

Town of Uxbridge, Massachusetts Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

SEP 7 '11 PM 5:54

Date: June 9, 2011

Place: Board of Selectmen Room

Present:

Peter DeMers	P	Mark Andrews	P	Howard Fortner	P
Christine Horwath	P	John Morawski	P	Ray Wright	P
Open position	n/a				

Call to Order: 7:00 PM

1. Public Hearing- June 23, 2011 Special Town Meeting warrant

The Finance Committee heard citizens discuss Article 2 of the Special Town Meeting warrant.

The Uxbridge Town Finance Director, Mr. David Genereux, presented a document with four exhibits to illustrate the financial impact to Uxbridge taxpayers of Article 2, if it were to be approved, based on a \$5,000,000 borrowing. Assuming a 4% coupon over 20 years, the Town would pay \$7.363 million, which would cost the average Uxbridge taxpayer \$71 per year. Mr. Genereux also pointed out that because of a low interest rate environment for the School Building Project, original estimates for costs to the average Uxbridge taxpayer were too high by \$33. If Article 2 were to be approved, the net difference from the original estimates, on which the project was passed, would be \$38 per year over 20 years. For the average home in Uxbridge, valued at \$291,000, the average tax for the entire project would be \$362.58 per year. The first substantial debt for the Town drops off the books in 2018.

Mr. Don Sawyer, the School Department Business Manager and a member of the School Building Committee, presented a drawing from the project's architect. Because of favorable economic conditions at the outset of the project, items that had once been considered outside of the original \$43 million approval moved within the budget. However, finishing the recreational fields did not move into the budget. If Article 2 is approved at the Special Town Meeting, a ballot election for a Proposition 2 ½ override would follow on July 12th. Mr. Sawyer said that \$5 million is the worst-case scenario and that \$1 million is held (by law) in a construction contingency that could be available for this purpose, too.

Mr. Sawyer took questions from the Finance Committee, and was joined in answering the questions by Mr. John Higgins, Chairman of the School Building Committee and School Committee member, and Mr. Ernie Esposito, Chairman of the School Committee.

The Finance Committee's first round of questions focused on what would be included, if the Article were to pass. Those speaking to the Article discussed things like a synthetic field, the time needed for grass fields to prepare for play, a maintenance hut, concession stand, fencing, and a list of other items, but neither the Article nor the information presented contained any dollar figures, either itemized or in total.

Mr. DeMers asked what the plan for athletics would be, if the plan were not to pass. The answer was that busing would be used to transport athletes to the existing fields in Uxbridge. The cost is estimated to be \$72,000 per year, if no other buses are needed; that is, if the buses that are currently leased are needed to transport middle school and/or elementary school, and times conflict, a new bus contract may be needed, and the costs will be higher.

The question of "Why now?" was then discussed. Because the contractors and their equipment are in place, and most costs are locked in "as bid" for a period of time, the costs to do these projects now are much lower than starting a completely new project. The Massachusetts School Building Authority informed the Town that it would only reimburse the Town for a percentage of a \$43 million project. None of the costs for this Article, if approved, are currently considered to be reimbursable by the MSBA, though the question has been submitted.

Selectman Jay Cahill, representing the Sponsors of the Article, the Uxbridge Board of Selectmen, discussed how the timing of the Article and the project can optimize a successful opening of the new Uxbridge High School.

Mr. DeMers informed the Finance Committee that the sponsor of Article 1 of the Special Town Meeting warrant, Mr. Stephen O'Connell, was unable to attend tonight's meeting and would attend the meeting planned for June 14, 2011.

2. Old Business

None.

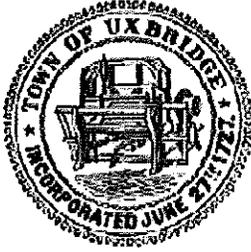
3. New Business

None.

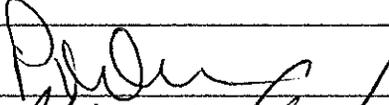
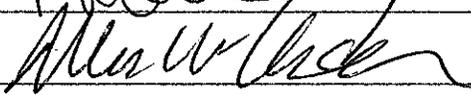
4. Adjournment

Motion/Second/Discussion Vote

Motion	To adjourn meeting.				
1 st	CH	2 nd	JM	Vote	6-0-0



Finance Committee Approval Sheet

Name	Signature	Date
Peter DeMers		08/23/2011
Mark Andrews		08/23/2011
Howard Fortner	Howard W Fortner	8-23-2011
Christine Horwath		
John Morawski		
Ray Wright		