

TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES  
BUDGET/MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE  
Town Hall Council Chambers  
February 17, 2009- Tuesday

Present: Kenneth DiFazio, Chairperson  
Patrick O'Connor, Vice Chairperson  
Michael Molisse, Councilor  
Kevin Whitaker, Councilor  
Arthur Mathews, Councilor

Also Present: Michael Smart, Council President  
Ed Harrington, Councilor  
Maureen Duffy, Town Auditor  
James Wilson, Chief Financial Officer  
Michael Gallagher, Director of Administrative and  
Community Services  
Cindy DePina, Director of Human Resources

Recording Secretary: Diane T. Hachey

Chairman Kenneth DiFazio called the Budget/Management Committee meeting to order at 6:35 PM.

**09 004-Appointment-Interim Town Clerk**

Councilor Smart spoke to this measure as he introduced it originally at Town Council. He explained that the job description of both the Town Clerk and Assistant Town Clerk were included in the Councilor packets. He further noted that Kathy Deree covered in the absence of Frank Fryer who was out on medical leave. In order to abide by provisions of the Charter, Councilor Smart put forth this measure. Chairman DiFazio questioned the date of October 16<sup>th</sup> (as indicated in the measure) and Councilor Smart clarified that this was the date Mr. Fryer first went out on leave.

Councilor Molisse asked if any financial implications are associated with this measure. Councilor Smart noted that he did not believe so and did not inquire of this with administration.

Michael Gallagher distributed copies of the Interim Pay Policy from the Human Resources Department.

Councilor Whitaker noted that as the Town Clerk position is elected he cautioned creation of an interim position as the appointment period could be effected. It was noted by Chairman DiFazio that February 19<sup>th</sup> is the deadline to approve this measure, under the appointment guidelines.

Councilor Molisse noted the exemplary job the Assistant Town Clerk performed in the absence of the Town Clerk, but additionally stated that the Assistant Town Clerk's job description includes acting as Town Clerk in their absence.

Councilor Smart recommended that this issue is reviewed under the up- and -coming Charter review.

Councilor Whitaker recommended that the measure be withdrawn by the sponsor.

A MOTION was made by Councilor O'Connor to forward item 09 004 to the full Town Council with a recommendation for NO ACTION and was seconded by Councilor Molisse. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

### **09 005-Deeds in Lieu of Foreclosure**

Jim Wilson explained that this measure is a function of tax title. If certain guidelines are successfully met one can be considered to have deeds in lieu of foreclosure for a tax title property. This is a relatively new process and defendants have sought this approach due to the current economic conditions. Councilor Whitaker asked what the plans are for the properties once they are foreclosed. Mr. Wilson confirmed that the parcels would be put up for auction. He further confirmed that title searches have been completed on all properties. Properties would then fall under the guidelines of sale of town owned properties of which the Mayor would approve the auctioning of each property. Councilor O'Connor recommended that we hold onto said properties in hopes that the housing market improves so the town would maximize its profit margin.

A MOTION was made by Councilor O'Connor to forward item 09 005 to the full Town Council with a recommendation for favorable action and was seconded by Councilor Mathews. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

### **09 007-Use of Funds for the Sale of Town Owned Property**

Mr. Wilson noted that this measure represents a one time revenue generation in order to make up for recently mandated reductions in state aid. If this measure does not pass, the town would have no choice but to institute layoffs of numerous employees due to the lateness in the fiscal year.

Councilor Smart questioned if it was typical for DOR to offer two alternatives to this situation. Jim Wilson stated that DOR wants to be informed of what each town's plans are due to time constraints (ie: budgets have been completed, and tax rates have been set). DOR does not want towns to run in the red as of June 30, 2009.

Councilor Whitaker questioned of Mr. Wilson what if any issues are foreseeable in the future in terms of potential town deficits. Mr. Wilson forecasts that health insurance (prescriptions ) are up, snow removal- as we are only part way through the winter season, and the Fire Department will most likely be requesting an additional appropriation for overtime. He confirmed that workman's compensation appears to be alright. Mr. Wilson additionally cited a grant in the Health Department, which is soon to expire in the amount of \$10,000. Councilor Whitaker voiced his concern with the end of year transition to the GIC and that claims may potentially increase. He hopes that capital improvement items will be addressed as there has not been a focus on this as of late. Jim Wilson confirmed that budgets for both fiscals 2009 and 2010 will be based on recurring revenues and not on one time.

Councilor Harrington asked in what areas Mr. Wilson foresees recurring revenues. Mr. Wilson cited a 2M dollar savings resultant from employees joining the GIC, 1.5M dollars in real estate increases based on tax levy, several hundred thousand dollars in savings in utilities, and a substantial savings in rubbish removal resultant from joint efforts with surrounding communities.

Councilor DiFazio asked if we executed all outstanding contract in town , if the aforementioned savings would cover the cost. Mr. Wilson stated that if 9C cuts were not to occur then we probably could of handled.

A MOTION was made by Councilor Mathews to forward item 09 003 to the full Town Council with a recommendation for favorable action and was seconded by Councilor Molisse. Resultant vote was 4-1- with Councilor O'Connor noting nay.

### **09 008-Appointment of Director of Human Resources-Cindy DePina**

Mr. Gallagher introduced Cindy DePina who possesses in excess of 20 years experience, 10 of which were in senior management. He said that she has many fresh, new ideas which she has brought to the table. Ms.

DePina spoke to auditing of personnel policies, auditing of systems to ensure that procedures are streamlined.

A MOTION was made by Councilor O'Connor for favorable action on measure number 09 008, seconded by Councilor Mathews seconded. Councilor Mathews asked if there is a procedure in place for evaluation of employees for performance reviews. Ms. DePina said she will research and get back to him. Councilor Whitaker asked what role she perceives that Human Resources will play in the GIC conversion. HR will be the resource for employees, they are working closely with GIC regarding the transition and completed an upload to GIC files with favorable results. A health fair has been scheduled for May for all employees.

Measure voted unanimously.

At 7:26 PM, there being no further business, Councilor O'Connor made a MOTION to ADJOURN the meeting and was seconded by Councilor Molisse. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

Respectfully Submitted by:  
Diane T. Hachey-Recording Secretary

Approved by:  
Ken DiFazio, Chairman of the Budget/Management Committee