

Finance Committee Meeting  
Acton Town Hall, Room 204  
April 29, 2014  
MINUTES

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**Members Present:** Pat Clifford, Mike Majors, Bill Mullin, Mary Ann Ashton, Margaret Busse, Steve Noone, Bob Evans, Herman Kabakoff, Doug Tindal

Chairperson Pat Clifford called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

The Chairperson led a brief overview of this evening's agenda items.

- I. Public Participation – None
- II. Kelley's Corner Improvement Initiative *Andrew Brockway*
  - Andrew presented the Kelley's Corner proposed development schedule. Some of the highlights included the following milestones:
    - ✓ April 2013 – Acton Town Meeting approves request.
    - ✓ March 7 – initial workshop for citizen outreach.
    - ✓ 2015 - Implement zoning & design regulations at ATM.
    - ✓ September 1, 2015 – State Grant application submittal date.
    - ✓ 2016 – Begin public infrastructure construction.
    - ✓ 2017 Complete construction of public infrastructure.
  - Bill Mullin questioned Andy regarding his professional background.
  - Herman wanted to know from Andy how the Urban League Institute's observations will be incorporated into the plan.
  - Mike asked about the overall economic concept behind the KC initiative.
- III. Local Aid Estimates *Pat Clifford*
  - Cherry Sheet is 30-40% higher than ALG estimates.
  - Mary Ann gave an update of local aid estimates related to the House budget and school revenues.
- IV. Annual Town Meeting Wrap Up / Follow Up *Pat Clifford*
  - There was a lively and candid discussion from the committee members regarding their feedback regarding town meeting observations.
  - Bill M. – indicated that there was a split vote from the committee on the Capital request. Bill met with Acton Town Officials to discuss a possible capital budgeting process. He reminded the committee that when we over-budget, we over tax.
  - Herman was concerned about the organization of TM and how impractical it is to make important financial decisions at 11:45 in the evening.
  - Mary Ann commented that the Nursing Service issue needs to be followed more closely and that the budget process with regard to how the Finance Committee interacts with the school budget needs some work. Mary Ann would like to see the School Committee budgets addressed sooner rather than later.
  - Steve Noone thought everything came together very late in the game and that we need to do something different with the school budget. Our schedule should be much tighter.

- Bob Evans stated that the Nursing Service amendment was a small example of how we can free up excess funds. He would like to see future budgets presented with a focus of benefiting current taxpayers versus taxpayers' six-years out.
- Margaret had comments regarding the whole process of town meeting and its organization. She is in total agreement with Bill Mullin's point regarding budgets and that she shared some interesting ideas with the PTSO.
- Doug stated that he thought the lighting at TM was inadequate and that it takes a very long time to process votes. He indicated that low turnout by the voters is a big deal with the net effect of allowing special interests to make a disproportionate impact on any vote.
- Mike agrees with Doug's comments that low turnouts favor potential special interest groups and that the town needs to invest in current technology to improve lighting, sound, video and voting procedures.
- Pat indicated that there are things that we do very well, as well as things that need improvement.

**V. Committee Reports**

*Pat Clifford*

- The committee members gave updates of their committee assignments.
- Bob Evans - Health Insurance Trust
- Margaret Busse - Acton 2020
- Doug Tindal - Economic Development Committee and Morrison Farm.
- Mike Majors - Planning Board
- Steve Noone - Acton Leadership Group
- Mary Ann Ashton - School Committee, Morrison Farm Committee
- Herman Kabakoff - CPC and BoS
- Bill Mullin - Morrison Farm
- Pat Clifford - ALG, South Acton Train Station and Acton Community Housing

**VI. Work Plan for FY 15 – Preliminary Discussion**

*Pat Clifford*

- Mary Ann discussed her "Proposal for Acton Finance Committee 2014-2015", a strategy for a comprehensive capital plan developed by the BOS, SC, and Finance Committee.
- There was a lively discussion of Mary Ann's proposal.

**VII. Finance Committee Business**

*Pat Clifford*

- Meeting Minutes approval deferred
- Next Meeting – May 13<sup>th</sup> at R.J. Grey Junior High School Library

**DOCUMENTS PRESENTED AT MEETING:**

1. Kelley's Corner Capital request calendar
2. Kelley's Corner Imitative Project Schedule
3. Proposal for Acton Finance Committee 2014-2015