newbury when he voted against the inventory proposal last fall. They said that could find out. Building are prioritized based on which would provide a greater impact on the aesthetics of the community. Ms. Friend stated there are 113 homes on Main Street over 100 years old. Although not yet approved, Ms. Friend believes there is a good possibility the commission will receive the grant from the state.

Ms. Grammer inquired if the Historical Commission would like to add a summary paragraph or an Appendix to the FinCom booklet. Ms. Grammer stated the deadline for submission of support information is the end of March. *Ms. Friend agreed to author a summary of the bylaw for the FinCom booklet.*

Whittier Technical High School

Mr. Gould joined FinCom following the discussion with the Historical Commission. FinCom asked Mr. Gould if he expects a decreased budget for Whittier due to the Superintendent's statement that West Newbury was down one student. Mr. Gould believed he received different numbers. *Mr. Gould will follow up to confirm numbers on Tuesday, March 7, 2017.*

Essex Technical High School

Previously, Chapter 70 state funds, for West Newbury students, were received by the town of Newbury. Ms. Grammer asked Mr. Gould if there were a mechanism in place to track funds. *Mr. Gould will follow up.*

Budget Changes

Chairman Codair asked Mr. Gould to explain the decrease in salaries for the BOS. Mr. Gould responded the decrease was due to the retirement of the Administrative Assistant and hiring a replacement at a lower pay scale.

The expense of the School Resource Officer was reduced \$26,000.00 due to the contribution of the Pentucket School System.

FinCom members asked Mr. Gould to inform them when the BOS votes on the requested salary adjustments. *Mr. Gould will follow up.*

FinCom Business

FinCom members inquired into the deadline for warrants. *Mr. Gould will look into it on Tuesday, March 7, 2017.*

Ms. Grammer stated the two stray articles-President Trump’s release of his tax returns and the incorrect property settlement have received sufficient votes for discussion at the Town Meeting. *Members will extend an invitation to the individuals to meet with FinCom.*

The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) will meet on March 13, 2017 to discuss the renovation budget for Carr Post.

In anticipation of the budget review and rationale preparation, Ms. Grammer will create a matrix including past rationales.

Minutes

The Committee voted to approve the February 27, 2017 minutes, 4-0-1, Codair abstaining.

Future FinCom Meetings

Monday, March 13, 2017

- Review Articles and invite authors of the two citizen generated articles

Monday, March 20, 2017

- Meet with the BOS and the Town Moderator to discuss budget

Monday, March 27, 2017

- Meet with CPC

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elisa Grammer
Secretary

Meeting Materials

Updated Omnibus Budget

Historical Commission Demolition Delay Bylaw

Historical Commission Demolition Delay Bylaw Compared