

Warrant Committee FY06 Meeting Minutes
March 15, 2006
7:30 p.m. Chenery Middle school, Community Room

Handout(s) distributed tonight are:

1. Public Safety Sub Committee regarding Assistant Police Chief Position 3/15/06
2. Education Sub Committee report on FY07 budget dated 3/15/06 including school recommendations for tiers of reduction from level services budget dated 2/22/06 and balances in school revolving accounts
3. Town Administrator recommendation for items to be restored to reduced services budget should additional funds become available
4. Revised draft of BOS statement regarding the \$3M override for a Road Stabilization Account

Member(s) absent: Jones, Brusch, Oates

Also present: Town Accountant Barbara Hagg, Town Administrator Thomas Younger, Assistant Town Administrator Jeff Conti, Town Treasurer Floyd Carman, School Committee Member Miller and Gerry Missal. Jamie MacIssac and Christopher Donahue were present to represent the police patrol and superior unions.

WC Assistant Chair White called the meeting to order at 7:35 PM.

Minutes of 3/8/06 – Accepted after several changes

Public Safety Sub Committee

Member Paolillo passed out an information sheet dated 3/15/06 regarding the Assistant Police Chief position. Member Paolillo met with Chief O'Malley, Town Administrator Younger and Assistant Chief Lane. This position had been recommended several years by Chief O'Malley and approved by the BOS at that time. O'Malley & Lane had reported that this position had been supported by all prior chiefs. Historically, the superior officer union were against the position and the elimination of the Lieutenant position. Prior to reorganization there were 17 superiors, post reorganization there were 16 superior officers. This includes Chief & Assistant Chief, Captain to oversee patrol services, 5 lieutenants and 8 sergeants. Today there are 17 superior officers. Assistant Chief is non union and non civil service. Assistant Chief can now be involved with all disciplinary actions within the departments. Prior to this the second in command could not handle disciplinary actions with superior officers because they were a union member. This results in more effective management of the department. The Assistant Chief makes \$97,543. If this position is eliminated and goes back to Administrative Lieutenant there is a \$12,000 savings but is then eligible for overtime which he is not

currently entitled to. Overtime cost would be \$73 an hour. 163 hours of overtime in a year would negate all savings. This position was collectively bargained, there could be morale implications, and detrimentally impact the management of the department. Acting Chair White had asked the Subcommittee to review this issue. The organization is currently vertical, meaning the Chief has only one person reporting to him. He felt that with the filling of the Chief position and the current transition this would be a good time to raise this issue. The Assistant Chief is an employee at will. Only the Chief or Assistant Chief could suspend an employee; a captain could not. The union agreed that there is a benefit for the town to have two positions out of Civil Service as Chief and Assistant Chief. Member Curtis stated that Assistant Chief can take over more routine tasks that the Chief is responsible for leaving the Chief to focus on higher level responsibilities. Member Paolillo recommend retaining the Assistant Chief position. The Subcommittee did not vote on this matter but it was discussed. Member Paolillo felt that both Police and Fire should be analyzed as to number of personnel and command personnel and that this is not a decision that should be made rashly. BOS Chair Solomon felt that this was not a good time to bring this to the fore. Member Hofmann questioned the use of \$15,000 for an outside consultant for this search for the new Chief. BOS Chair Solomon stated that this is an assessment center manned by outside personnel. Member Hofmann felt that it is important that we include candidates within the department. BOS Chair Solomon agreed that there are good candidates within the department.

Building Maintenance Functional Consolidation

Member Widmer on behalf of this subcommittee stated that the consolidation was being looked at for better maintenance of the facilities, not savings. It was felt that a program must be established to maintain our facilities. The principal recommendation is that the Town hires or names a new position of Director of Plant and Facilities that would drive the planning process of protecting our assets for both Town and School properties. Member Widmer stated that this is a common position in most communities. It is the recommendation that this position report to Peter Castanino and be a joint hiring of Peter Holland and Tom Younger. There are many issues involved in how this will be done. Six or seven individuals led by Holland & Younger would meet over the next six months with a report in six months. The report would be to the BOS, School and WC. The position would start on 7/1/07. This would be a consolidation of the town and school maintenance and is commonly someone that reports to the Town side. A draft of the job description, a summary of present organization, and recommendations would be the charge of the

committee. Younger stated that the reasons for this is economy of scale, planning for painting, carpeting, plumbing, etc would be viewed in total without "sides" and just the maintenance of all town buildings. A proper plan for the next 20 years with clearly defined lines of responsibilities with a head, current school Bob Martin position, current town Kevin Looney position, and custodians etc. would be established. This gives the town more credibility and expertise in this area. This allows us to expand our resources and get more bang for our buck. There are currently seven buildings under the school. The town has nine buildings plus the pool and the rink. There are sixteen buildings in total. This could be a good cooperative effort. Efficiencies will be gained along with economies of scale and outsourcing. Member Doblin would like to include contract administration within the job description since there would be a great deal of outsourcing. The assumption would be that there would be a new position to start out and perhaps changing the structures over time. Member Tillotson suggested making this person a voting member of all Building Committees and perhaps a member of the Permanent Building Committee so that there can be some oversight and coordination of the systems being put into the new buildings. Both the School Committee and BOS would need to support this charge before consolidation goes forward. School Committee Member Miller stated that by law both Boards would be required to vote. Member Widmer stated that this is an initial vote to recommend formation of a Committee chaired by Superintendent of School Holland and Town Administrator Younger. Member Widmer made this motion:

That the WC recommends in concept that the Facilities Maintenance functions for Town and Schools be consolidated, and that a new director position be created to manage the consolidated department. This was seconded by Member Doblin. All in favor, 2 abstentions.

Member Doblin motion:

That the WC requests that the BOS and SC appoint a joint committee to develop, within the next six months, a detailed Implementation Plan for Facilities Maintenance consolidation such that the consolidation may take effect at the beginning of FY08. Member Callanan stated that protection of our assets is critical. All in favor, 2 abstentions.

School Chair Gibson would like further information before voting. She has abstained on both motions. Member Fitzgerald also abstained from both votes.

School Committee Subcommittee Report dated 3/15/06

Member Curtis distributed a report on FY2007 School budget. This is a two page overview of the FY07 Reduced Services budget (2.5% increase over FY06) and the FY07 Level Service Budget has a 7.1% increase. There is a difference of \$1.5M between the two budgets. There are 12 fewer positions in the FY07 reduced service budget. The level services budget provides more educational services. There is a level of tiers of reduction. These would be the levels of reduction as there were fewer dollars. Tier one would be the first to go.

Based on the opinion of the Educational Sub Committee the feeling was that building maintenance should not be cut. Student Athletics and activities should fall before the cuts in building maintenance. There was also a conversation regarding the library aides at the elementary level. These positions are important and the Subcommittee would put these on the first tiers of restoration. These positions should be restored before teaching positions in the opinion of the education subcommittee. Currently there is a revenue offset of \$100K in the first tier of restoration. In effect that \$100K has already been taken out. How would \$125K more be taken out and what does this do in the line of reductions?

Revolving accounts are another revenue stream for the school department. The ones factored into the budget are reported on the attached report. The summer school program revolving account has been increasing in balances over the past four years and now has \$150K available. In total there is \$675K of available funds from revolving funds (this includes the summer school program). It would appear reasonable to carry forward a balance \$300K. How many years would it take to spend down the athletic revolving? The Subcommittee felt that three years is reasonable and \$125K of the accumulated balance will be applied to the FY07 budget. This effectively reduces the amount that has to be taken from the town available funds. Each year over the next three years, this same amount would be used for the budget, although the balance would be reviewed to see that it is feasible. Member Heigham stated that this will reduce their reserves. He asked what these funds could be spent for. Member Miller stated that it must be spent for the purpose that the funds were collected. Member Widmer stated that the Town's reserves are healthy and are stronger than most other communities in our state. Member Heigham reiterated that we are decreasing reserves rather than increasing revenues. Member Curtis stressed that these revolving funds have been increasing from people that are expecting those funds to be used for those programs. These are not the same as town reserves. Missal stated that \$675K is only 2% based on their \$33M budget. These balances are used to bail out deficits and toward future year budgets. For example during the current year they are running a

\$300K deficit. The revolving funds will be covering the first \$200K of this deficit. They have only come to the WC Reserve Fund for \$37K for a truly unforeseen expense at Winnbrook School.

Member Curtis stated that when they go back 10 years, the average carryover balance was \$200K but in recent years this has been much higher. There have been opportunities to spend down especially during the oil spill and the funds were not forthcoming.

The Education Subcommittee has a recommendation for these revolving accounts. Member Widmer stated that there is nothing in common between these revolving funds and the town reserve funds. The fees are for a particular purpose and have built up over a series of years. There is no correlation between town reserves and the revolving funds. Member Paolillo completely concurs that all these reductions seem reasonable. BOS Chair Solomon clarified that there is currently \$530K plus \$150K from summer school for \$675K of revolving funds, this is the number that will be reduced to \$300k over three years. The add-ons of \$63K of additional school needs will need to be folded into the tiers of reduction in order to stay within a level service budget.

Town Budget Tiers

Town Administrator Younger has presented tiers that would restore up to a level service budget. This already has included in the additional revenues from the state as well as the increased revenues identified from the Town Treasurer. This has a restoration of a total of \$322K over the three tiers. The tiers are being restored on the basis of revenues makers, building maintenance and finally senior center lease. There is an alternative for the senior center in the portable classrooms behind the High School.

Then there is another list of tiers that would allow for another \$256K of add backs should the \$1M become available when or if the Road Stabilization Fund passes. Should the override fail, all these items will be eliminated from the operating budget.

Lastly, if there were no other additional reserves used to cover the \$700K gap then \$400K of cuts would be made from the level services budget.

These tiers however do not take into account maintenance and technology costs that may be recommended by the CBC to revert back to the operating budget. Member Callanan stated that some of these items have to be funded. Younger stated that should this happen he will

go back to the departments to prioritize needs. Chair White stated that Member Brusch will be discussing these items. BOS Chair stated that right now the BOS will be requesting a recess until June on the budget items.

Draft Letter regarding the Road Stabilization Fund

The BOS has reduced the draft letter that had been reviewed last week down to one page. BOS Chair passed out the draft prepared by Selectman Brownsberger and would like to have a final decision made by next Wednesday. Chair White asked that the BOS vote for the letter and have this sent to the Committee on Tuesday morning so that the WC has sufficient time to review. BOS Chair asks that the School make a final vote on the library aides' budget items and have the BOS review the final Town tiers. The BOS, due to the delay of the budget, will not be having a budget meeting next Monday evening.

Member Heigham moved adjournment at 9:37 p.m.