

Town of Sudbury ~ Finance Committee
Minutes of Meeting
Monday – October 19, 2009
7:30pm – Flynn Building (Thompson Room)

Present: Chairman Chuck Woodard, Joan Carlton, Jamie Gossels (arrived 7:36pm) Bill Kneeland, Marty Ragonas, Jim Rao, Robert Stein, and Sheila Stewart (arrived 7:35pm)

Absent: Bob Jacobson

Item 1: Approve Meeting Minutes

The committee was asked to approve the minutes from the September 21 & September 22 meetings. The committee was advised that Jim Rao had emailed some corrections earlier.

VOTED: On approve the minutes of the September 21 & September 22, 2009 meetings, with the understanding that the suggested changes will be made. Motion made by Joan Carlton and second by Bill Kneeland. On vote, motion carries 6 in support, 0 opposed, and 3 absent (Gossels, Jacobson, Stewart).

Item 2: Transfers and Other Business

Transfers: There were no for the committee to take action on.

Other Business: Chuck Woodard wanted to remind everyone that no “netting” should be done on the budget spreadsheets. He also reminded everyone that the salary figures should include all monetary compensation, including stipends.

Bill Kneeland informed the committee that he would be attending the breakfast at Minuteman Regional High School. They will be discussing the school’s future renovation project.

Jaime Gossels stated that a liaison meeting was held with SPS, and there are a few questions. The first question regards what the purpose is for the schools for providing the head count figures. The concern is that these figures can be misconstrued. Jim Rao stated that the figures can be used for benchmarking. He believes there is more relevant information that can be provided. Chuck Woodard stated that this can be a useful statistic when comparing the same cost center year to year. It is not used as a benchmarking mechanism to compare against other departments/cost centers.

Susan Iuliano, SPS school committee, thinks there could be a more useful benchmarking figure that could be used. SPS includes the custodians and cafeteria personnel in their counts, and these are contracted services positions with LSRHS. She believes the head count figures can be more confusing than helpful.

Chuck Woodard stated that the purpose of asking for this information is to raise questions and get answers. Susan Iuliano stated that there are a lot of fluctuations that cause these figures to change each year.

John Brackett, SPS Superintendent, ask what the committee was trying to track over a period of time. He believes everyone could come up with a better matrix. Jim Rao recommended tracking the cost per 1,000 students. Chuck Woodard stated that tracking the head count is also useful in many ways.

The next question regarded how the cost centers should be reporting the number of sick days used. John Brackett stated they keep track of each individual employee's time. Different unions get a different number of days. Chuck Woodard stated that they want to see the total number of days used during the fiscal year. He was surprised by the number of days the employees are allowed in the recent contract settlements. Chuck Woodard stated that they are not trying to create additional work for the cost centers.

The committee also discussed the section of the warrant that lists employees who made over \$80,000. They discussed the possibility of raising the base salary amount. Maureen Valente reminded the committee that this must be determined by the FinCom, since it falls under their section in the warrant.

Item 3: BRTF Recommendations Update

Maureen Valente provided the committee with an updated expense report. She is trying complete as many fields in the spreadsheet as she can. She will be asking the Board of Selectmen to approve the revenue report at their meeting tomorrow night.

The committee discussed having the BRTF's final report show under the FinCom's section on the town's website. Maureen Valente stated that they need to obtain the selectmen's permission before doing so. She recommended that the committee take a vote tonight on their position and forward a Notice of Decision to Selectmen.

VOTED: Motion to request approval from the Board of Selectmen to post the Budget Review Task Force's Final Report under the Finance Committee section of the town's website. Motion made by Jim Rao and seconded by Bill Kneeland. On vote, motion carries 8 in support, 0 opposed, and 1 absent (Jacobson).

Chuck Woodard asked the committee members to state what they believe to be the 5 highest priority recommendations. The following is what each committee member listed:

Jamie Gossels	Joan Carlton	Jim Rao
School Admin Consolidation	GIC Insurance	Rt. 20 Sewer
Rt. 20 Sewer	School Admin Consolidation	Energy Policy
Energy Policy	Rt. 20 Sewer	School Admin Consolidation
Regionalization of Town Services	Energy Policy	
Revenue Expectations - Pilot	Grant Writing	

Bill Kneeland	Sheila Stewart	Marty Ragonis
School Consolidation	Rt. 20 Sewer	School Admin Consolidation
Rt. 20 Sewer	School Admin Consolidation	Rt. 20 Sewer
Energy Policy	Energy Policy	GIC
Regionalization of Town Services	Regionalization of Town Services	Energy Policy
GIC Insurance	GIC Insurance	Regionalization of Town Services

Robert Stein	Bob Jacobson <i>(provided via email sent to Chuck Woodard)</i>	Chuck Woodard
School Admin Consolidation	GIC Insurance	School Admin Consolidation
Regionalization of Public Safety	Consolidate Facility Management	Regionalization of Public Safety
Regionalization of Road Work	Regionalization of Public Safety	Regionalization of Road Work
GIC Insurance	Rt. 20 Sewer Feasibility Study	GIC Insurance
Health Plan Contribution Rates		Rt. 20 Sewer

Chuck Woodard consolidated the results into a single list on behalf of the entire FinCom that was agreeable to all present, as follows:

- 1. Consolidation of school administrations.**
- 2. Installation of sewers on Route 20 as part of an effort to increase the size of the commercial sector and therefore commercial property taxes.**
- 3. Regionalization of the management of Town services.**
- 4. Movement of health benefits delivery from a local plan to the State plan (the “GIC”).**
- 5. Implementation of specific revenue and cost saving energy opportunities.**

Item 5: Budget Hearings and Additional Budget Submissions Timetable

Chuck Woodard reviewed the information that was discussed at the September 21st meeting. He stated that the way the past budget hearings were held caused a lot of revisions to be done to the budgets by the cost centers.

Maureen Valente reminded the committee that the town’s annual town meeting and local elections are set by the town’s bylaws. The elections usually take place a week prior to the annual town meeting.

Chuck Woodard reminded the committee that they need to agree on a budget hearings schedule by their December meeting. He stated he will create a revised hearing schedule and will circulate it to the committee via email.. He reminded the committee members that they should send any concerns they might have with the schedule to just him. He reminded the committee members not to use the “reply to all” when responding to emails.

Item 6: Content of the FinCom Section of the Warrant

Chuck Woodard stated that he would like to cut down on the number of pages in the warrant, by reducing the section of the town’s General Government Budget section. Maureen Valente agreed with him on this matter, and stated that the information that is eliminated from the warrant can be made available to the public via the town’s website.

Marty Ragonas asked the committee to consider including a 2-page summary from the BRTF. She stated that she could have this summary prepared and have it circulated to the committee within the next month.

There being no further business, the committee adjourned at 9:20pm.