

Finance Committee Meeting  
 Wednesday, January 7, 2009  
 4:00 pm

Larkin Hall, Provincetown Center of Coastal Studies  
 Called to Order: 4:09 pm

**Membership:**

<b>P</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>Name</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Thomas Coen, Chair	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ruth Gilbert, Vice Chair	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Robert Vetric	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Virginia Ross (arr. 4:13)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Thomas Thurston	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Walter Winnowski	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Frederic Biddle	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Philip Gaudiano	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ann Maguire	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gabrielle Hanna, Alternate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Voting
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Alfred Tedesco, Alternate	<input type="checkbox"/> Voting

(Note: **P** = Present   **E** = Excused   **U** = Unexcused)

**Also Present:**

The Board of Selectmen (Michelle Couture, Mary-Jo Avellar, Austin Knight, Elaine Anderson, David Bedard).

Sharon Lynn, Town Manager; David Gardner, Assistant Town Manager; Alex Heilala, Finance Director; Doug Johnstone, Town Clerk; Debra DeJonker-Berry, Library Director; and Jeff Jaran, Chief of Police

**Order of Business:**

1. To conduct a joint public meeting with the Board of Selectmen.
2. To consider any other business that may legally come before the Finance Committee.

**BoS Chair Ms. Couture called the Board of Selectmen to order at 4:08.  
 Mr. Coen called the Finance Committee to order at 4:09.**

Town Manager Sharon Lynn began with a commentary (attached) on the FY 2010 budget. She said that the request summary (attached) reflected a \$900K shortfall, after the police and some other departments trimmed their original requests by up to 13% at her direction.

For the second year in a row the budget lacks a capital improvement plan, she said. Selectman Couture said that consideration of capital expenditures might have to wait until spring.

Debt service and inflation “really does take a chunk out of everybody’s budget,” Couture said - especially as most FY 2010 requests are level-funded with last year. “That’s what I think people sometimes don’t understand.” She and Lynn agreed that “this is no way of doing business.”

Mr. Coen cited a \$280K decline in school tuition reimbursement from students in Truro as another reason for the shortfall. Selectman Knight said that Town revenues might have decreased 8% overall.

“Let’s try to avoid a (Proposition) 2 ½ override at all costs,” Mr. Coen said. Hard times will make voters reluctant to approve any tax increase to make up the gap, he said. “Let’s presume that we won’t get it.”

Selectman Knight said the BoS had received “no budget whatsoever” from the School Committee, which operates independently. “Somehow that \$280K Truro deficit has to be dealt with,” he said. “There may be programs in the schools that can go into a 2 ½ override. All options are still on the table.”

Selectman Avellar said the School Committee “has no intention of doing anything whatsoever” about a December 2008 report by the Schools Strategy Committee concerning the possible combination of some or all of the Town’s school operations with another school district. Details were originally closed to the press.

Selectman Avellar also said that the schools had given no notice of the \$280K deficit from Truro students. “The School Committee did the public a great disservice by not giving the public a chance to question them,” she said. “We had to sit around like a bunch of dumbos. I find this insulting in the extreme.

It's like a clique, and only a certain number of people were allowed to participate," Avellar said.

Mr. Coen, who was on the strategic committee, said he wasn't at liberty to discuss details except to say that the members of the School Committee are "seriously considering real change."

Avellar and Knight expressed frustration that Couture knew the details, but no other selectmen did. "There really isn't anything to share," Couture said, adding that issue of regionalization shouldn't be merged with the FY2010 school budget.

Mr. Biddle complained about the difficulty of comparing the school budget with the Town's overall, and asked whether their line items might be standardized. Mr. Coen said state law gives the School Committee autonomy in this regard. "And they give us all the information they have," he said.

**[Couture ended the joint meeting at 5:05. Coen said that FinCom would remain in session as a non-participating observer of the BOS' own meeting, which followed at 5:13 pm.]**

**FinCom remained in session as allowed by members' schedules. the Committee lost its quorum at 5:35 pm.]**

Next Meeting:	January 29, 2009
Adjourn:	5:35 PM
Minutes by:	Frederic Biddle

Approved by  on March 30, 2009  
Thomas Coen, Chair