

**MINUTES OF THE
TOWN COUNCIL'S BUDGET/MANAGEMENT
COMMITTEE**

APRIL 27, 2004

PRESENT: Ken DiFazio (Chairman), Sue Kay, Colin McPherson, Paul Leary
and Michael Molisse

OTHERS: Jane Hackett, Jim Wilson, Richard Swanson, Michael Smart and Greg
Shanahan

Chairman DiFazio called the Budget/Management Committee meeting to order on April 27, 2004 at 6:30 p.m. at the McCulloch Conference Room, 182 Green Street, Weymouth.

APPROVAL OF PRIOR MINUTES

Councilor Kay MOTIONED to approve the Budget/Management Committee minutes of April 12, 2004. Councilor Molisse seconded. VOTED UNANIMOUSLY

Councilor McPherson MOTIONED to the review of the FY04 Fire and General Budgets out of order. Councilor Molisse seconded. VOTED UNANIMOUSLY

Review of General Government

Town Council: Richard Swanson stated this year's budget is exactly the same as last years at \$257k. He reduced the annual audit by \$5,000 because it is on a contract with O'Connor and Drew. It also includes the step increases for the 3 staff. The compensation for the councilors remains the same as it has been for the past 5 years. The recording secretary line is also the same as last year.

Councilor Kay stated that in the future she would like to see the entire council have some more input on this budget as the first time she saw it was when she opened the book. She asked if we were losing the \$250 for dues and memberships and MR. Swanson said no, it was moved to the audit oversight.

Councilor Kay MOTIONED to take the Town Clerk's budget out of order. Councilor Molisse seconded. VOTED UNANIMOUSLY

Town Clerk: Richard Swanson and Franklin Fryer. Mr. Swanson said the FY05 budget is \$289,646 compared to last years at \$290,319. The staff has remained the same and the Town Clerk is budgeted for 4 days a week. This included step increase for the staff. Salaries have decreased compared to FY04 due to the Town Clerk being budget at full-

time in FY04. The Election Day workers are funded at \$1800.00 which is a \$1200 decrease from what was requested.

Councilor Kay asked why the \$1200 was taken out of the election workers line item. Mrs. Hackett stated that Mr. Fryer has again as he has in the past requested for an increase for poll workers. The Mayor and President Lacey had conversations regarding this. Jane said the Mayor had stated that it was something in this point in time that he could not go forward with but was on his priority list. Councilor Kay said she is firm believer that this increase is very much needed. They haven't been increased since 1998. She pleaded with the administration to try to come up with the \$1200.

Councilor Leary said he knows they are having a very difficult time filling these positions.

Mr. Fryer distributed a sheet on costs of a town election to the committee members. On a state election the state will contribute about \$6,000. He said that his elections workers earn an average of \$5.66 per hour compared to other towns at \$7-10 per hour. Back in 2000 he had requested an increase and it was denied. He is now requesting it again. He has also asked all the councilors to come up with three names each of people interested in working the polls. He is having a very difficult time keeping people as it is a very long day.

Councilor McPherson suggested that they announce this shortage on cable at the next Town Council meeting. Councilor Smart agrees and said he will announce it on 5/3.

Chairman DiFazio asked if all this back up information was given to the administration and Mr. Fryer replied yes.

Councilor Kay said she would like to look at a policy for the future to spear head this.

Mayor's Office: Mrs. Jane Hackett and Shelby Tillett

Councilor McPherson said he would like to recuse himself from any discussions on the Mayor's Office salaries. He left the room.

Mrs. Hackett said this budget was decreased from \$999,411 to \$993,912. This is driven by the elimination of the full time clerk's position. There was a secretary position created in the fall of 2003 in the FY04 supplemental budget which is 60% Mayor and 40% Administrative and Community Services. The Fire Municipal Insurance has stabilized from FY04. This included step increases for the 3 non union positions.

Councilor Leary stated that the Mayor as the Councilors are still operating under the 2000 salaries.

Councilor Kay stated that some of the budgets show step increases on the salary page while others do not and asked why. Mrs. Hackett said that is how each individual department head chose to do their budgets within the MUNIS system. It is a text error.

The Wey-Bra is funded 50/50 with Braintree. The \$9,395 is for retirement costs. The line item RPK/CON/MA for \$56,000 is for that park as well and is level funded from FY04. In FY04 Weymouth appropriated more money than Braintree so Weymouth may be seeing a refund this year.

Fire Department: Chief Robert Leary stated that his budget has been increasing at a slow and steady pace over the last few years. All positions are filled and will continue through FY05. There are 105 positions with 3 non-union clerical. The salary line item has increased \$40,000 due to step increases for 3 non-union people and also for the salary augmentation program. Overtime is level funded due to the full complement of personnel. There are 6 recruits at the academy right now. Clothing expenses are contractual and the difference is bringing on new firemen. The expenses are up 13% and this is to fill voids that he made last year. The electric and gas line item has increased significantly.

Mr. Swanson said the overtime shows \$366,000 for FY04 and the council added \$150,000 during the year so it really is not level funded.

Chairman DiFazio said initially the new fire truck lease was to come from the fire department budget, yet this year it is not. Will it always come from somewhere else? Mrs. Hackett stated that they are not sure of FY06 yet.

Councilor Kay expressed her concern that overtime is not enough, especially with 3-4 retirees in FY05.

Councilor McPherson said the salary line item is up 3.7% and asked what that represented. Mr. Leary said increases for the 3 non-union personnel and the salary augmentation program. There are more people at higher ranks who are going into the augmentation program with the majority of them qualifying for the highest level. The contract allows for their salaries to be increased 8% for the last three years of employment for exchange of sick days.

The vehicle maintenance line item is different this year because they purchased two new fire trucks that are now under warranty and they also got rid of 5 old trucks therefore maintenance will not be as high.

Councilor McPherson said so we have the same number of people and so salary increases is that correct and Chief Leary stated yes, that is correct.

Heating and A/C has increased 50%.

Councilor McPherson stated that the council authorized a study of two fire stations and asked where that stands. Chief Leary said they are just about ready to get that done. Two stations went from oil to gas with new boilers.

Councilor McPherson asked Richard Swanson if he has compared the positions to make sure they are level funded as represented. Mr. Swanson said no and Councilor McPherson requested that he do so.

Administrative and Community Services: Mr. Caroline LaCroix and Denise Coleman, Acting Director of Human Resources

Mrs. LaCroix said that after two years of cutbacks there are no layoffs or cuts in programs this year. Salary increases are for step increases. The revolver salaries have been moved to the general budget and there is an increase in the OCLN Assessments. All positions at Elder Services have been broken out by contributions of grants, general fund, etc.

Human Resources - Denise Coleman, Acting Director of Human Resources stated that there are three main components of the increase in the HR budget. They are training, drug testing and advertising. It was stated that the drug testing and medical exams are in one line item and reflect the entire town. Training is offered through Human Resources. The Mayor has an annual luncheon for department heads and they have lunch and a guest speaker attend. Also there is in house training on Microsoft, Excel, Eudora, MUNIS etc. and there are supplies that may be needed. Advertising is increased to reflect what they would most likely incur. They are using the web-site more and newspaper less.

Fiscal year 2004 was a year of transition for the HR department. The Director was originally cut back to part-time and then his full time hours were restored in the supplemental budget. A clerk's position of 10 hours was not filled and they had a full-time clerks position filled in March. It was funded at a grade 3 step 4 and was hired at a grade 2 step 4. Only step increases are reflected in the budget.

Councilor McPherson said the salary line item went from \$162,000 to \$183,000 (increase of 13%) because the director went back to a full-time position. He asked if he was full time the prior year and it was stated no.

Maintenance of Town owned buildings – Mrs. LaCroix stated that there is duplication in the salary line item and it should be \$107,000. There are step increases for the custodian and supervisor. Electricity has gone down in all line items as the town is planning on going out to bid for a savings.

Councilor Kay questioned the over time amount and Mrs. LaCroix stated she feels this is an adequate amount. Money has been moved around to cover civil defense costs.

Under management services there is only a \$5,000 increase even though MUNIS says otherwise. She transfers money out to cover grants before they come in. Veteran's services there are a step increase for the director and a step increase and a 3% raise for the clerk.

Elder Services – There are no cuts in this department. There is a new line item for cell phones. There are step increases for the full-time van driver and part-time van driver. Some of their salaries are on grants.

The Mayor has tried to meet some of the needs of civil defense. In the fall he purchased a new generator for them in the supplemental budget.

Youth & Family Services – There are step increases for the supervisor. The expenses have increased to cover the teen center programs and field trips.

Councilor McPherson stated that a year ago they lowered staffing levels and wanted to know how it was working out. Mrs. Lacroix said employees have a good outlook and they have had no complaints on any services. They have developed and improved their program base. Attendance and popularity have increased. The gift and donation accounts have helped out a lot as well as the friends groups.

Library – This included step increases. They have saved money on the beeper program for call backs as they have made arrangements with the school department and the school patrol has helped out. They moved this money into the salary line item for custodians.

Last year the OCLN increased \$9,000 and this year it increased \$4,000. Last year the \$9,000 was paid out of a separate account (state aid to libraries).

Adult services have increased 11% as the part-time pagers and desk assistants have been budgeted for 20 hours for FY05. This is an increase in hours.

Councilor Kay asked if these hours were cut before and are now being restored and Mrs. LaCroix said no these are just additional hours.

Councilor McPherson asked if we were meeting a fund for state match. Mrs. LaCroix said there are two reports with the commonwealth. The first is a state aid for public libraries and we complied with it for FY04. The second is a financial which is completed by the library director and is a formula base which is 2 ½% over the past three years average. If you don't meet that you need to seek a waiver which is completed by the CFO. We needed to seek this waiver for FY04. This was granted and we received our certification. FY05 will be filed in October 2004 and Mr. Wilson stated that he believes we will be seeking another waiver.

All summer salaries are reflected in the general government budget and the revolver will repay it \$84,000.00.

Information Technology – Mr. Limbey said the IT is continuing to go through evolving technical changes. They are moving from 350 networks to 2700 networks. They need to be able to adapt to change and keep operations stable. This comes down to the employees. They also rely on a small number of outside services. Mr. Limbey provided a spread sheet of the re-organization of his department. The before is 3-4 years ago. The product support position does MUNIS, payroll and accounts payable, DPW is Basam, two help desk positions, land manager. The after is a net reduction in 2 full-time positions. They have done away with the assistant director, reconfigured and reassigned tasks. The programmer position was contracted out as it was half the cost has hiring. They had to add a web position. The engineering position works 2 days at the police station. There two help desk positions remain a grade 7. This has been successful and it is critical they don't lose someone or they will be up a creek as it is too complicated. They now work as a team. They do all of their design work and have been able to save \$150,000 in design of the fiber lay out as they did it in house. The incentive is to keep employees around.

Chairman DiFazio asked what they do for the DPW and Police and Mr. Limbey said give technical support. They have 40 computers each.

Mr. Limbey stated that right now we have a very secure system with multiple layers of security.

Councilor McPherson asked if Weymouth's technology is on par with other communities. Mr. Limbey said we are in pretty good shape compared to others and are way ahead on the web site. As far as the network infrastructure we are on par with communities of our size.

Councilor Kay asked what has changed so drastically from October 2003 until now that requires a re-organization of your department. Mr. Limbey said this is just the final stage. Councilor Kay said that back in the fall when he presented the re-org it was to bring it up with other communities and that the request would do it. We are upgrading people and we are increasing consultants from \$90k to \$115k and yet paying out much higher salaries. One position for a production support person was making \$37.3 in the beginning of FY04 and now is \$58,000. She does not have a problem with a re-org but not in this short amount of time.

Mrs. Hackett said what has changed since last October is that the Mayor has come to a final conclusion on what he believes is the appropriate salaries for the job functions. There was no representation to the budget/management committee or full council that further consideration regarding additional reclassifications was ongoing and she apologized.

Councilor Kay asked so what was the change in that position in 6 months time that requires an additional \$20,000. Mrs. Hackett said she's not sure there was a change in that position or a change in the mayor's level of understanding for the need to go to the

additional step. This is what he considers to be the final stage of the reorganization and the fact that he was considering additional moves on these two positions was not communicated back then.

Councilor Kay thought she might be missing something when reviewing their budget and at least hoped the consulting amounts would have decreased when in fact they have increased. In October we discussed the assistant leaving.

Mr. Limbey said these positions were geared to those people as we manage and see aptitude and skill levels of the employees. It is in our best interest to keep Sean. He has no idea when he hired him how skilled he was.

Councilor Kay said she does not understand the need for the consultant. Mr. Limbey said Mabel will not be here after 7-1-04. The intent was to keep her on until the remainder of the fiscal year. Councilor Kay was not aware of that. She thought it was until they trained someone. In FY04 for 9 months time you spent \$115,000 in consultants and in FY03 for the entire year it was \$91,900.

Mr. Limbey stated that the consultant fees are somewhat misleading as the bitwise is a maintenance cost that is in the consultant line. For FY05 the only consultants will be Tom Rose for the web site and Mazza and bitwise who provides maintenance.

There was debate on Mazza being a consultant versus hiring him. Councilor Kay stated that she was not qualified to debate his department as she does not know enough about it.

Councilor McPherson stated that he can not follow the discussion at this point and asked Councilor Kay if she could follow up with Mr. Limbey on her questions. Mrs. Kay stated that she will sum it up.

Councilor Kay stated that she feels they are not ready for reorganization and it is still ongoing and Mr. Limbey hasn't decided what he wants. She thought it was complete in October 2003 as it states in the minutes. The salaries increases are major and she will not be supporting it.

Mr. Wilson said that in prior budgets each salary was allocated across three programs. Due to last minute changes in the various salaries, he chose not to allocate them. Each person's salary is accurately identified. As we move forward next year they will go back to the allocations. On the MUNIS spread sheets you should only be looking at the bottom line.

There is a minor reduction in software upgrades. The GIS is flat lined. Other professional services are Tom Rose and Mazza. Bitwise is an internet access line and hardware maintenance.

Councilor Leary stated that he talked about team work and asked how the moral was in the department. Mr. Limbey said it was good. They all work well together and work out very sophisticated problems in a productive way. The consultants provide a critical service to the town.

Planning & Community Development – Mr. Jim Clarke stated that there is no real change in his budget. There is a section with a break down of town fund salaries and grant salaries. There is a decrease in town salaries as a greater portion of the director, secretary, principal clerk in conservation and economic developer's salaries are now on grants.

The expenses have increased by 2.5%. The recording secretary is now zero as it is paid through the conservation fund.

Building Dept. – Mr. Jeff Richards said in the salary line there are step increases. There is a reduction in telephone and dues expenses. Changes within his department are minimal.

Health Dept. – Mr. Richard Marino said they are level programmed. There is a step increase and there are increases to expenses due to under funding last years and to cover some anticipated costs in laboratory expenses that the state picked up last year but may not this year. His funding for communication was paid for through the DPW last year and is not this year. There are 7 people in this department.

Reserve Fund – Mr. Wilson said in FY04 the original funding was \$400,000 there was a supplemental budget added for \$181,000 due to an anticipated increase in health insurance costs. We are now level funding it for \$400,000

Solicitor – Mr. Wilson said there is only one salary and there is no change. There is an increase in miscellaneous expenses for federal express, postage etc. Litigation is decreasing due to the end of the Tanger hearings. There is a decrease in labor relations despite the fact that we are going into negotiations as FY04 was a year of grievances. Real estate takings-we are in the process of foreclosure on 18 parcels and the next step is to advertise.

Councilor Leary asked if there was any money for the Abington Transfer Station. Mr. Wilson said he was not sure. Mrs. Hackett said there is a decrease in the Exelon activity and an increase in the Abington Transfer activity. Mr. Lane is confident with these figures and if not they will be before the council to continue to be able to defend.

Municipal Finance – Mr. Wilson said a year ago they consolidated with the school department and as a result there were five open positions going into FY04. The salary line item has gone up 3.4%. There are 24 people in his department, 3 are at maximum and 21 will get step increase at 2.5%. Of the 21, nine are in the SEIU who have a negotiated raises due FY05.

Councilor Kay asked what is happening with DPW and Mr. Wilson said right now they are assuming some of those duties but not increasing staff. Mr. Wilson provided several spreadsheets outlining his department to the committee.

The school department saved \$295,000 from FY03 to FY04 due to 9 positions moved to municipal finance and the municipal finance budget increased by \$125,000 and 5 positions for a net savings about \$150,000

There is an increase in procurement because in FY04 one person was half in accounting and half in procurement and now for FY05 that person was moved entirely to procurement. There are 3 full time positions in procurement for FY05. Another change is an assessing person going into treasurers and one collection person into treasurer.

Under expenses there were 3 people who asked for increased duties and responsibilities which requires training. There is an increase in accounting copier maintenance. There is also a decrease about (\$10,000) in procurement supplies and expenses. Up to this point they have combined McCulloch and Town Hall supplies and now they are being separated out. They also saved money by changing copiers.

Councilor McPherson asked if there are any allocation changed could they be put in the lead sheet for the FY06 budget.

The revaluation is not in this budget which is \$250,000. It is in a separate measure but will become an annual expense instead of every 3 years. They are going from a \$450,000 line item to just under \$800,000. DOR mandates this to supervise proposition 2 ½.

Chairman DiFazio asked if they look at property and it was stated yes. This year they will be knocking on doors. This will go out to bid. Valuations go up and taxes go down and the net result will still be 2 ½ percent.

04 100 – Re-appropriate \$2,100 to Town Council Salary

Mrs. Hackett said this is for a re-appropriation from town council audit line item to town council salary line item to accommodate the FY04 financial impact of the financial assistant working full time from April 26, 2004 through June 30, 2004. This will need to be addresses going into FY05 as well.

Councilor Leary MOTIONED to recommend favorable action on measure # 04 100 to the full town council. Councilor Molisse seconded. VOTED UNANIMOUSLY

04 101 – Appointment to Board of Library Trustees

Mrs. Hackett said this is a new appointment of Eileen Dumont, 50 Front Street, Weymouth for a three year term to expire June 30, 2007. The Mayor was truly impressed with the candidates for this appointment.

Councilor Kay MOTIONED to recommend favorable action on measure # 04 101 to the full town council. Councilor Molisse seconded. VOTED UNANIMOUSLY

04 102 – Re-appointment to Weymouth Housing Authority

Mrs. Hackett said this term is determined by statute and is a five year term to expire on June 30, 2009.

Councilor Molisse MOTIONED to recommend favorable action to the full town council on measure # 04 102. Councilor Kay seconded. VOTED UNANIMOUSLY

Councilor McPherson asked if the meeting for tomorrow night on the 28th could be rescheduled for May 3, 2004 before the town council meeting.

Councilor Kay agrees but wants to make sure the agenda does not include the police salary line item discussion.

Mrs. Hackett stated that the Police Chief is out of town on the 28th.

Chairman DiFazio said he would like to leave it on the agenda so that he can keep track of it.

Councilor McPherson MOTIONED to cancel the meeting of April 28, 2004 and reschedule it for May 3, 2004 at 6:45 p.m. Councilor Molisse seconded. VOTED UNANIMOUSLY

ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Leary MOTIONED to adjourn. Councilor Kay seconded. VOTED UNANIMOUSLY

Respectfully submitted by,

Lee Hultin, Recording Secretary

Approved by:_____

