

Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting, Tuesday, February 27, 2001 Judge Welsh Meeting Room, Town Hall, Provincetown, MA 02657

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The meeting was called to order by Chair Bill Dougal at 5:30 P.M.

Those present were Chairman Bill Dougal, Irene Rabinowitz, Gordon Siegel, Jennifer Bedard, Gail Enos, Rick Holland, Alice Foley and Robert Vetrick. Sue Buerkel was absent.

I. The minutes from February 22, 2001 were approved unanimously.

II. Bill Dougal discussed a memo he received back from Jim Cole, Chairman of the Library Board of Trustees again requesting written figures from the Fin Com. It was decided again that this was just a general discussion amongst the Finance Committee of future planning and Bill would reiterate this to Jim Cole.

III. Bill Dougal handed out the following information

- ⇒ February 26, 2001 memo from Town Manager regarding Provincetown's Proposed Legislative Initiatives for Affordable Housing
- ⇒ February 27, 2001 memo Adjustments to Board of Selectman's FY budget request
- ⇒ February 27, 2001 memo that Board of Selectman have agreed to issue an RFP for Cape End Manor
- ⇒ February 12, 2001 memo from Cape End Manor Board of Directors
- ⇒ February 27, 2001 memo from Town Manager regarding an Understanding with Provincetown Fisherman Association and the MacMillian Pier/Pier Corp.

IV. **Continued Review of FY 2002 Budget and Articles**

Division IV School Budgets

Representing the Schools were Susan Fleming, School Superintendent, Bill Rockiki, Elementary School Principal, Michael Marino, High School Principal, Katie Slivka, Special Ed, Dana Berry, Frank Wills, Deb Travato, Bill Rogers, and Terese Nelson, School Committee members.

A long discussion ensued with the Schools defending their budget as in the best interests of the children. Susan Fleming stated that their budget request is much less than other school districts with even fewer enrollments than Provincetown and that without asking for major increases they've been able to add new programs, etc. Frank Wills stated that while he wants a school system that makes financial sense he also wants one that makes educational sense. Terese Nelson invited members of Fin Com to come to the schools to see what goes on. Bill Rogers doesn't think that the schools are offering "the best bang for the buck". He doesn't know if they have the best financial model for the schools but doesn't really know how to improve it. Dana Berry suggested that Fin Com go through the budget and suggest cuts to which Robert Vetrick replied that they don't really know the inner workings of the schools to do that.

Bill Dougal talked about the fact that the Schools have no long term planning to coincide with the Board of Selectman's 10-year fiscal plan. He suggested going "out of the box" to look at other school districts with similar demographics to Provincetown to see what they are doing and to possibly get ideas. His challenge to the Schools was can we get better or the same quality of education for less money. Irene Rabinowitz raised the issue of Provincetown having so many special Ed students. (26% compared to state average of 17%) and asked if anything could be done to change that. Rick Holland

again stressed the need for long term fiscal planning so there are plans in case some current revenue streams disappear. Robert Vetrick asked if there was some way we could offer the same services for less money. He stated that many people in town feel like Provincetown is becoming a repository for special Ed kids. He was told that the 4 most difficult kids in the schools live in Provincetown. Robert said that he thinks there isn't enough honest interchange between the Finance Committee and School Committee and an agreement was made by all to try to have a less adversarial relationship in the future. Ruth Gilbert agreed with Robert and again stressed the need to look at the big picture when creating a long-term plan. Bill Dougal suggested that perhaps the School Committee should hire a consultant to help them evaluate needs and create a long-term plan that would address those needs in a fiscally sound way. Gail Enos brought up the issue of regionalization. She thinks that while people were unfavorable to it in the past, with the changing demographics in Provincetown and Truro more people would support it now. Everyone seemed to agree that this was definitely the way to go and Ruth Gilbert suggested that the School Committee establish a sub-committee going to look into this further. Susan Fleming stated that there have been and will be more changes to the Truro School Committee which will make them more open to the idea than in the past and that the Truro Finance Committee supports regionalization.

Susan Fleming said that she would arrange a meeting with herself, Bill Dougal, Frank Wills and Keith Bergman to begin to strategize and eventually bring the matter up with their Truro counterparts. Ruth Gilbert made a motion to approve School budget request, Irene Rabinowitz seconded and it passed unanimously.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:40 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Phyllis Lutsky
Recording Secretary