

MINUTES
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BOARD OF SELECTMEN
FEBRUARY 3, 2005
REGULAR SESSION

Call to Order

The Board convened in regular session at 7:34 a.m. in the Selectmen's Meeting Room of Town Hall. All members were present.

Warrant Committee members Ralph Jones, Pat Bruschi, Scott Stratford, Town Accountant Barbara Hagg and Kristina Frizzell also attended the meeting.

The Selectmen discussed the selection of readers of Warrant Motions at the February 7th Special Town Meeting.

The Selectmen invited C. Kenneth Strachan, General Manager of Municipal Benchmarking, LLC ("MB") to make a presentation on the Municipal Yardstick prepared for the Town by MB. Mr. Strachan described the sources of information for the data used as well as the reasons for selecting the 20 communities in the Yardstick. The Board discussed how Belmont varies from some of these 20 in its reporting of certain budget items to the state and the consequent difficulty in making true comparisons between Belmont and other towns. There were several places where the group asked Mr. Strachan to add a note to a chart or set of figures explaining how Belmont differed from most of the comparison group in a particular accounting practice.

The group agreed to drop the three least comparable towns of the twenty from the list and substitute three towns which Belmont more consistently compares itself to, although for purposes of MB's Yardstick these were not considered as comparable. The three towns added to the list are Lexington, Concord and Acton.

Mr. Strachan agreed to meet further with Mr. Firenze and with Ms. Hagg to fine tune the Yardstick to maximize its usefulness to the Town.

The Board next discussed the budget presentation Mr. Brownsberger and Mr. Widmer, Chair of the Warrant Committee, will make at the Special Town meeting on February 7.

The Selectmen talked about their interest in the Warrant and Capital Budget Committees reviewing and voting on the new Reserve Policy, before it is presented to Town Meeting either in a report or as a resolution on which Town meeting would vote.

The Board then reconfirmed its position that the Wellington School schematics should be paid for out of the Capital Endowment Fund.

The Selectmen agreed to cancel all their Thursday morning meetings scheduled through March because the Board's need for extra meeting time in the week has diminished.

The meeting adjourned at 9:58 a.m.

Dr. Paul Solomon, Chairman
Board of Selectmen