

**MINUTES**  
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**BOARD OF SELECTMEN**  
**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 7, 2006**  
**SPECIAL JOINT SESSION**  
**SELECTMEN'S MEETING ROOM, TOWN HALL**  
**7:30 PM**

A special combined meeting of the Board with the Warrant Committee, School Committee, and Capital Budget Committee was called to order at 7:30 PM. All members were present. Town Administrator Tom Younger and Assistant Town Administrator Jeff Conti were also present.

Chairman Solomon explained that the purpose of the meeting is to discuss possible initiatives that arose out of discussions of the Warrant Committee. The goal is not to discuss solutions but rather to define the initiatives, who should be addressing them, what resources are needed, what the timeline should be, and when this group should meet again to discuss solutions presented by initiative-specific working groups. The initiatives are:

- \* Health Insurance – Cost of employee & retiree health insurance
- \* Regionalization/Collaboration – combining services with other municipalities, including legal and labor issues
- \* Outsourcing – contracting services rather than providing them in-house
- \* Waste management – including yard waste and recyclables, and a possible transfer station
- \* Consolidating school and town departments – facilities maintenance, IT, finance offices, human resources
- \* New sources of revenue – including economic development of underused property
- \* 20-year asset management plan – planned maintenance of roads, water/sewer and buildings
- \* Energy/resource savings – town organization to oversee energy and resource use
- \* Systems and process efficiencies – finding more cost efficient ways of doing things, such as the new software project
- \* Defining core activities – identifying services that need not be provided with town funds vs. mandated services

There was discussion of a suggestion by Selectman Brownsberger to combine some areas that might be related under the aegis of one working group: regionalization, consolidation, outsourcing, and systems and process efficiency. Warrant Committee member Mark Paolillo suggested they should be kept separate at least at the beginning.

Capital Budget Committee member Jennifer Fallon suggested that the first step in these four areas should be to obtain the input of key Town and school staff.

It was agreed that all groups will give a progress report back to the larger group in September.

#### *Health Insurance*

Chairman Solomon noted that work has already been done in this area. This is on the list because of its importance and the amount of potential savings. Warrant Committee member and Healthcare Insurance Committee chair Phil Curtis said the next step is implementation. Some of it involves negotiation with labor, but there are other aspects that could be looked at administratively. The Town could benefit from the expertise of the experts who served on the Health Insurance Committee. It was agreed to have that Committee look in a more focused way at the administrative issues. Mr. Curtis will convene the group for this purpose.

#### *Regionalization/Collaboration*

Mr. Paolillo and Selectman Firenze will visit the board meetings of other communities and talk about this. They will serve on this working group. School Committee members Kathy Miller and Ann Rittenburg will serve representing the schools because this will include lower-level “coordination” and “collaboration” efforts that might affect the schools. Mr. Paolillo will convene the group.

#### *Outsourcing*

Warrant Committee members Lynne Doblin and Liz Allison, and School Committee member Scott Stratford will serve on this working group. Ms. Doblin will convene the group.

#### *Waste Management*

Chairman Solomon noted that the Solid Waste/Recycling Committee has been reactivated. They will work on this issue together with Warrant Committee member Robie White. Public Works Director Peter Castanino will convene the group.

#### *Consolidating School and Town Departments*

Warrant Committee member Mike Widmer, School Committee members Diane Stafford and Elizabeth Gibson, Mr. Younger, and Capital Budget Committee chair and Warrant Committee member Pat Bruschi will serve on this group. Mr. Widmer will convene the group.

#### *New Sources of Revenue*

Town resident Roy Epstein raised this matter before the Warrant Committee and will be asked to participate in the working group along with Selectman Firenze, Warrant Committee members Jim Heigham and Geof Tillotson, and Ms. Fallon. Mr. Heigham will convene the group.

#### *20-year asset management plan*

Warrant Committee chair Ralph Jones, Ms. Bruschi, resident Rob Stafford, and Selectman Brownsberger will serve on this group. Mr. Jones will convene the group.

#### *Energy/resource savings*

It was suggested that members of Sustainable Belmont participate in this group, specifically Jan Kruse and Raffi Manjikian. Ms. Fallon and Chairman Solomon will also serve. Chairman Solomon will convene the group.

#### *Systems and process efficiencies*

Mr. Younger, Mr. Paolillo, and Selectman Firenze will serve on this group. Mr. Younger will convene the group.

#### *Defining Core Activities*

It was noted that Mr. Heigham has compiled a list of what services and positions the Town is mandated to provide and fill. There was also a Vision 21 survey on this. Ms. Doblin and Mr. Stratford pointed out that citizen input is very helpful and very important in determining what is or should be a core activity. Ralph Jones said the Town should get public input and then tell the public how much it costs to provide the services and ask what they are willing to pay. Warrant Committee member Peg Callanan volunteered to work on this. The Selectmen will discuss this further on Monday and figure out where to go with this issue area.

Chairman Solomon asked about the minimum information that will be expected in the reports from the work groups in September.

- A definition of their scope of work including what areas will be discussed
- What facts are needed?
- What opportunities does each area present and what is the probability of implementation?
- What are the next steps and what is a realistic timeframe for implementation?

Mr. Conti will distribute the list of appointments, goals and conveners.

It was clarified that all these committees will need to post meetings and keep minutes to comply with the Open Meeting Law.

Resident John Owens asked how this will actually get implemented.

Chairman Solomon said that will be one of the questions the working groups have to answer. It was clarified that this effort is not about cutting the budget, though some of the recommendations could be incorporated into the budget.

The Board adjourned at 9:37 PM.

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Thomas G. Younger  
Town Administrator