

**APPROVED MINUTES OF BOARD OF FINANCE SPECIAL MEETING
MONDAY, MARCH 21, 2011**

A special meeting of the Board of Finance was held on Monday, March 21, 2011 in the large conference room at Town Hall beginning at 11:31 a.m.

Members Present: Peter Gomez, Chairman; Jill Bornstein, Vice Chairman (via dial-in), Margaret Price Sims and David Ulmer (in person)

Members Absent: Marty Heiser

Town Officials: Rudy Marconi, First Selectman, Kevin Redmond, Finance Director,

Guest: Ben Oko, Conservation Commission

A G E N D A

- Open meeting
- Discussion and Vote regarding request by the Board of Selectmen for a special approval of \$363,332 for the acquisition of land for open space and a cell tower on said property.
- Adjournment

Mr. Gomez called the meeting to order at 11:31 a.m.

Mr. Gomez noted that Board of Finance members had forwarded requests in advance of this meeting, including requests for payback analyses and information about the parcel in question (current property tax, assessed value and treatment of future revenues, etc). Mr. Gomez asked town officials to address those questions.

Mr. Redmond reviewed a payback analysis, noting that if bonding costs are built in, the breakeven is a little over 6 years. Mr. Marconi provided answers to the other Board of Finance questions, including noting that at present, the property generates \$10.20 per year due to its forest land designation. In addition, Mr. Marconi noted that the Board of Selectmen agreed that all revenues from the cell tower rentals would go to the general fund.

Mr. Ulmer questioned whether maintenance would be the responsibility of the Town or the cell tower management company. Mr. Marconi replied that as currently envisioned, maintenance would be the responsibility of the management firm, however, when we put it out to bid, it is possible that a the town could also manage the tower. Mr. Gomez questioned whether we would be able to negotiate directly with the carriers. Mr. Marconi responded that we would, if we structured it similar to what we do with the existing cell tower at the Police station. Ms. Bornstein questioned whether the Town expects much opposition from the property owners near the proposed site of the tower.

Mr. Marconi stated that he has not received any correspondence regarding a cell tower from residents at this time.

Chris McQuilken, a resident attending the meeting, questioned whether the purchase could be of a smaller, less expensive lot and thereby achieve better economics. Mr. Oko responded that the purchase is not just about a cell tower, rather it has a dual goal of providing more open space towards the Town's goal of 30% open space. Discussion ensued regarding the parcel and another three acre lot nearby. In addition, discussion of what impact a cell tower would have on adjoining property values. Ms Price Sims opined that, from a property owner's perspective, having adjoining open space may well offset any negative impact of a cell tower on the property.

Mr. Gomez moved to approve the authorization. Ms Bornstein seconded the motion. The motion was approved 4-0.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms Price-Sims made, and Mr. Ulmer seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting at noon

Vote: 4-0. Motion **APPROVED**.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin Redmond
Director of Finance
March 21, 2011