

TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES  
BUDGET/MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE  
Town Hall Council Chambers  
March 27, 2007 - Tuesday

Present: Kenneth DiFazio, Chairperson  
Susan Kay, Vice-Chairperson  
Paul J. Leary, Councilor  
Patrick O'Connor, Councilor  
Michael Molisse, Councilor

Also Present: Gregory Shanahan, Councilor  
Kevin Whitaker, Councilor  
James Wilson, Chief Financial Officer  
Robert O'Connor, Director, DPW  
Tom Slattery, Director of Maintenance  
Caroline LaCroix, Director, Administrative and Community Svc.  
Michael Doyle, Director, Parks Dept.  
Robert Leary, Chief, Fire Dept.  
Paul Gabriel, Environmental Partners, LLC  
Paul Costello, Environmental Partners, LLC

Recording Secretary: Mary Briggs

Chairman DiFazio called the Budget/ Management Committee meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

A MOTION was made by Councilor Kay to take item 07-029 out of order and was seconded by Councilor Molisse. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

**07-029 – Bond Authorization for Extraordinary Repairs for Parks and Playgrounds**

Mr. Wilson requested \$7,000,000 be raised and appropriated for restoration of Legion Field. He reviewed the bonding schedule; not all would be bonded- \$2 M in the line item for the Host Community Agreement through LNR to the town will be earmarked, and the \$700,000 set aside for parks improvements would also be applied to the \$7,000,000 bond. HCA funding is dependent on the MEPA certification on the base and will not be received in calendar 07. He explained it would be similar to the high school project process; the total is not borrowed all at once. There was a brief discussion with the committee on MEPA certification process, the current bond rating, and the bond market.

Chairman DiFazio requested Mr. Wilson supply the committee with totals for monies expended restoring Legion Field thus far. Mr. Wilson will provide the information. Chairman DiFazio asked if the request includes playground/field work other than Legion.

Mr. Wilson responded that the request is for Legion; however, as in other projects, monies not expended at the end of the project are collapsed into a residual account which then can be spent on other park projects.

Paul Gabriel and Paul Costello of Environmental Partners, LLC were introduced and provided a presentation to the committee on the conceptual plans for the field and determining elements, including artificial turf field, baseball field, rollerhockey rink which will be floodable in winter, tot lot, and basketball court. Also included in the design are handicapped accessibility, parking areas, walking trails, lighting, seating (benches and stadium seating), a gazebo and concession stand.

Following the presentation, the committee requested information on several aspects, including whether any significant changes had been made to the design since the two public hearings on the project, which there were not. Also a part of the discussion was the scope of lighting and style of fencing, and landscaping. (At 7:10 PM, Councilor Shanahan arrived to the meeting.) Costs of some of the project were discussed, as was the rebuilding of the memorial wall and restoring the perimeter fencing.

Included in the discussion were Bob O'Connor, Tom Slattery, Caroline LaCroix and Mike Doyle on the recreation needs, and the estimated upkeep once the project has been completed.

Sources for some of the estimated costs of the project are based on unit costs provided by Mass Highway. A MOTION was made by Councilor Kay to request that with the \$7M price, the backup for cost estimates be reviewed by Auditor Swanson, and was seconded by Councilor Leary. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

Further discussion included comparison in cost and longevity for synthetic vs. turf field, the irrigation system, and drainage for the field, trash receptacles, including solar powered, cost and placement of scoreboard.

Caroline LaCroix and Mike Doyle provided information on the increase in the numbers of sports programs, supporting the need for additional fields. This proposed plan will allow for the maintenance department to continue the practice of resting fields. Permitting of the fields was also discussed, and Ms. LaCroix noted that permitting will continue-- the current practice of prioritizing the town's needs before offering to private groups.

The committee also had concerns and discussed monitoring the field when not in use, signage, and resident use.

A brief discussion followed of the other fields in town. Councilor Shanahan noted that with the field on the high school, the town will have two state of the art facilities, and there certainly is the need for them. Chairman DiFazio questioned why building a new facility is being considered when the existing fields are in atrocious condition. Mike

Doyle disagreed, and noted that people are happier with the conditions of the fields and are encouraged by the progress made. Tom Slattery noted that under the Mayor's parks improvement plan, there has been a complete turnaround. Councilor Molisse agreed, noting that the Mayor has made park improvement a priority.

Chairman DiFazio also requested whether the scope of the totlot might be enlarged, noting a similar park in Quincy draws crowds.

A discussion of fields planned for the site of the former naval air base followed. Several audience members, including abutter Dick Foye and Steve Berkquist, the President of the East Weymouth Neighborhood Association voiced their concerns about the scope of the project, which include drainage of the fields, and how it may affect water tables on their properties, the sense of a lack of information to the public on the project, and the survey distributed by one abutter (Diane Malano) and the responses. The committee asked if she would provide then with the survey and the results. Other neighbors questioned whether this project may influence the siting of a library on the grounds of Libbey Park. Mr. Berkquist reminded the committee there are creative ways to address some of the costs of the project, reminding the committee that the gazebo on Whitman's Pond was put up by the Rotary, at no cost to the town. Mickey Cronin spoke, and told the committee the neighborhood feels there should be more public hearings before a decision is made. Chairman DiFazio pointed Jack Encarnacao to her in the audience, and noted that he has done several pieces on the project for the Patriot Ledger.

Councilor Leary noted that a public hearing is scheduled on the plan April 2, 2007, after which time the committee would make a recommendation to the full Council. A MOTION was made by Councilor Leary to continue item 07-029 to the next Budget/Management Committee meeting, and was seconded by Councilor Kay.  
UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

#### **07-028 – Purchase of One HP 100 Ladder and Appropriate for the First Payment Under a Capital Lease**

Mr. Wilson was joined at the table by Chief Robert Leary of the Weymouth Fire Department. Mr. Wilson noted there are three elements to the request: raising and appropriation, executing the capital lease, and making the first payment in advance. A MOTION was made by Councilor Kay to reduce the amount of the request from \$750,000 to \$725,000 and was seconded by Councilor Leary. VOTED UNANIMOUSLY. Mr. Swanson noted the request is not to raise and appropriate the entire amount. The first payment of \$160,000 will be made in advance.

Discussion followed on the immediate need for replacement of the truck, and any effect on staffing levels. Chief Leary noted the previous ladder truck had to be taken out of service, and will be traded in for \$2500. The staffing levels will not be affected. He will continue the 20 per shift minimum. He noted the truck they are looking to purchase is in state, and available soon if the committee votes to purchase. Councilor Kay asked if the truck would fit in each fire station, and the chief noted that not until some capital

improvements scheduled over the next few years are completed (replacing bay doors), and the contracts were signed for the architect phase. The new truck will be housed at the Winter Street station.

A MOTION was made by Councilor Kay to recommend favorable action on item 07-028 to the full Council, and was seconded by Councilor Molisse. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

A MOTION was made by Councilor Kay to take item 07-031 out of order, and was seconded by Councilor O'Connor. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

#### **07-031 – Reappropriate to Fire Department Overtime**

Mr. Wilson and Chief Leary requested an additional \$20,000 be re-appropriated from the Fire Department salary line to the fire suppression and rescue line for the projected overtime remaining in FY07. This is to fill two vacancies due to active military service. Mr. Wilson commended the Chief's excellent control over overtime costs in his department, which the committee agreed with. A MOTION was made by Councilor Leary to recommend favorable action to the full Council on item 07-031, and was seconded by Councilor Molisse. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

#### **07-030 – Refunding Bond**

Mr. Wilson reviewed the request. In order to reduce interest costs, and with new bond rates decreasing in the foreseeable future, the town could save \$749,000 over a 15-year period. The first year savings will be \$30,000; the second year up to \$50,000.

A MOTION was made by Councilor Kay to recommend favorable action to full Council and was seconded by Councilor Molisse. Chairman DiFazio asked that Auditor Swanson evaluate this measure and report back to the committee, but not make the vote contingent upon it. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED. Councilor Leary commended Mr. Wilson on this in that it will save the town a substantial amount of money, especially going forward into FY09.

Mr. Wilson noted when the vote is taken by full Council, it must be voted into the record verbatim for it to be valid.

#### **07-032 – Reserve Fund Transfer – Revaluation Costs**

Mr. Wilson requested \$2,500 reserve fund transfer to supplement the \$200,000 in the budget this year to complete the property re-evaluation and archiving records. The contractor hired to reevaluate property is not doing the job, and this is needed to finish the work in 06 and 07. Mr. Wilson outlined the circumstances-- this is currently in litigation; the originally hired company was sold, the new company has had some employee dissatisfaction and now the successor of that company is involved in continuing the process of reevaluating, updating the Property Viewer software, and archiving records.

A MOTION was made by Councilor Kay to recommend favorable action to the full Council on item 07-032 and was seconded by Councilor Leary. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

**Discussion Relative to Meeting Schedule in Preparation of Fiscal Year 2008 Budget**

Chairman DiFazio asked the members of the committee to review the schedule for budget reviews and make any changes to the recommendations. Mr. Wilson noted his new assignment as consultant to the NAS committee will require his presence at their meetings and he will be unavailable for the 4/9 meeting. He recommended rescheduling or combining the 4/9 and 4/12 meetings.

Councilor Kay noted she will not be available for the 4/30 meeting with the School Department, but if the committee could get some preliminary information in writing for the School budget it would be helpful.

Auditor Swanson took notes of which members had conflicts with the meetings scheduled and will provide it to the full Council.

At 9:15 PM, there being no further business, a MOTION was made by Councilor Kay to adjourn and was seconded by Councilor O'Connor. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

Approved by

Kenneth DiFazio  
Chairman Budget/Management Committee