

BELMONT WARRANT COMMITTEE FY08 MEETING MINUTES  
FINAL  
APRIL 9, 2008, 7:30 P.M.  
CHENERY MIDDLE SCHOOL COMMUNITY ROOM

Present: Chair Curtis; Members Allison, Callanan, Epstein, Heigham, Jones, Lynch, McLaughlin, Oates, White, and Widmer; BOS Chair Firenze; School Committee Chair Bowe

Town Administrator Younger, Assistant Town Administrator Conti, Town Accountant Hagg, Town Treasurer Carman

Absent Members: Bruschi, Hofmann, and Paolillo

The meeting was called to order at 7:34 pm by Chair Curtis.

Chair Curtis began the meeting by informing WC members that the WC must submit its report for TM. This report consists of subcommittee reports. These subcommittee reports need to be reviewed by Chair Curtis this weekend in order to be delivered to Assistant Town Administrator Conti by Monday, April 14.

Review of Warrant Articles (continued)

ARTICLE 9: Position Classification and Compensation Plan - Diane Crimmins

HR Director Crimmins: This is a standard article appearing in the Warrant every year. Based on the position study that was completed 6 years ago, this classification is a hierarchy; it is non-discriminatory in nature and defensible in court. The Classification and Compensation Plan gets updated every year. There are only 4 changes on classification since last year's TM: 3 positions have been upgraded. HR Director and Town Accountant were upgraded (from 18 to 20) as a result of additional job duties being made permanent, and the Community Development Director position was upgraded (from a 20 to 22) as the CDD took on more duties when another position in Development was eliminated. The final change was the addition of an Administrative Secretary position from Grade 5 to non-union. The rates are determined by surveying similar positions in other communities as well as companies. This year's salaries are up 5% because of give-backs that resulted when health insurance was negotiated. Union positions have guaranteed step increases (start at step one and move upward) and once a non-union employee hits the mid-point of the salary range, subsequent raises are based on performance reviews only.

BOS Chair Firenze said he struggles with the fact that salary ranges continue to move upward and that increases are given to those who receive poor performance reviews (step positions).

Chair Curtis said that it may be a good idea to take a fresh look at the compensation scheme and its assumptions, but that it may not be appropriate for the WC to do so tonight. The WC needs to focus on Article 9.

Several WC members noted that Article 9 has been in effect since last July 1, 2007 and that the WC would like to opine on this article "proactively" as opposed to "retroactively." Ms. Crimmins noted that since the union contracts are settled for next year, the pay ranges are known and she can create a chart reflecting the 3.5% FY09 pay increases (which take effect July 1, 2008). Town Administrator Younger will present the FY09 Compensation Plan to the WC next week (4/16/2008), as Crimmins will be unavailable.

Ms. Crimmins will distribute an updated document and will be available to present Article 9 at Town Meeting.

Chair Curtis noted that it might be helpful to convene a group to review the Position Classification and Compensation scheme as was done with health insurance.

ARTICLE 16: MWRA Sewer/Stormwater Infiltration/Inflow Loan Program and  
ARTICLE 17: DEP Sewer/Stormwater Loan Program - Member Jones

Member Jones: Article 16 pertains to the MWRA loan program. Belmont is receiving funding (both in grant and loan form) for GIS work and increased modeling.

The WC moved to approve Article 16. The motion was passed unanimously.

Member Jones: Article 17 involves borrowing money (\$11.6M at 2% interest) for sewer and storm drain improvements and re-aligning for leaks to address flooding issues in the Winn Brook area and to replace 2 pumps stations on the Hill (to mitigate flooding).

The WC moved to approve Article 17. The motion was passed unanimously.

Member Jones will present Articles 16 and 17 at TM.

ARTICLE 18: Amendments to OBEP Trust Fund Enabling Legislation

Town Administrator Conti: This Article pertains to a change in language relating to the following: the town (not the retirement board) will pay for an actuarial study, which study will go into the town's annual report, while the retirement board will do the OPEB investing. Town Counsel felt that the language needed to be standardized. Member Allison: If the town's pension funds become managed by the state, would the local retirement board manage OPEB by itself? - is this a good idea? Town Accountant Hagg replied that the retirement board has more flexibility than the state. She added, that the tax-exempt status bears relevance as well. Member Jones suggested that perhaps Town Counsel should say why it requested the rewording and the WC can ask them if the language binds the town to Member Allison's concern.

Member Heigham moved that the WC recommend to dismiss Article 18 until further legal study and specific questions are answered by Town Counsel. The motion passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 5: Salaries of Elected Officials - Member Heigham

Member Heigham: A letter was sent to the Town Clerk stating that she should recommend 4% increase for her position (as opposed to the 8.6% increase) bringing her salary to \$80,697. There was no response to this letter. Member Widmer concurred that this request is consistent in following the practice in relationship to the midpoint of the range (4% raise after reaching the midpoint).

The WC moved to recommend the approval of Article 5 subject to revising the Town Clerk's salary to \$80,697. The motion passed with 9 WC members voting in favor, and 3 abstaining.

Reserve Fund Transfer for the Health Department

The Health Department has requested a reserve fund transfer for the amount of \$5K for its hazardous waste contract. The contract came in higher than expected as the cost of disposals and number of collections have gone up.

The WC moved to recommend the reserve fund transfer request of \$5K. The motion passed unanimously.

Minutes of Meetings from 3/19/08, 3/26/2008, and 4/2/2008

The minutes from 3/19/08 were approved as amended. The minutes of 3/26/08 and 4/2/08 were approved as is.

Other

ARTICLE 4: Budget Appropriation

This article will be discussed at the meeting on April 23rd.

Reports

The WC will hear a Capital Budget report next week 4/16/08.

The Planning Board will present to the WC next week 4/16/08.

ARTICLE 21: Amendments to Quarterly Tax Billing Legislation

This article will be decided on next week 4/16/08.

ARTICLE 25: Roads Stabilization Fund

It was advised that WC members read the email from Town Accountant Hagg pertaining to Article 25. The WC discussed how to ensure that the \$1M (voted on in 2001) from the operating budget continue to go towards the roads. It was the general consensus from the WC that this \$1M should definitely continue to fund the roads. BOS Chair Firenze concurred and will speak to this issue at TM.

The WC moved to approve Article 25.  
The motion passed unanimously.

Member Heigham moved that the WC adjourn at 9:15 pm.

Submitted by Lisa Gibalerio  
WC Recording Secretary