

Warrant Committee Meeting Minutes June 22, 2005

Handout(s) distributed tonight are:

1. Summer Subcommittee Ideas for Summer 05

Member(s) absent: Solomon, Callanan, Curtis, Doblin

Also present: Selectman Will Brownsberger, Town Accountant Hagg, and DPW Director Peter Castanino

Chairman Widmer called the meeting to order at 7:36 PM.

Reserve Fund Transfers

DPW Director Castanino gave an overview of his request. Member Hofmann added the Public Works Subcommittee recommends approval of this transfer.

- Member Hofmann made a motion, Member Heigham seconded said motion, and the Committee unanimously voted to transfer \$393,093 from the Warrant Committee Reserve Fund to the Department of Public Works.
- Member Hofmann made a motion, Member Hobbs seconded said motion, and the Committee unanimously voted to transfer \$16,000 from the Warrant Committee Reserve Fund to the Fire Department.

For the Cemetery, Town Accountant Hagg believes the funds were not originally encumbered. The funds went back into the General Fund a few years ago, but the Town-wide mailing to encourage the people to buy plots in the Belmont Cemetery is needed.

- Member Hofmann made a motion, Member Tillotson seconded said motion, and the Committee unanimously voted to transfer \$3,520 from the Warrant Committee Reserve Fund to the Cemetery Department.

Acceptance of Minutes

The Committee discussed the minutes of the April 20, 2005 meeting.

- Member Hofmann made a motion, Member Oates seconded said motion, and the Committee unanimously voted to accept the minutes as amended of the April 20, 2005 meeting.

The Committee discussed the minutes of the May 4, 2005 meeting.

- Member Hofmann made a motion, Member Oates seconded said motion, and the Committee unanimously voted to accept the minutes as amended of the May 4, 2005 meeting.

The Committee discussed the minutes of the May 18, 2005 meeting.

- *Member Hofmann made a motion, Member Oates seconded said motion, and the Committee unanimously voted to accept the minutes as amended of the May 18, 2005 meeting.*

The Committee discussed the minutes of the June 1, 2005 meeting.

- *Member Hofmann made a motion, Member Hobbs seconded said motion, and the Committee unanimously voted to accept the minutes as amended of the June 1, 2005 meeting.*

The Committee discussed the minutes of the June 13, 2005 meeting.

- *Member Hofmann made a motion, Member Heigham seconded said motion, and the Committee unanimously voted to accept the minutes as amended of the June 13, 2005 meeting.*

Nominating Committee

Chairman Widmer noted Members Brusch, Doblin, and Oates will come back to the Warrant Committee in the fall with their recommendations.

Priorities and Summer Tasks (Handout 1)

Chairman Widmer wants the Warrant Committee to take a step back and discuss the projects either that have been specifically on the agenda or have come up during the year. This summer is an opportunity to plan for next year and try to make some progress on these projects. Town Administrator Younger and the Board of Selectmen are in support of pursuing these ideas.

Member Brusch broke Handout 1 down into three categories: (A) already ongoing, (B) summer 05, and (C) begin now and continue through the year.

Try To Complete In Summer Of 05

B1 Potential Regionalization Area: Members White, Doblin, and Heigham have volunteered to create a list of potential regionalization areas for the Board of Selectmen (Item B1).

B2 Computer Leasing (computers, servers): Members Fitzgerald, Paolillo, and Oates

B3 Training program for Warrant Committee members: Town Accountant Hagg, Member Curtis, and the Executive Committee (Brusch, White, Jones, and Widmer) – This was suggested from new members to train incoming members on the Warrant Committee's role as a whole and the Subcommittee.

B4 FY06 Agenda: Member Curtis and the Executive Committee

B5 Financial Software/Part 1: Members Fitzgerald, Paolillo, and Tillotson, and Town Accountant Hagg – We would like to see an RFP formulated and, hopefully, hire a consultant in the early fall.

B6 Pension Obligation Bonds: Members Hofmann and Hobbs, and Treasurer Carmen – Chairman Widmer recommends that as a Warrant Committee we drop it from the list. He will talk to Treasurer Carmen to see if he wants to raise this issue. However, Members Hobbs and Hofmann are still interested in looking at it.

B7 ID all sources of money coming to the Town: Town Accountant Hagg and Members Bruschi, Hofmann, and Gibson (or a School Committee member)

To Begin Now, But Will Continue During The Year

C1 Asset Management for Rink: Town Administrator Younger will work on this with his Board.

C1 Asset Management – Pavement Management, Sewer/Water, User Fees: Vice Chair Jones and Members Hobbs and Tillotson

C1 Asset Management – Use of Town Property by Private Groups (except Rink) and Creating Guidelines for "Gifts": Members Curtis, Fitzgerald, Tillotson, Oates, and a School Committee Member – Vice Chair Jones offered the Sewer Stormwater Committee to look into water reuse for the fields that Member Fitzgerald is working on. It can be between \$10K - \$18K to build and run the well.

C2 Financial Software/Part 2: will be same group as Part 1 when needed

C3 Use of Overtime: Town Administrator Younger, Members Doblin, Paolillo, and Hofmann – Member Hobbs asked to combine this issue with outsourcing.

C4 Review of tax-exempt properties: Members Callanan, Hobbs, and Heigham will work with the new Assessing Administrator.

C5 Study reasons for Minuteman's per pupil cost: Member Callanan will be the liaison with Minuteman.

Outsourcing payroll is being reviewed through the financial software package project. We will hold on that until we get further into the project.

Member Fitzgerald said the goal of the ESCo Committee is to look at a number of energy conservation practices as a town entity. We came up with something that will be cash neutral as a town entity. The cost of the enhancements is roughly \$130K. Over a 10-year period, the savings will be \$260K for non-school town entities. For Schools, the cost is \$1.8 million with a return of \$1.6 million. Both costs do not include finance charges. This is a case where the town is one asset owned by the taxpayers. What is being done here make a lot of sense, as far as a lower costs long-term. Overall, Member Fitzgerald personally thinks this is an issue of how the town is recognized within the financial constraints of these

buildings. It offers many benefits as far as electronic ballasts, energy efficient toilets, energy controls, and standardization of fixtures. The contract signature is scheduled for June 30 with Noresco.

Member Heigham asked if on these savings, the inclusion of finance costs will make the Town owe money. Member Fitzgerald said there is someone looking into making it cash neutral with rates around 3.5% down to 3.2%.

Member Tillotson pointed out that we have had three unanticipated and unique things recently (i.e., Burbank oil spill, Concord Ave. property purchase, and the rink). Are we being as efficient as we can be with our funds? Do we have the right checks and balances in place when an emergency comes up? Are we dealing with the right people? We have a great opportunity in front of us with a change in administration.

Vice Chair Jones thinks that two of those were critical assets that were "let to run to failure." In the end, there are savings in getting them repaired in the proper order so they do not become future emergencies.

Member Paolillo asked what the contingency plans are for emergencies, and what is the protocol around those issues? Selectman Brownsberger answered that general management takes responsibility for these unplanned issues. We have an emergency planning committee that takes care of public safety contingency plans.

Member Heigham believes on the financial issues, the most we can do to be prepared is to have the appropriate reserves.

Member Fitzgerald thinks it would be helpful to see what the Warrant Committee's feelings are in taking the additional savings from the non-school entities and putting it towards the schools. Members Hofmann and Paolillo think we need to go forward because it is for the benefit of the entire town.

Town Accountant Hagg wants to be able to allocate back some of the school's share of the expense allocation on the end of year report the School files with the State. The Committee agreed.

Other

Member Heigham made a motion and it was unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:23 PM.

Selectman Brownsberger congratulated the Warrant Committee on the work they have done this year.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristina Frizzell, Recording Clerk