

**MINUTES OF THE
BUDGET/MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

May 17, 2004

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

OTHERS: Frank Fryer, Richard Swanson, Jane Hackett and Jim Wilson

Chairman DiFazio called the Budget/Management Committee meeting to order on May 17, 2004 at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

APPROVAL OF PRIOR MINUTES

Councilor Kay MOTIONED to approve the Budget/Management Committee minutes of May 3, 2004. Councilor Leary seconded. VOTED UNANIMOUSLY

04 107 – Re-appointment of Planning Board, Paul Dillon

Councilor Kay MOTIONED to recommend favorable action to the full town council on measure # 04 107. Councilor Leary seconded. VOTED UNANIMOUSLY

04 108 – Re-appointment to the Waterfront Committee, Nancy Blazo

Councilor Kay MOTIONED to recommend favorable action to the full town council on measure # 04 108. Councilor Molisse seconded. VOTED UNANIMOUSLY

04 109 – Re-appointment to Board of Zoning Appeals, Richard McLeod

Chairman DiFazio said he placed this measure on the agenda just in case Mr. McLeod was able to attend. This measure will be placed on the agenda for Thursday, May 20th.

Councilor Leary requested that Mr. McLeod attend the next town council meeting when the council appoints him.

Councilor Kay MOTIONED to table measure # 04 109 until May 20th. Councilor Molisse seconded. VOTED 4-1 (McPherson)

04 111 – Re-appointment to the Cemetery Commission, Donald Mathewson

Councilor Kay MOTIONED to recommend favorable action to the full town council on measure # 04 111. Councilor Molisse seconded. VOTED UNANIMOUSLY

04 112 – Re-appointment to the Memorial Committee, Joan Anderson

Councilor Kay MOTIONED to recommend favorable action to the full town council on measure # 04 112. Councilor Leary seconded. VOTED UNANIMOUSLY

04 113 – Re-appointment to the Board of Health, Maureen Del Prete

Councilor Kay MOTIONED to recommend favorable action to the full town council on measure # 04 113. Councilor Leary seconded. VOTED UNANIMOUSLY

04 114 – Re-appointment to the Scholarship Fund Committee, Elaine DeCosta

Councilor Kay MOTIONED to recommend favorable action to the full town council on measure # 04 114. Councilor Leary seconded. VOTED UNANIMOUSLY

04 115 – Re-appointment to the Conservation Commission, John Thompson

Councilor Leary asked Mrs. Hackett if there was a Conservation Officers and she currently, no. The interview process is ongoing.

Councilor Kay MOTIONED to recommend favorable action to the full town council on measure # 04 115. Councilor Leary seconded. VOTED UNANIMOUSLY

04 116 – Re-appointment to the Recreation Committee, Richard Waite

Councilor Kay MOTIONED to recommend favorable action to the full town council on measure # 04 116. Councilor Leary seconded. VOTED UNANIMOUSLY

04 117 – Re-appointment to the Board of Elder Services, Bill Begley

Councilor Kay MOTIONED to recommend favorable action to the full town council on measure # 04 117. Councilor Leary seconded. VOTED UNANIMOUSLY

04 118 – Re-appointment to the Board of Elder Services, Lawrence Cassese

Councilor Kay MOTIONED to recommend favorable action to the full town council on measure # 04 118. Councilor Leary seconded. VOTED UNANIMOUSLY

Discussions on FY05 Budget

Everyone has received a copy of the questions that the budget/management and Councilor Kay submitted to the administration.

04 087 – Operating #7 Appropriate \$108,556,047 FY05 Operating Budget

04 088 – Operating #8 Appropriate \$ 6,665,841 FY05 Water Budget

04 089 – Operating #9 Appropriate \$11,049,518 FY05 Sewer Budget

Councilor Kay asked the members if they would consider splitting the question on the budget so that they will be able to have 15 separate individual votes. This would allow her to be able to vote on the rest of the budget if she chooses not to vote on the IT Department budget.

Chairman DiFazio asked if the reason for this is to facilitate the moving of that department out with a vote of the committee or what is the reason. Councilor Kay said the only advantage in not voting the bottom line is to be able to disagree with other portions of the budget. She doesn't know if she is the only Councilor among all the 11 who chooses to do that, but there is a very good possibility and she would not like to have to vote no on the entire budget as she does not want to send that message and maybe not just for her as she believes there are some concerns. The procedure would be to ask to vote it here in the budget/management and then recommend it that way at the town council but she is not sure how the full town council would vote.

Councilor McPherson suggested that Councilor Kay split the question with any department that she has an issue with, not vote every department line item by line item. If you have a problem with the IT Department then split the question and vote on it separately.

Councilor Kay would not have a problem with that but doesn't believe she can do it that way unless she reduces the budget and that really isn't her intent. She realizes it is a bit of a nuisance as there are 15 departments.

Councilor McPherson said you could make a motion to reduce the IT Department and if it fails it would be on the record and you could bring it up at the town council level as well.

Councilor Kay said she doesn't necessarily want to cut the IT Department. She would like the reorganization to be done correctly. It may not even be a money issue it is just very confused at this point.

Chairman DiFazio said he feels sometimes there is added pressure on the committee level to vote favorably because no one wants to come out even if someone has some major issues. Councilor Kay's idea facilitated someone who was going to need to vote on this budget and didn't want to really make the final decision on the entire budget but did have significant problems with certain parts of the budget. This would give the other people at the town council the idea that a budget/management committee member had difficulty with that section of the budget.

Councilor McPherson is confused as Councilor Kay is saying that she doesn't necessarily object with the amount being requested, just how it is being spent.

Councilor Kay said she came out with a report and she is waiting for a response from the department. She is leaving it open as she is not quite sure. She wants some justification to be able to support it.

Councilor Molisse asked if splitting this up could be done legally and Councilor Kay said yes by motion and it would be up to the committee to agree or disagree. It's just a different way of voting it. There is also the option were someone may want to recuse from a certain element of the budget and it would not preclude them from voting the rest of the budget.

Councilor Leary said the vote doesn't have to be unanimous at the committee level it could be 3/2 or 5/1 and send it up and make it very clear that the budget should be discussed with all the councilors. He would like to leave the budget all together. State your issue now and bring it up again at the full council.

Councilor Kay really thought about that but she did want to come off with a no action vote or abstain from the entire budget and this was the only relief she could find. She doesn't want the appearance that she doesn't support the budget.

Councilor DiFazio would feel much more comfortable voting individually if he had a particular issue with a department instead of voting no on the budget.

Councilor McPherson said all you can do is cut the budget. You can make a motion to cut the budget and if it passes the budget would go as amended and if not it goes as originally stated and report that there was a 3/2 vote that failed. This is all a matter of what kind of paper trail we are going to leave than anything else. The council is the only one who can take action that means anything.

Councilor Kay disagrees. She thinks the recommendation sends a very big message. To say favorable action but I really didn't like this loses merit. She asked them to consider what the detriment is other than to have to go through 15 votes.

Councilor McPherson reiterated what he just said. You still come out at the same place. He would prefer to leave it the way it is.

Councilor Leary said not all votes come from committee favorable action. This is the whole point of the committee. Why would you have a committee if there weren't any discussion.

Chairman DiFazio said by doing by department the full town council gets a much stronger flavor.

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Councilor Leary said this could open a whole can of worms.

Councilor McPherson said anyone can make a motion at the full town council to cut a line item. Your still going to come out at the same place.

Councilor Kay doesn't necessarily want to cut the budget. What she would like to do is send it back to the Mayor in the hopes that it would be cleared up. Maybe the amount of money is not the issue but how convoluted the attempt to reorganize it was.

Chairman DiFazio said his next meeting is Thursday the 20th and expect answers from the administration. He asked all to review them and be prepared on Thursday to go forward on voting these last three measures.

Councilor Kay said it will be her intent to ask to split the questions then. She also recommended that we look at the revenue measures, pre-funding measures and then go into the operating budget and water and sewer.

Councilor Leary will not be able to make it Thursday.

Councilor Kay asked if the revenue measures and pre-funding measures will be ready and if we are all set with those. Mr. Wilson said they have already been voted out of budget/management.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Kay MOTIONED to adjourn at 7:00 p.m. Councilor Leary seconded.
VOTED UNANIMOUSLY

Respectfully submitted by,

Lee Hultin, Recording Secretary

Approved by: _____