

BOARD OF SELECTMEN & SEWER COMMISSIONERS'
MEETING MINUTES
Special Budget Workshop

clerk

Present: Chairman Dore'Hunter, Selectmen Lauren Rosenzweig, Andrew Magee, Paulina Knibbe and Peter Berry Temporary Town Manager John Murray and Recording Secretary Maryjane Kenney

Francis Faulkner Meeting Room
Town Hall
October 11, 2007
7:30 PM



CITIZENS' CONCERNS: NONE

PUBLIC HEARINGS AND APPOINTMENTS

No public hearings or appointments are scheduled

SELECTMEN'S BUSINESS

FY '09 CAPITAL PLAN

Selectwoman Knibbe detailed her 4 year strawman outline for the Board. She would like to use \$375,000 of the NESWC funds (as a ball park number) and carry all debt inside Prop 2 ½ for FY 2009. The Board would use debt service for sewer expansion and Counsel on Aging expansion and continued funding of the fire station, with some pay-off from Avalon Funds. In FY 2010 the Board would ask for an operating override for the schools, and in FY 2011 have no override and in FY 2012 ask for a capital override.

Chairman Hunter discussed the monetary reasons for reducing the square footage of the fire station. It will be costed out at approximately \$400.00 a square foot. Funding of the second ambulance could come from the enterprise fund (\$600K). But the cost remains in the manning of the ambulance. Additionally he stated for expansion of the COA building, it is difficult to discuss numbers when we don't know if an on-site expansion is possible or a new location will be needed. Those decisions will weigh significantly in costing out the project. Selectwoman Knibbe felt to put off planning to 2012 is way too long; the Chairman indicated he fully agrees with this statement. The Temporary Town Manager noted the multiple problems in dealing with expanding the current location. It is part of a condo development so we have zoning, parking and leasing issues. We will need design money to see if we can expand in the current location. You will then see a 3 year building cycle. If you act now it will be 2013/14 before we open a new facility; if extended a year to request funds it will be 2015 before you see build out. Selectman Berry questioned where the current study that the seniors had finished could be read. Mr. Murray responded that it was a needs study, not a space study.

Selectman Magee stated that this was a very solid start to the overall COA issues although now the issues are space and parking. He also feels that working this year with in 2 ½ is a positive movement. It is his belief that we should continue to move the project along. He would like the Board to consider using a percentage amount when discussing NESWC funds rather than a dollar amount. Selectman Magee felt that the Board will have at least 2 proposal alternatives for the sewer going forward. He suggested that we hold off until we have the capacity study completed. The real question becomes how to fund sewers.

Selectwoman Rosenzweig reminded the Board that using percentages or numbers, there is always a possibility of liability and the use of NESWC funds is a risk. The Town Manager is looking into insurance coverage. The chairman stated that the monies will only be allocated incrementally for that very reason.

It was reported that Jonathan Chinitz reported that the School Committee has not decided if they will fund in or outside of proposition 2 ½. They will need to come to a vote on that. It is very premature to change levies at this point in time.

In theory the figure of \$375K agrees with the discussion the Selectmen have had in terms of capital expenses. Selectmen Rosenzweig, Knibbe and Berry all feel that it would be inappropriate to spend all of the NESWC monies. There is a consensus to reserve a 1 million dollar sum for improvements to the transfer station recycle operation. The Selectmen all agreed to use the amount of \$375,000 and then plan on holding a specified amount for period of time. The Temporary Town Manager clarified with the Selectmen that there is a total of \$5 Million. The plan would have \$1.3 conditioned upon maintaining environmental insurance, \$1.3 to towns and schools and \$1.3 to bookmark to save. Selectman Magee stated it would be good to have a plan for the ALG Meeting on Monday, but it is hard to have a plan without knowing the schools needs. We will need to use inside budget to draw down operating numbers; the biggest discussion is the ongoing operating items. We can use NESWC, but on an ongoing basis we need to be constantly replacing those funds. Selectwoman Rosenzweig stated the obvious difficulty is the operating budget goes up higher than we are allowed to go up in our funding. The goal is to keep taxes within 2 1/2 and keep and improve services. The Board needs to make decisions and the taxpayers need to see a plan to work toward.; that plan can change but still the operating budget needs to shift to the municipal side. It is a priority for us. The chairman agreed with this. ALG has asked for major capital items. We are way early on deciding on the split. The Chairman would like to hear from ALG and the schools with their opinions on this. Selectwoman Rosenzweig would like to discuss the total cost of fire station as well as NARA improvements and other needs to be funded out of increased fees. The Hayward/Main Street traffic improvements are \$75K; sidewalks are part of the continuing budget. Salary and staffing parity is a major goal, as are 13 new FTE's; one being the Deputy Police Chief. A new ladder truck is a big number. Selectman Berry asked Mr. Murray if the sewer expansion has a solid number from the Board of Health. WRAC is completing the feasibility study and the number will get firmer. It expected in the next 2 months. If the Board is interested in sewers expansion this cycle we need a number. We might have 2 numbers, the Flint /Tuttle neighborhood and then West Acton. We did put out a RFP and interviewed, but then said wait until capacity study done. Selectman Knibbe stated it is easier to have it on and pull it than adding it in last minute. Selectman Magee does not disagree, but we are not close enough to guess. Chairman Hunter stated that it will take a long time to ramp up and find financing. The Chairman decided to carry it and when we get close we can pull it off. Patricia Clifford of Finance Committee offered a draft "Point of View" plan she would like her committee to adopt as a positive forward-moving document. FinCom stressed that we have strong finances, especially with the Chapter 70 funds for the schools. Therefore, it is not appropriate to ask for an override. The Selectmen commented on the town's many needs with the housing market possibly affecting operating budgets. Ms. Clifford is of the opinion that the revenue split be maintained. And she strongly suggests that leftover unspent dollars be allocated to the entity that did not spend them. Chairman Hunter would like Fincom to add their comments and thanked Ms. Clifford for sharing what they have proposed to their committee for vote. Selectman Rosenzweig and Knibbe found the presentation helpful and agreed that unspent dollars taken off the top of a budget as a penalty; is not really a good guideline to encourage living with in the budget. When one tends to be conservative one should not be penalized; instead they would encourage the incentive of returning the unspent dollars. The Selectmen would like to be more aggressive in this year's proposed split with the schools. Ms. Clifford reminded everyone that this has not adopted and encouraged comments.

Chairman Hunter wanted to discuss leaving the Center Station open. There is an expense with this option, but it is a choice that citizens seem to want to consider. The Chairman stated that the Selectmen in general are thinking of several separate questions for the Town Meeting.

FY '09 OPERATING BUDGET: WHAT IS THE APPROPRIATE FUNDING LEVEL?

- A. Budget Assumptions/Ongoing Operations
- B. Funding "Below The Line Capital"
- C. Funding The Board of Selectmen's Priorities
 - 1. Staffing and salary levels should be in parity with comparable communities

2. The Master Plan should be updated into a comprehensive document.
3. Place a priority on achieving a "green culture".
4. Update our current level of technology.
5. Citizen engagement should be the priority of all efforts in making municipal improvements.
6. Transportation needs to become multi-modal, including but not limited to the walkability of our town.

The Temporary Town Manager is in favor of a continuing the shift toward the municipal share of the split of the total revenues with the schools. Chairman Hunter read the draft minutes from the latest FEATG Meeting. Selectman Knibbe stated that since she was at the meeting it was her sense that they would not have to meet again to have the architect go forward with the drawings. You can still move forward and don't need a picture just to say we need a station; it is not necessary for the State of the Town Meeting. Selectwoman Rosenzweig asked the Chairman how long it would take to see a sketch, how much would it cost, and to what level of detail would the pictures be drafted? Chairman Hunter replied that a basic arrangement of the space would be shown. Each new design cost is dependent on how much is changed. The new 9500 sq. foot design would change the building considerably to a new building and that would cost \$4-5 million. The Chairman noted that this is a conceptual plan to see if people are agreeable. Selectwoman Knibee would like to decide on Monday night at the special meeting if money will be spent on the drawing for State of the Town Meeting. She and Selectman Magee agreed that a decision should be made; if no quorum you go and get the drawing, if the vote is "no" then honor the vote and defer to the Committees decision. Selectman Berry made a motion that if there is no quorum then the Temporary Town Manager is authorized to proceed with funds for the drawings to be drafted and if the committee votes "no" then there will be no drawings sketched for the State of the Town Meeting. Selectwoman Rosenzweig seconds the motion. Chairman Hunter abstains. All agreed and the motion carries. Mr. Murray stated it would be crucial to get plans as it will take a 3 week period before a solid figure can be derived from the drawings.

FINANCIAL PLANNING FOR FY '09 AND BEYOND

- A. Revenues
- B. Expenses

CONSENT AGENDA

The Chairman read the consent items and asked for a motion to approve. Selectman Rosenzweig moved to approve all items and Selectman Magee seconded; all agreed. No discussion followed.

- 6) Committee Appointment, Historic District Commission, Kathryn A. Acebo-Bachmann, Alternate Member, Term to expire 6/30/10
- 7) Disposal of surplus equipment, Highway Department
- 8) Confidential Request for relief of Transfer Station fees.
- 9) Relocation of Melanoma Foundation gift from Veterans Field to MacPherson Field.

Chairman Hunter stated the reason for the change of location was the original spot on Veterans field might be built on at some point so it became necessary to find a new location.

The Chairman asked for a motion to go into executive session. Selectman Magee moved that the Board go into executive session for the discussion of compensation policy and go back into the regular meeting only to adjourn. Selectwoman Rosenzweig seconded. All ayes

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Selectwoman Rosenzweig notified that Board that Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) was doing a survey and putting link to survey on the Acton website.

Chairman Hunter gave notice of a Steering Committee meeting on Thursday at 7:00pm.

The Town Manager stated that the Comprehensive Community Plan (CCP) will be on the state of the town meeting on November 13th. All materials from the schools and municipal side need to be camera ready Thursday at noon. They will be brought to the printer at noon on Friday.

Selectwomen Rosenzweig and Knibbe will interview and review the consultants. They would like to introduce the idea, look for volunteers and if possible introduce the consultant. Chairman Hunter

stated it is so important to attract people and have them involved from the beginning. Mr. Bartl will be working the CCP plan for the staff. Steve Barrett, Mark Hald and Jean Flemming will work the Counsel on Aging (COA) project. Steve Barret, Chief Craig and Chairman Hunter will be the point people on the Fire Station Project.

Selectwoman Rosenzweig announced that the Chinese Language Dancing School will do a presentation at the high school on Saturday.

Selectwoman Knibbe asked that we put a place holder for sewers to be presented at Town Meeting. We will need something. Selectman Magee is not sure we will have something ready. Chairman Hunter briefed on his 3 day Veterans conference he has been attending.

MINUTES PENDING VOTES

Regular Meeting Minutes, Sept. 17, 2007 and September 29 Special Meeting Minutes

PENDING COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

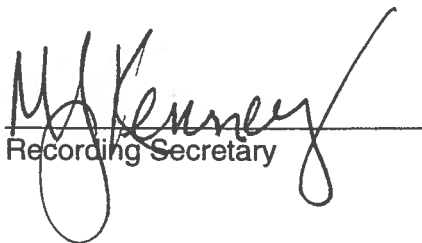
Mike Fisher, Transportation Advisory Committee

OCTOBER 22

Land/water Use Study Committee Presentation, CPA Discussion, Audubon Hill Sewage Disposal System Repair, NARA Park Dog Leash Regulation review, Traffic on Maple Street

NOVEMBER 5 & 19

DECEMBER 3 & 17


Recording Secretary


Andrew D. Magee, Clerk

3 December 2007
Date