

**West Newbury Finance Committee  
Minutes of the meeting  
Monday, March 27, 2017**

Chairman Codair called the Finance Committee meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the second floor hearing room of the 1910 Building with Ms. Grammer, Mr. DeLena, and Mr. Ellis in attendance.

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

**Pipestave Apartments— Ms. Tracy Watson, Executive Director of Newburyport and West Newbury Housing Authorities**

West Newbury Housing Authority members accompanying Ms. Watson included Mr. Burt Knowles, Ms. Leisa Mingo (State Appointee), and Mr. Larry Corcoran. Also present were members of the Board of Selectmen-Mr. Joe Anderson, Mr. David Archibald, and Mr. Glenn Kemper. Town Clerk/Council Michael McCarron and Department of Public Works (DPW) Director Gary Bill attended as well.

Ms. Watson explained she is both the Executive Director (ED) of Newburyport and the ED of West Newbury. She stated it is not the only partnership in the area. Due to low inventories and revenue, the housing authority of smaller communities will pair up with those in larger nearby communities. She reported there are approximately 35 of these partnerships in Massachusetts. Each Housing Authority remains autonomous.

Ms. Watson stated Newburyport HA has been managing the Pipestave Apartments. At one point, there were discussions regarding the transfer of management to the West Newbury Housing Authority. Ultimately, it was determined for Newburyport to continue management of the facility. The West Newbury HA will set policies under the direction of the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) and Massachusetts General State Laws.

Ms. Watson remarked the transfer of the complete managerial control and maintenance responsibility from the Town of West Newbury to the Newburyport Housing Authority is an involved process. The town must pay for due diligence (including a study of the property, lead and asbestos abatement, and a deed search regarding restrictions —costing perhaps \$20-50K) prior to going back to the DHCD.

. Once approved by the DHCD, the town may turn over the property to the West Newbury HA for the sum of a \$1.00. Mr. Archibald reported the town insurer, Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association (MIIA), will no longer cover rental property. The town is looking into another insuring agent.

Mr. Knowles stated a 2005 renovation included the removal of asbestos and lead. Mr. Archibald inquired if the apartments would remain accessible for West Newbury residents. Mr. McCarron replied the property remains a part of the West Newbury subsidized affordable housing (SHI). Mr. Kemper added the renovation was in a plan for the state to take over the property. However, the

revenue was insufficient to carry out the vetting process. Mr. Bill stated the roof is in good shape. Mr. Knowles followed up stating the septic system is new. Mr. McCarron added a property search was conducted, prior to construction of the solar fields. He reported finding no title issues or restrictions.

Ms. Watson expressed that for larger capital items, it may be necessary to approach the West Newbury Community Preservation Committee (CPC) for funding. Ms. Watson stated revenue funded smaller capital projects such as storm drains and the addition of a handicapped bathroom.

Mr. DeLena inquired if residents had maintenance employees available to them. Ms. Watson stated there was someone available every day seven days a week. She added there is a new maintenance staff who will service all of the low-income West Newbury housing facilities. Mr. McCarron concluded by stating there is an article giving the BOS the authority to turn over the property to the West Newbury Housing Authority.

### **Board of Selectmen Meeting**

FinCom members transitioned to the first floor hearing room of the 1910 Building for the BOS meeting at 7:00 pm. Joining both groups was Town Moderator KC Swallow. FinCom members reviewed their votes on the upcoming articles. FinCom members did learn the amount attached to Snow and Ice is \$150,000.00.

**Special Town Meeting—ARTICLE 6.** To see if the Town will vote to transfer from available funds the sum of \$150,000.00 to fund the Snow and Ice deficit. By request of the DPW Director. *FinCom voted to approve, 4-0-0.*  
Rationale: Chairman Codair

Mr. Janes and Mr. Clewly from the Historical Commission discussed the Historic Demolition Bylaw.

### **Finance Committee Meeting**

FinCom reconvened at 8:45 pm in the second floor hearing room of the 1910 Building

### **Community Preservation Committee (CPC) —Mr. Bob Janes, Chairman**

Accompanying Mr. Janes were Ms. Jean Nelson, administrator, Ms. Ann Bardeen, Planning Board Representative, and Mr. Tom Flaherty, Parks and Recreation Representative. FinCom and CPC reviewed open projects.

### **Action Cove Playground Status**

Ms. Grammer requested a status report on the progress repairing the playground. After visiting the playground, Ms. Grammer prepared a summary of the status of projects presented in a report by the contractor issued in September 2016. Mr. Flaherty stated the high priority projects were addressed immediately. These include replacing any structures with V-shapes, in which a child's head may be stuck and replacement of wood railings with composite material.

Ms. Grammer expressed concern for safety issues. As indicated on the chart she prepared, a visit to the facility indicated that 5 of 12 Priority 1 safety items had not been completed, and almost none of the Priority 2 and Priority 3 items had been resolved. She particularly described metal picnic tables that had been situated in a way that presents a severe hazard if children fell from an elevated track system and hit their heads or other bodily parts. Mr. Flaherty stated this is an ongoing issue. In Phase II, a cement base will support the tables in an upright position.

He stated expected completion of a third coat of staining and the completion of all safety items will take place prior to April vacation, weather permitting. He indicated that the playground does not have 12" of mulch; this is problematic because it compresses quickly.

Phase II includes power washing and staining the rest of the facility. Mr. Flaherty reported the possibility of completing the original three phase, three-year project (\$25,000.00 per year) in two years (\$50,000.00).

Once all projects are completed Mr. Flaherty feels comfortable with the safety aspects of the playground. He indicated several times that he is aware of no serious injuries so far. Furthermore, Parks and Recreation Department and Department of Public Works (DPW) have developed a maintenance plan; Mr. Flaherty remarked a replacement cost would run approximately \$250,000.00. He continued, with careful maintenance, the current structure could last another ten years.

Mr. DeLena queried as to why Phase III may not be necessary. Mr. Flaherty responded there was less carpentry and staining than originally projected.

### **Inventory of Historical Properties**

The project was on hold until confirmation of the state grant. The Historical Committee did receive the grant. The committee will move forward with the project within parameters given by the state. Prior to obtaining state funds, the expenditure of \$25,000.00 must occur. The town will then receive a grant equal to half of the amount.

### **G.A.R. Memorial Library**

Mr. Janes stated the painting the exterior of the library will occur before May 30. The cost is \$12,000.00.

Improvements on the Library walkway are completed and the project is now closed.

### **Carr Post Building**

Mr. Janes reported the building is secure and CPC has received the remaining funds. Moving forward, the CPC plans to prepare a presentation of ideas for the property at the Town Meeting. There are no further plans to update the property this year.

### **Paige School Ventilation**

The ventilation project at the Paige School is near completion.

### **CPC Funds**

Ms. Grammer inquired who oversees specific projects. Mr. Janes stated it is the responsibility of whoever applies. He remarked the Board of Trustees often requests funds for library projects. The improvement of the walkway is an example.

FinCom members asked about Housing Authority projects, specifically the new roof for elderly housing complex, which experienced some difficulties. Mr. Janes answered by stating several agencies are involved. Initially, the Housing Authority and the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). Ms. Nelson noted that the Community Preservation Act is a relatively new thing; they are coming to recognize the need for a project manager to ensure work progresses as expected. In addition to direct project cost, funds for advertising and online bidding are necessary. Each project is an evolving process with generation of quarterly progress reports.

FinCom members followed up with questions regarding purchase of the property to serve as a potential new well site. Mr. Janes stated the BOS is currently in negotiations with the owners. FinCom members asked if the dollar amount is necessary for submission of the article. Mr. Janes replied it is possible to include a sum within the appraised value in lieu of an exact amount. He continued stating the dollar amount is in the motion not in the warrant.

### **FinCom Business**

FinCom members proceeded to vote on more remaining articles.

### **Town Meeting Articles**

#### **Annual—General Government**

**ARTICLE 5:** To see if the Town will vote to appropriate, in anticipation of Water Department revenue, the sum of \$698,525.00 of which \$186,126.00 for Salaries and Wages which include \$1,700.00 for Water Commissioners stipends, \$30,514.00 for Insurances, \$400,594.00 for Expenses, \$16,722.00 for Debt Service, \$15,000.00 for Extraordinary and Unforeseen, and \$49,519.00 for Indirect Cost. By request of the Board of Water Commissioners.

*FinCom voted to approve the budget, 4-0-0.*

Rationale: Mr. Ellis

**Placeholder ARTICLE 6:** To see if the Town will (i) vote to authorize the Board of Water Commissioners and/or the Board of Selectmen to acquire by purchase, gift or eminent domain, for Water Department purposes and for general municipal purposes, the fee interest in a certain parcel of real estate, with all buildings and improvements thereon, located at 31 Dole Place, West Newbury, MA containing approximately 8.71 acres of land and as shown on Assessors' Map 1 as Lot 640 or any part therefore, together with and subject to all rights, restrictions and easements of record, on such terms and conditions as the Board of Water Commissioners and/or the Board of Selectmen may determine; (ii) to appropriate \$ or some other amount to pay costs of purchasing the property described herein, including the payment of all costs incidental and related thereto, for payment of all costs pertaining to the construction of a new water well on said property, and to determine whether this amount should be raised by borrowing, water department fees, transfer from available funds or otherwise; (iii) to authorize the Board of Water Commissioners and Board of Selectmen to enter into all agreements and execute any and all instruments as may be necessary

to effect said acquisition or purchase; or (iv) to take any other action in relation thereto. By request of the Board of Water Commissioners/Board of Selectmen.

*FinCom delayed vote until next meeting.*

Rationale: Chairman Codair

**ARTICLE 24:** To see if the Town will vote to amend its Bylaws by adding a new section in order to preserve the historic and architectural assets of the town by instituting a period of delay for a period up to nine months before the issuance of a demolition period, or take any other action relative thereto.

*FinCom voted to abide by the will of the people, 4-0-0.*

Rationale: Chairman Codair

**ARTICLE 25:** To see if the Town will vote to amend the West Newbury Zoning Bylaw concerning “Signs” pursuant to the attached document entitled “West Newbury Planning Board Proposed Zoning Bylaw Amendment SIGNS”, 5 pages, dated February 6, 2017 at the Spring Town Meeting by:

1. Deleting Section 7.C. “Signs” in its entirety and replacing it with a new Section 7.C. “Signs”;
2. Amending Section 8.B.3.e. by adding new subsection 8.B.3.e.5., which would read “5. Signs (Section 7.C.)”.

*FinCom voted against, 0-4-0.*

Rationale: Mr. Ellis

**ARTICLE 26:** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to transfer, by deed or otherwise, the care, custody and control of the Pipestave apartments located at 692 Main Street consisting of approximately 1.52 acres of land and shown on Assessors’ Map R23 as Lot 23A to the West Newbury Housing Authority upon such terms and conditions as the Board deems appropriate, or take any other action relative thereto.

*FinCom voted in favor, 4-0-0.*

Rationale: Mr. DeLena

### **Special Town Meeting Articles**

**ARTICLE 8.** To see if the Town will vote to transfer from Community Preservation Act funds the sum of \$25,000 for Preservation and Rehabilitation of the Action Cove Playground Facility, Phase II, said sum to be taken from the CPA Open Space and Recreation Reserve, or take any other action relative thereto. By request of the Community Preservation Committee and the Park and Recreation Commission.

*Ms. Grammer will forward her report to Mr. Bill (DPW) and to the BOS.*

*FinCom voted in favor, 4-0-0.*

Rationale: Mr. Phillips

### **Future FinCom Meetings**

Monday, April 3, 2017

- Review FinCom booklet for Town Meeting

The meeting adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elisa Grammer  
Secretary

*Meeting Materials*

- 1) Pipestave apts article request
- 2) Sign bylaw article request
- 3) Sign bylaw text
- 4) Sign bylaw presentation
- 5) Comparison of current vs proposed sign bylaw
- 6) Historical Commission update re certified govt status
- 7) JUST REVISED Demo delay bylaw text
- 8) Demo delay bylaw explanation
- 9) Action Cove article request & additional info
- 10) Action Cove safety/repair report
- 11) EG 3/26/2017 spreadsheet safety/repair "to do" vs what's done
- 12) CPC expense report
- 13) Latest ATM with redline showing changes--some substantive
- 14) Latest STM
- 15) Latest budget
- 16) Spring 2017 Article Spreadsheet (consistent with latest ATM & STM)