

Belmont Warrant Committee Meeting Minutes
FINAL
May 19, 2010, 7:30 p.m.
Chenery Middle School Community Room

Present: Chair Curtis; Members Becker, Callanan, Dash, Epstein, Hofmann, Libenson, Lynch, Manjikian, Smith; BOS Chair Jones; School Committee Chair Rittenburg

Members Absent: Allison, Brusch, McLaughlin and Millane

The meeting was called to order at 7:33 pm by Chair Curtis.

Chair Curtis began by noting that there would be additional agenda item which would be addressed first.

Town Clerk Salary

Town Clerk Cushman and Treasurer Carman appeared before the WC to discuss the salaries of elected officials. Ms. Cushman stated that the process for determining the salary, and the result, are flawed. She cited a personnel study which revealed that the Town Treasurer and Clerk positions should be at a level 18. Mr. Carman offered to email the personnel study memo out to WC members. Ms. Cushman noted that if the current Clerk's salary stands, the Assistant Town Clerk salary will be close to the Town Clerk's salary as soon as next year. She then reviewed a document which showed that the Town Clerk salary has been lowered back to what it was in 1999.

Chair Curtis asked whether there would likely be an amendment put forth at next week's Town Meeting. Ms. Cushman replied, yes, to expect an amendment. Member Hofmann noted that the Treasurer is paid \$55K less than the school's Finance Director and that if the Town Clerk's salary stands, she will be the lowest paid department head in town. Mr. Carman noted that the Treasurer in Belmont also collects taxes and that his position is often compared with just Treasurer only positions. He stated that the salaries should not be looked upon differently because these are elected positions.

Nominating Committee Appointments

Chair Curtis explained that every year the WC nominates a Chair, a Vice Chair, and a Secretary. The Chair, he said, appoints a Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee meets over the summer and reports their nominations in September. The Nominating Committee will be: Members Libenson, Millane, and Brusch.

Summer Projects

Chair Curtis noted that the WC will meet again after TM on June 16 or 23. He will post a pre -TM meeting, in case it is needed.

Summer Projects, he said, are various projects tackled (during the summer months) by an ad hoc group of WC members. Chair Curtis and the WC identified the following potential projects to be explored this summer (the person who proposed the item is listed in parentheses):

- 2012 Budget – programmatic budgeting approach continued (Jones)
- Education Subcommittee to work with the Superintendent, new Business Manager, and school committee on new budget book (Brusch)
- Pension issues (joining state system, retirement board, COLA) (Brusch)
- Insurance Reforms (Brusch)
- Minuteman Study Group – Member Callanan asked the BOS if this group would stay in existence given that there is a regional agreement task force studying the member town agreement. Henry Hall is the representative but, as he no longer lives in Belmont, the study group could attend some of the meetings during the summer.
- Automated systems across departments (Treasurer, Accounting, Light Department) looking at credit card payments, improved technology, etc. (Jones)
- Looking at other communities to see how they handle the extraordinary Special Education mandated costs and specifically how it is dealt with within the budget process (Rittenburg)
- School department maintenance repairs over 20 years – to ensure the schools are taking care of their capital investments – what is actually spent vs. what is budgeted (Lynch)
- Look at the FY10 school budget and see where money was actually spent – this will be a good starting point for the FY12 school budget (Lynch)
- CORE services – to assess what we spend money on and to see if there are services we might not want to continue supporting – (Callanan)
- 5 Year Fiscal Plan for the town – (Callanan)
- Structural change list – what suggestions merit investigation – for example, regionalization as it relates to Public Safety – (Libenson)
- Recommendation review of structural changes – it would be good to report out to the community on progress with structural issues – highlight significant areas that are being reviewed – (Lynch) (BOS Chair Jones indicated that he intends to do a quarterly report on what is happening with structural reforms)
- Trash pick up issue – as it relates to the past override (Hofmann) – BOS Chair Jones noted that Town Counsel said there is no problem with changing the trash pick-up in Belmont, however, the Assessor and Treasurer say different things as there may have been an ethical promise made to residents at the time of the override
- Privatizing ice rink – to see what if anything is possible (Becker) (BOS Chair Jones noted that he believes the Recreational Department/Commission can explore the various issues e.g. location and parking)
- Refine and streamline the WC report for next year (Epstein & Conti)

Chair Curtis requested that WC members email him any other ideas.

Minutes

The minutes of March 17 were approved with two abstentions.

The minutes of March 24 were approved with two abstentions.

The minutes of April 7 were approved with one abstention.

The minutes of April 14 were approved with two abstentions.

The minutes of April 28 were approved with two abstentions.

The minutes of May 5 were approved with one abstention.

The minutes of May 12 were approved with two abstentions.

Other

The new Open Meeting requirements will be reviewed by Member Lynch at the June WC meeting.

Member Hofmann moved to adjourn at 8:26 pm.

Submitted by Lisa Gibalerio

WC Recording Secretary