

**Belmont Warrant Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**Final**  
**January 30, 2013, 7:30 p.m.**  
**Chenery Community Room**

Present: Chair Lynch; Members Allison, Baghdady, Bruschi, Dash, Gammill, Grob, Helgen, Libenson, Manjikian, McLaughlin, Millane, Sarno; Selectman Jones; School Committee Representative Slap

Members Absent: Epstein

Chair Lynch called the meeting to order at 7:31 pm.

***Minuteman Update***

Member McLaughlin informed the WC that three challenges were identified at the recent meeting with Minuteman:

- Adding member towns to the Minuteman District.
- Obtaining a higher state reimbursement for vocational facilities.
- Ensuring that out-of-district towns pay a fair share of operating and capital expenses.

Member McLaughlin stated that legislation has been filed to increase the MSBA's reimbursement for vocational facilities. He noted that Belmont's assessment is down \$92K as a result of fewer students attending this year. Member McLaughlin noted that non-member towns have enrolled more students in the freshman class than member towns. He then reviewed some of the capital expenditures that Minuteman may need to undertake.

Mr. Kale added that Belmont's message regarding the size of the new facility and the non-member fiscal contributions has been made clear to the new project manager. There is movement toward identifying additional money from the state. Minuteman has obtained a grant to address the future of the school should major changes be required. Finally, the Deputy Commissioner informed him that there is a proposal to reduce the tuition for non-member towns. This is something he will keep an eye on.

Member Bruschi noted that Belmont has been concerned about subsidizing non-member students via tuition rates. She said if non-member tuition rates were lowered, it would be a huge hit for the member towns.

***Town Financial Update and FY13 Quarter 2***

Mr. Kale informed the WC that he is working closely with department heads and with the School Department on the budget. Regarding state aid, he said that it is not clear if the

House of Representatives or the Senate will agree with the Governor to increase income taxes, which would allow for additional state aid.

Mr. Kale reviewed revenue numbers. He also reviewed the Minuteman assessment, the Capital Budget Committee allocation and the retirement assessment. He expects the retirement board will support a 6.7% increase, as projected in FY14. Mr. Kale said a balanced budget will be presented to the Board of Selectmen on Monday, February 11, 2013.

Mr. Kale distributed several budget handouts, which he reviewed in detail. He then reviewed the revenue numbers for FY13, noting that they are on track. He explained why the ambulance revenues appear to be high. Member Brusch suggested that, given the amounts, perhaps meals and excise taxes could be tracked separately. Mr. Kale agreed.

### ***School Financial Update – FY13 Quarter 2***

SC Representative Slap noted that things look to be on track, so far, for this fiscal year to end with a small positive balance. She reviewed the salary line items, noting why there are deficits. Transportation and fringe benefits also show deficits. Utilities/maintenance seem to on track, so far. Regarding SPED spending, this was offset by additional circuit breaker funds.

She then reviewed the grants and revolving accounts, noting that more detail will be forthcoming for the Quarter 3 review. Fee-based programs are now being tracked, she said.

The WC briefly discussed the school financial update. SC Rep Slap will research the issue of the additional aides and the cost of their fringe benefits.

### ***Letter to Town Meeting (TM) Members***

Chair Lynch distributed the revised letter that will be sent to TM members. He welcomed edits from the WC.

### ***WC Report Template – Discuss and Finalize***

Chair Lynch said he received two additional suggestions to the WC draft template.

One suggestion was to look more closely at staffing numbers. Member Millane said this might be helpful to look at trends in staffing over the years. Member Libenson said that this would be useful on the education side, but he said he is not sure it would yield interesting data on the town side.

Chair Lynch said he thought this would be valuable for the education side and certainly valuable for the larger departments on the town side. Member Brusch noted that the

larger student population affects not only the Education side but also the Recreation Department and the Library.

Mr. Kale said the number of FTEs is not always exact depending on when the snapshot is taken. Member Sarno spoke to the complexity of looking at staffing numbers – he said it gets complicated when analyzing demand and output data. He said this will be a major undertaking to access and assess this data. Member Dash noted that the WC did this analysis two years ago, but not again last year. Member Allison said that this data was meaningful when it was carefully collected at the Education subcommittee level last year. She said the data has to be gathered appropriately.

Chair Lynch said that the other suggestion was to look at “all in cost” numbers, e.g., capital costs, pension costs, etc. Member Allison suggested breaking this down by department to capture the real and full costs of providing a function to the town. She said this would involve breaking down the following: building services, pensions, debt repayment, DPW transfers, and town services provided to schools.

Member Libenson offered that, in general, the purpose of data collection is to inform choices. He said the data analysis around the Education side was useful and important. He said he would not suggest diving into data analysis unless it informs TM in a meaningful way. Member Allison replied that some services are provided expensively and some are provided economically; it is useful to know this information.

Member Millane spoke to how this data was collected in the past and agreed to do some preliminary work.

### ***Community Preservation Act (CPA) Projects – Preliminary Review***

Chair Lynch noted that nine projects will be submitted to Town Meeting. He said the WC will weigh in on those that will have an impact on the operating budget now or potentially in the future.

### ***Revised WC Spring Calendar***

Chair Lynch distributed the WC Spring Meeting Calendar.

### ***Approval of Meeting Minutes***

The WC offered edits to draft meeting minutes distributed by Chair Lynch. The WC approved the minutes of January 9, 2013, as amended, with two abstentions.

### ***Updates: BOS, School Committee, Planning Board***

**Board of Selectmen:** Selectman Jones noted that the Warrant is open. The Board is meeting with the SC. The Board will begin meeting with department heads soon. The Underwood Pool meeting will be held on Thursday, January 31st.

**Planning Board:** Member Baghdady noted that the church in Waverley Square has been demolished. The builder will likely build three two-family houses on that lot. Hopefully, he said, the landmark by-law will be in place before the next historic building is sold.

The Selectman and PB are leaning toward imposing a moratorium on marijuana dispensaries until the state has issued its regulations. The moratorium will likely hold until June of 2014.

**School Committee:** SC Rep Slap observed that the SC will not fill Dan Scharfman's seat, as there is not sufficient time to do so before the April election. The SC extended Dr. Kingston's contract for another year.

### ***Public Contributions***

There were none.

### ***Adjournment***

Member McLaughlin moved to adjourn at 9:31 pm.

Submitted by Lisa Gibalerio  
WC Recording Secretary