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**Town of Belmont**  
Warrant Committee  
Education Subcommittee Meeting  
Tuesday February 16, 2016 6 pm  
Town Hall Conference Room 1

Attending: Roy Epstein (RE), Jim Gammill (JG), Anne Helgen (AH), Robert Sarno (RS)

1. JG called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm.
2. The subcommittee discussed the FY2016 Q2 actual versus budget reports provided by the School Department.

JG said that the pattern was similar to recent years, with a projected overage in the SPED accounts to be offset by savings in the compensation and other regular education accounts. He noted that the School Committee Chair said at the last full Warrant Committee meeting that unlike the past two years, no SC request for a WC reserve fund transfer is anticipated for this year.

AH said that the projected over-budget amount for the SPED tuitions, \$700,000, seemed big, especially since this item received attention last spring in preparing the FY 2016 budget. She also noted the favorable trend in the other SPED accounts.

RE suggested that the subcommittee consider report presentations that included a comparison with the prior year. RS shared an analysis of SPED account growth estimates that compared actuals from FY 2010 through FY 2015, plus the actual for FY 2016.

3. The subcommittee discussed what requests if any should be made of the School Department at this time, noting that the FY 2017 budget presentation is scheduled for February 24th. The discussion concluded with JG offering to ask for the current payroll data and to remind the School Department that the subcommittee will be looking for responses to the eight recommendations in its FY 2016 report.

4. The subcommittee discussed how maintenance is to be presented, given the recent consolidation that placed responsibility for maintenance and repairs at six school buildings and the School Administration building with the Town's Facilities Department. The members will await the presentation of the Town and School budgets to resolve this.

5. The subcommittee discussed its work plan for the spring and possible changes in the scope and structure of its report. RS provided historical information about the recent structure of the report. RE said a shorter report in many cases may have more impact than a longer report. JG said a review of compensation trends, both in Belmont and in other districts, will be timely this spring. RS suggested that the 30+ "programs" as officially used by the School District could be organized into a much smaller number of groups, and that more historical data about those groups could be provided. AH said comparison with other towns is helpful and cited the compensation study done by Arlington in 2014 as insightful.

The subcommittee members agreed to reflect on this discussion and to share ideas about how to structure this year's report. They also agreed to meet within a week of the School Department's budget presentation, in order to prepare its questions, so that the School Department will have time to respond and allow for the subcommittee to meet its own deadline.

6. The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 pm.

(The next meeting will be held Monday February 29, 2016 at 7:30 pm, Town Hall Conference Room 1.)