

Minutes of the Planning Board held on January 29, 2002 at
7:30 P.M. at the Department of Public Works

Present: Paul Dillon, Chairman; Paul Hurley; Walter
Flynn; and Mary Akoury

Absent: Scott Curry

Staff: James Clarke, Planning Director and Rod Fuqua,
Principal Planner

Attendees: James Wilson, Chief Financial Officer and James
Keefe, Contract Administrator

Meeting called to order at 7:30 P.M.

WAIVER OF NOTICE - ABINGTON ZONING

Mr. Clarke said the Abington Board should have notified the
abutting Towns of any zoning change. As this was not done,
the Attorney General's office suggested Abington ask for a
waiver from the various Boards.

Motion by Mr. Flynn, seconded by Mr. Hurley to provide the
Town of Abington Planning Board with a waiver on their
notice for a request for a zoning change.

All in favor. SO VOTED UNANIMOUSLY.

CAPITAL BUDGET

Mr. Clarke said Mr. Wilson will be giving the Board an
overview of the financial picture with regard to Capital
Budget items. After Mr. Wilson's presentation, he would
like to discuss an approach the Planning Board might take
for setting the priorities for the project. Also, he would like
to take a little time tonight to begin to do some of the
prioritizations.

Mr. Wilson congratulated Mrs. Akoury on her appointment to
the Board.

Mr. Wilson stated that the Governor's budget came out last
Wednesday and had a 6% reduction in Chapter 7 - aid to schools.
Based upon all the information, and projecting the increases
that are about to be granted, he recommended to the Mayor
that level funded budgets be given to all departments.

All departments will be absorbing all raises in 2002 plus all
step and raises in FY03. He is projecting that Unemployment
Compensation will go from \$770,000 this year to 1.8 Million
next year. This also has to be absorbed in the budget.

Other fixed costs will also increase. Health insurance will
go up to just under 2 Million and debt service will go up in
anticipation of the high school program.

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He has recommended to the Mayor a level funded budget which includes the layoffs and unemployment as of July 1st. This affects the Planning Board's work for the remainder of FY02 and FY03.

If there are further reductions in the budget we will have to seek revenue from the Stabilization Fund (using approx. 2 Million out of the 3 Million dollars).

He is recommending no new spending be incurred from this point forward including Capital Budget. There are some exceptions. He would strongly recommend, absent dire need, that all Capital Budget requests be suspended for the remainder of this fiscal year and going into FY03.

He would suggest looking at the Capital Budget requests in three (3) categories as follows: (1) emergency repairs, (2) if funds available and (3) normal course.

The Water and Sewer Divisions have been excluded from the above categories as they have three (3) funding mechanisms - retained earnings, mitigation funds (I & I and Conservation) and Bonding monies.

Mr. Wilson explained the above.

Mr. Clarke asked what would be considered normal expenditures?

Mr. Wilson said it would be ordinary and regular repairs to school buildings. Every year, 1-2 Million dollars fluctuates for projects i.e. vehicle replacement or a heating system in a school.

Mr. Clarke and Mr. Wilson had a discussion as to the approach the Board might want to take. The recommendation is to look at each year and try to make some assessment as to whether the projects are in the right year; and for the first year, to give some kind of ranking system to those without really talking about a number. (Mr. Clarke explained)

Mr. Clarke stated that the Mayor would prepare his Capital Budget based on the Board's recommendations.

Mr. Wilson stated that the Mayor is considering submitting the Capital Plan and then waiting for the funding for another thirty (30) days. The funding piece would be submitted with the regular budget.

A lengthy discussion ensued with regard to the following:

1. Information presented by the departments
2. Prioritizing
3. Other funding sources

Mr. Flynn suggested having the department heads come in with more information. A number of projects were not related to funding. This raises the question as to how much forethought went into the submission. Mr. Clarke said he would take Mr. Flynn's suggestion and contact the people to get more information.

Mr. Keefe said not only do the departments have to prioritize but the numbers need to be firmed up.

Mr. Clarke asked how the Board felt about his two step plan?

Mr. Flynn said if we prioritize projects for FY03 those that we do not prioritize are going to become FY04 projects. All the projects will then slip down the line.

Mr. Clarke said once we put this in, we might get an update every quarter to give us a sense of where things are. There might be some communication between the Mayor's office and the Planning Board as things change.

All Board Members agreed with Mr. Clarke's two step approach.

Mr. Flynn said the key thing the Board is looking at - what year do they really want it in and for those items submitted without justification, submit the justification. If they want to, they can put emphasis on what they consider their priority projects.

The Board is to receive the updated information on February 8, 2002.

Mr. Keefe would like copies of the minutes.

OTHER BUSINESS

PERFORMANCE GUARANTEE - SUMMER WOODS

Mr. Fuqua stated that they are looking for a reduction. The reduction includes the guard rails and the granite curb which are in place. He is recommending that the total be reduced to \$53,500.

Motion by Paul Hurley, seconded by Mr. Flynn to reduce the Performance Guarantee for Summer Woods to \$53,500.

All in favor. SO VOTED.

There was some discussion with regard to the Alexan litigation on the subdivision denial and whether anything had started.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on February 12, 2002 at 6:00 P.M. at the DPW. Capital Budget is to be the only item on the agenda.

Motion to adjourn. SO VOTED.

Meeting adjourned at 8:55 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Annette M. Cignarella
Recording Secretary

APPROVED

Paul M. Diller