

FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES
09-23-2009

Attending:

Mayor Matthew Arnett
Councilor Shannon Cox
Councilor William Shakespeare
Councilor Andre Cushing
Councilor Tom Brann
Councilor Jean Lawlis
Town Mgr., Sue Lessard

1. Minutes of August 17, 2009 Meeting

Mayor Arnett declared the minutes accepted since there were no corrections or omissions noted.

2. Review and signature of Warrants

The warrants were accepted and signed by committee members. Councilor Shakespeare questioned payments to a pool service. The Town Manager explained that these were for items done as part of annual maintenance during the pool shutdown period, not as regular maintenance such as mowing around the building or work inside the facility.

3. Review of Financial Statements

The Town Manager presented the financial statements through 9-23-09. Taxes and revenues have been coming in well and there has been no downturn in excise tax.

4. Old Business

5. New Business

a. Excise Tax Referendum – *The Town Manager presented information on the fiscal impact to the Town of Hampden if the Excise Tax Referendum passes, which will be approximately \$601,000 per year. That would equate to a \$1.11 increase needed on the property tax. The Committee discussed the proposal and it was the consensus of those attending that while no one likes to pay excise tax, this drastic approach would have very negative effects on the community. Motion by Jean Lawlis, seconded by Shannon Cox to recommend to the full council that the proposed resolve against the Excise Tax Referendum be adopted. Vote 6-0.*

b. Tabor II Referendum – *The Town Manager presented information to the Committee in regard to the Tabor II (Referendum Question 4) of the November state ballot. Although this measure is primarily targeted at the State of*

Maine government – it also has negative impacts to local government in that it makes referenda a requirement in terms of budgets instead of a local option, which is what it currently is. In addition, the cost to the state for referenda required would be very large, with an estimated \$800,000 per referendum cost for the mailing of information packets alone. It was the consensus of the Committee that the Town Manager prepare a draft resolve in opposition to the measure for the consideration of the full council at the next regular meeting.

- c. *10 Mayo Road – The Town Manager explained that a tax acquired property in Hampden had a serious roof leaking problem and that the town had assisted the property owner with applying for assistance through a social service agency. That application fell through when it was learned that there was a 3-5 year waiting list for participation in the program. The Manager requested that the Town be allowed to ‘front’ the money for necessary repairs and then be repaid from financing being applied for by the property owner. If the financing was not secured, the Town could place a lien on the property that would be satisfied at the time of sale in the same way that the outstanding property taxes would be paid. There was concern expressed that the Town needed a policy in regard to such situations in order to make sure that we are consistent in the manner in which they are handled. The Manager explained that we only have three properties in Hampden that would fall into this category and should either of the other two property owners come to the Town, we would work through our normal process of attempting to help them find assistance from all available sources prior to coming to the Town.*

Motion by Matthew Arnett, seconded by Jean Lawlis to recommend to the full council to expend up to \$3,000 for structural repairs to the tax acquired property at 10 Mayo Road. Vote 6-0.

6. Public Comments

7. Committee Member Comments

The meeting was adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Lessard
Town Manager

