

TOWN COUNCIL
Budget Management Committee
January 31, 2005

Present: Ken DiFazio, Chairperson, Sue Kay, Paul Leary, Colin McPherson
Michael Molisse

Also Present: James Wilson, Chief Financial Officer
Robert Swanson, Auditor
Joanne Lamont, Library Director
Denise Coleman, Human Resource Director
Dan McCormack, Acting Chief of Staff

Recording Secretary: Janet Murray

Chairperson DiFazio called the meeting to order at 6pm.

04 244 – Appropriation request -\$13,989 – Librarian Collective Bargaining Agreement

This request for \$13,989 is for a 2% cost of living increase, retroactive to July 1, 2004. A financial breakdown for FY 05 and 06 are included. The salary increase in 2006 will be 3% and in 2007 will be 4%.

The memorandum of agreement is for a 3-year contract. The probationary period has been increased from six months to nine months. Vacation language was cleaned up. Employees will be allowed to take single vacation days on Friday and Saturday. Also, employees will no longer be required to find coverage for Friday and Saturday when they take a full weeks vacation. However, they will need to make an effort to find someone to cover. There will \$2500 available, from a grant, for conferences and workshops. Finally, a performance evaluation will be put together for union staff.

Councilor DiFazio asked if any of these changes affect what is offered to constituents in regards to library services. It was noted that they would not be changed.

Councilor McPherson asked for clarification on vacation usage. The former contract had language that implied that if an employee worked Monday night, they had to find someone to cover for them or they could not take their vacation at that time. This language has been removed.

Councilor Kay asked if the \$2500 figure for workshops and conferences was a total amount not to be exceeded. It was noted that this is the total amount available. Employees must pay first and then be reimbursed.

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Councilor McPherson noted that library services have been cut in recent years. It was noted that the area that was affected the most was the branch evening hours. No hours were cut at the Main Library. One branch office is open, along with the Main Library on any given night.

A MOTION was made by Councilor Kay to recommend FAVORABLE ACTION on Item #04 244 and was seconded by Councilor Leary and UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

04 247 – O'Connor and Drew Audited Financial Statements and Management Letter for Fiscal Year 2004

Richard Swanson stated that the auditors would not be present this evening due to illness. They agreed to be present at the next Budget Management Meeting.

Councilor McPherson questioned why they needed to be present before this committee. They have previously reported to the full Council. The Council referred this item to Budget Management, which is routinely done. None of the councilors present had any questions.

It was noted that all Councilors would be advised that if they had any questions for the auditors, they should bring it to the attention of Councilor DiFazio and the auditors would be asked to appear before the Council. Otherwise, they would not be required to appear.

A MOTION was made by Councilor McPherson to ACCEPT the report of Item #04 247 and was seconded by Councilor Kay and was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

05 001 – Appropriations request - \$102,855 Non-union general government

Councilor McPherson recused himself from this item.

This request reflects a 2% cost of living increase for non-union general government employees. Water and Sewer Department employees are not included as they fall under a separate measure. The increase is retroactive to July 1, 2004.

Councilor Leary asked if the request included any reclassifications. It was noted that this was current as of today as to how the organization is classified.

Councilor Kay asked the auditor for a breakdown of the 2004 salary levels so that Councilors could see how much a position is paid and what impact an increase would have on the salary level. The auditor noted ten reclassifications, however, only five were brought before the Council. It was noted that it was not required to inform the Council of a reclassification if it did not require a budgetary request.

Councilor Kay requested that any reclassification be brought to the attention of the Council. It was agreed that this would happen. She also noted when an employee receives a promotion they

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generally go to the next grade level that would result in an increase. However, there are exceptions.

Councilor Kay noted that the position of Human Resource Director had seen an increase of \$18,000. The Mayor has been doing a market analysis over the last year. He has also done an internal audit and an external market study. He determined what the current department heads receive as compared with surrounding towns. In comparing the number, it was determined that a Grade 16 was appropriate for this position. Mr. McCormack agreed to provide Councilors with a copy of these documents.

Councilor DiFazio questioned where the additional money would come from. Mr. Wilson noted that a position was vacant and the money was taken from that salary line item.

This request is for one year.

Councilor Kay stated that she would prefer to receive the copies of the above-mentioned documents before voting on this item.

A MOTION was made by Councilor Kay to CONTINUE the discussion of Item #05 001 and was seconded by Paul Leary and was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

05 002 – Appropriation request - \$3,555 – Water retained earnings

Mr. Wilson noted that this item has incorrect information. It is requested that it be withdrawn and resubmitted.

A MOTION was made by Councilor Kay for NO ACTION on Item #05 002 and was seconded by Councilor Leary and UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

05 003 – Appropriation request - \$5,956 – Sewer retained earnings

Mr. Wilson noted that this item has incorrect information. It is requested that it be withdrawn and resubmitted.

A MOTION was made by Councilor Kay for NO ACTION on Item #05 003 and was seconded by Councilor Leary and UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

05 004 – Appropriation request - \$48,135.90 Non-union school

Joseph Rull, Superintendent, and Mary Jo Livingstone, Assistant Superintendent, appeared before the Committee. Mr. Rull noted that this is a measure for 62 non-union school employees. A detailed analysis was provided to Councilors. This request is for one year.

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Councilor Kay asked if this was the same group of people who were a part of a previous measure that provided for an amount of money to be pooled and used as determined by the School Department. It was noted that those included in that group were Principals with individual contracts. The group referenced in 05 004 received an across the board 3% increase last time.

Councilor DiFazio asked if these were the same number of people as last year. Ms. Livingstone noted that some administrators have three year contracts and their increases have already been budgeted for 2005.

Councilor McPherson asked for clarification regarding the number of bargaining units within the School Department. Ms. Livingstone noted that there are a total of eight units. Two have been completed and five are upcoming. The food service does not come before the Council as it has a revolving account. It was noted that this measure is for non-union employees.

A MOTION was made by Councilor Leary to recommend FAVORABLE ACTION on Item #05 004 and was seconded by Councilor Molisse.

05 005 – Reserve fund transfer - \$20,262 – Special Education Van

Ms. Livingstone informed the Committee that one of the oldest vans in the town's fleet of special education vehicles will not pass emissions standards for a 7D inspection. The back-up van has been brought to front line service and there is no longer a back up. This van is a 1986 GMC van. This was requested as part of the capital budget but the need is immediate as there is now no back up. It was noted that there are 19 vans and one spare for a total of 20 vehicles.

Councilor McPherson questioned if there is a seven year replacement cycle, why any of the vans would get to be almost 20 years old. Ms. Livingstone stated that although the vans have been a capital budget request, it has not always been funded each year. He also questioned the age of the existing vehicles. Ms. Livingstone noted that almost half of the current vans in service are at least ten years old.

Councilor Kay asked if these vans are used to transport students out of town. Ms. Livingstone noted that these vans are used to transport students to close towns such as Hingham and Norwell. Most out of town transportation is provided by a private contractor. The cost runs about three to one to send them out.

Councilor Molisse asked what happens to the van that is no longer in service. Ms. Livingstone noted that the van did not pass the 7D inspection, which is more stringent because these vehicles transport students. Vans are normally handed down to be used as a cargo van as it would pass a regular inspection. However, in this particular case, it is likely the vehicle will have to be scrapped.

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Councilor Kay asked if a plan has been considered to have enough vans to eliminate the need for private contractors. Mr. Rull noted that the students using the private contractors go in many different directions.

A MOTION was made by Councilor Kay to recommend FAVORABLE ACTION on Item #05 005 and was seconded by Councilor Molisse and UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

05 006 – Appointment – Director of Health – Richard Marino

Mr. McCormack noted that during reconciliation of personnel appointments of various Boards, Committees and Department Heads, it was brought to the attention of the Mayor that the position of the Director of Health Department had not been appointed. At that time, the Mayor decided that since Mr. Marino has done such a great job over the past twenty years, he would put forth his name for appointment. This would be an initial appointment. It would be requested that Mr. Marino appear before the Council.

A MOTION was made by Councilor Leary to recommend FAVORABLE ACTION on Item #05 006 and was seconded by Councilor Molisse and UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

Councilor Kay asked for clarification of the appointments to the South Shore Tri-Town Board. It was noted that the confirmation of the appointment of Weymouth's two representatives has not come before the Council. Councilor Kay asked Mr. McCormack to find out about this.

05 007 – Reappointment – Board of Library Trustees – Robert MacLean

This is a request for reappointment. Councilor Kay stated that Mr. MacLean has done a great job on the Board.

A MOTION was made by Councilor Kay to recommend FAVORABLE ACTION on Item #05 007 and was seconded by Councilor Molisse and UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Councilor DiFazio stated that he wanted to make the Committee members aware that he has begun to take a closer look at the peer reviews. Mr. Wilson's financial analysis was the beginning of this process. JDA and MAPC reviews are now available.

Councilor DiFazio stated that it might be worthwhile to have each group that performed a peer review come in and make a presentation to the Committee. He also suggested that it may worth considering having all of the reviewers present at one time to discuss their reviews in comparison to each other.

Councilor Leary stated that there will be a meeting on February 9, 2005 in Abington. Each group that performed a peer review will be present. Lennar will neither make a presentation nor

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present a revised plan. Councilor Leary expressed concern over, when, or even if, Lennar will be presenting a revised plan which would include changes based on public input.

ADJOURNMENT

At 7:20pm there being no further business, Councilor McPherson MOTIONED to adjourn and Councilor Kay seconded and was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

Approved by: _____
Kenneth DiFazio, Chairperson