

Town of Rockport

Minutes of Finance Committee Meeting April 2, 2016

The committee convened at 9:15 am in the School Gymnasium and continued until the Annual Town Meeting adjourned at 3:30 pm. Chairman Laurene Wessel presided; Ian Crown, Beth Dailey, Wally Hess, Mike Hughes, June Michaels, Roger Levine, Melissa Tingley and Bill Wagner attended.

Article O – Creating over Solar Power District

June Michaels moved, Laurene Wessel seconded, and the committee voted to approve. The discussion centered on the desirability of qualifying for state grants by becoming a Green Community, and the fact that the cost of developing an array of solar panels can be borne by a private or non-profit energy company willing to partner with the Town.

During the ATM discussion of the article, Toby Arsenian moved to amend the language to define the perimeter of the solar zone; the motion failed.

Article 5 - FY2017 Budget

Departments held included:

122 Selectmen – Toby Arsenian questioned the health benefits for members of the Board.

131 Finance Committee – Toby Arsenian commended the FinCom for its work.

151 Legal – Zeke Seppela questioned the doubling of expense. Selectman Wilkinson gave an excellent summary of the Long Beach lawsuit to date.

181 Economic Development Committee – Toby Arsenian moved to reduce the budget, motion failed.

231 Ambulance – Francis Fleming asked why it had increased substantially. Rosemary Lesch explained the budget is quite variable, depending on number of emergency calls.

914 Health Benefits – question on what we are doing to control these costs.

Article 6 – Capital Outlay

Toby Arsenian moved to delete the \$20,000 for parking meter upgrades. Several people agreed the new high-tech meters are ugly and difficult to use. Can we invest in retro meters more in keeping with nature of the town? An interesting question was asked on the Town's liability if credit card information is hacked from the electronic meters.

Article K - DPW Garage

After an hour's discussion of the project's urgency, total cost and cost per square foot, the motion received more than the required 2/3 vote to approve the borrowing, contingent on passage of a debt exclusion at the May 3rd ballot.

Upcoming Meetings

Saturday, April 30, 9:00 am, School Auditorium – Special Town Meeting

FinCom meeting will be posted before and during

Tuesday, May 2 – town elections, vote on debt exclusion