

**MINUTES OF THE  
BUDGET/MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

**May 20, 2004**

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

OTHERS: Richard Swanson, Jane Hackett and Jim Wilson

Chairman DiFazio called the Budget/Management Committee meeting to order on May 20, 2004 at 6:30 p.m. at the McCulloch Building.

**APPROVAL OF PRIOR MINUTES**

Councilor Leary MOTIONED to approve the Budget/Management Committee minutes of April 27, 2004. Councilor Kay seconded.

VOTED 4-0 (McPherson late)

Councilor Kay MOTIONED to take measure # 04 131 Appointment of Town Clerk out of order. Councilor Molisse seconded.

VOTED 4-0 (McPherson late)

**04 131 – Re-appointment of Town Clerk, Franklin Fryer**

No one had any questions or comments regarding this appointment.

Councilor Kay MOTIONED to recommend favorable action to the full town council on measure # 04 131. Councilor Molisse seconded.

VOTED 4-0 (McPherson late)

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

Councilor Leary requested that he come before the Town Council meeting next week scheduled for May 26, 2004 as he will ask his questions then.

*Councilor McPherson arrived.*

Councilor Kay asked him to explain the roll of a Zoning Board Member. Mr. McLeod stated they are governed by state law. It is very difficult to separate yourself on issues when you live in the town. Sometimes the zoning bylaws are not easy to understand, although after 4 years on the board he is feeling much more comfortable with the role. He has also been speaking with the Mayor's office trying to incorporate ideas into the master plan.

Councilor Kay stated that she has been receiving complaints on how the public hearings have been run. Mr. McLeod stated he was shown the procedure on how to run a public hearing. His intent is not to chill anyone. Typically the applicant makes their presentation then the board members ask questions followed by the staff comments. Once that is done he opens the meeting up to the public. He usually hears Town Council members first and heads of civic organizations as they represent a group of people. He tries to eliminate repetitive questions as they don't need to hear the same question 10 times. He stated if this is a concern of the town council and residents then he will make those changes.

Councilor Kay stated at public hearings the people that are waiting to speak do not feel what they are saying is redundant. You should give everyone the opportunity to speak as they have been waiting all night. Mr. McLeod stated if people come with children he will usually hear them first so they can leave. His concern is keeping people there all evening. After hearing this comments he stated he is more than happy to make these changes.

Councilor Molisse stated that Councilor Kay has hit on an issue with the way residents are treated. He also suggested that all members should be going out to the sights as well. He has received complaints that people are not allowed to speak at these public hearings and are getting shut down by Mr. McLeod. Councilor Molisse is not in favor of this re-appointment.

Councilor McPherson stated this one of the most difficult boards in town to serve on. He hopes Mr. McLeod would double his efforts to be more sensitive to the people who come before him. He hasn't personally seen a meeting when the residents were mistreated. He suggested keeping controversial issues later in the evening and to reorganize the meetings for the public's benefit. Councilor McPherson will be supporting this re-appointment.

Mr. McLeod stated that these comments are well accepted. The Planning Department sets the agendas and he has several ideas to make the board more user friendly which includes the Town Council. He has never heard any negative comments.

Councilor Leary MOTIONED to table measure # 04 109 until the Town Council meeting on May 26, 2004. Councilor Kay seconded. VOTED 4-1 (DiFazio)

It was stated that the Budget/Management committee will not be meeting prior to the next town council meeting and would like to report this measure back.

Councilor McPherson MOTIONED to reconsider the vote on measure # 04 109. Councilor Kay seconded. VOTED UNANIMOUSLY

Councilor Leary MOTIONED to recommend favorable action on measure # 04 109 to the full town council. Councilor McPherson seconded. VOTED 4-1 (Molisse)

**04 121 – Yr End, RFT of \$116,330 to School Dept. for SPED**

Mr. Wilson said the first piece of this is a Reserve Fund Transfer of \$116,330 and the second piece is a re-appropriation of \$68,798 from a special fund to School budget totaling \$185,128. The Reserve Fund Balance before this appropriation is \$240,281 and after is would \$30,000.

Mr. Robert West, Superintendent of Schools; Mr. Joe Rull, Assistant Superintendent of Schools; Karen Berry, School Committee and Mary Jo Livingstone were all present.

Mary-Jo Livingstone stated the deficit is SPED tuition is not a surprise to anyone as they have known about it since October 2003. It has been slowly escalating and now they can project the deficit accurately. She handed out a spread sheet to the committee members (See attached).

Total Deficit is:	\$379,083.42
Other Deficits:	<u>167,300.00</u>
Total All Deficits:	\$546,383.42

Funds Available:	
Within the appropriation	\$196,195.42
Reimbursement from	
Circuit breaker	<u>\$165,060.00</u>
Total:	\$361,255.42

Shortfall:	\$185,128.00
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The circuit breaker reimbursement is based on 2 quarterly payments of \$82,530. The 4<sup>th</sup> quarter could be even more.

Councilor McPherson asked where the \$196,195.42 is coming from and Mary Jo Livingstone said a variety of places within their budget that will have extra money available.

Councilor McPherson said that these SPED costs are going up astronomically and need to be addressed at the state level. The FY05 reimbursement rates will go up but so will SPED costs. He feels we can't afford it and we are de-funding the rest of the education money as SPED is sucking up all the money and we need the state to control these costs.

Chairman DiFazio suggested that he bring that up at a town council meeting.

Councilor Kay stated she wished the sped costs were separate and Mary Jo Livingstone said she included the others to show a good faith effort that they were trying to pay for it with their own expenses.

Councilor Kay MOTIONED to recommend favorable action on measure #04 121 to the full town council. Councilor Leary seconded. VOTED UNANIMOUSLY

**04 122 – Yr End, Appropriate \$224,591.71 from Free Cash for snow removal**

Mr. Wilson said the balance in free cash is \$686,589.00 prior to this appropriation. The \$224,591.71 is the total deficit in the snow removal line item. They waited this long because they were eligible under FEMA for reimbursement of the 3 day storm and they received \$170,000.

Councilor Leary asked if there were any more bills and Mr. Wilson said no this represents the entire amount as of 5-12-04.

Councilor Kay MOTIONED to recommend favorable action to the full town council on measure #04 122. Councilor Molisse seconded.  
VOTED UNANIMOUSLY

**04 123 – Yr End, Appropriate \$25,000 from Free Cash for Weymouth Day**

Mrs. Hackett said this is in addition to the gifts of \$35,000. The total cost is around \$60,000.

Councilor Kay asked who so much. Mrs. Hackett said the Mayors intention is to have children and the residents attend the parade and not participate in it. To do this they need to bring in performers. The carnival also wants to be here for 3 days and not 1 day. They are trying to get as many discounted prices as possible. They don't want the local business to be funding this as they already do enough. For more information you can contact Shelby Tillett, Mayor's Assistant.

Councilor DiFazio is surprised at the amount of money this cost. Mrs. Hackett said this is a free cash appropriation and the other money is from gifts. There is an active interest in parents and children to participate in events like this. The Mayor believes this \$25,000 is exceptionally well spent.

Councilor Leary MOTIONED to recommend favorable action on measure # 04 123 to the full town council. Councilor Molisse seconded. VOTED UNANIMOUSLY

**04 124 – Yr End, RFT of \$14,051.25 to Fire Dept. for recording system**

Mr. Wilson said this was before you once before and withdrawn as the Chief indicated it may cost more than originally thought. This measure is replacing the original measure.

Councilor Molisse MOTIONED to recommend favorable action on measure # 04 124 to the full town council. Councilor Leary seconded. VOTED UNANIMOUSLY

**04 125 – Yr End, RFT of \$4,000 to Health Dept. Expenses**

Mrs. Hackett said they were aware that the health department budget was exceptionally tight when entering the budget season.

Councilor Molisse MOTIONED to recommend favorable action on measure # 04 125 to the full town council. Councilor Leary seconded. VOTED UNANIMOUSLY

**04 126 – Yr End, RFT of \$12,607 to fund 0002 to remove oil tank at Broad Street fire station**

Mr. Wilson said on 12-16-03 it was brought to his attention that the fuel tank at the Broad Street fire station was leaking. Under the state procurement laws he is allowed to sign an emergency declaration authorizing that the tank be removed. This was done and the building was sold. When they were testing they found out that the tank leaked and this was part of the sales agreement. The site has received a clean bill of health.

Councilor Kay MOTIONED to recommend favorable action on measure # 04 126 to the full town council. Councilor Molisse seconded. VOTED UNANIMOUSLY

**04 128 – Yr End, RFT of \$6,000 to Police expenses for MMA Chief's exam**

Mr. Wilson said in the fall there was an opening for Police Chief and the Mayor delegated his authority to conduct the exam to the MMA and the exam was in February 2004. The bill came in at \$12,000 on a per person basis. There is \$6,000 remaining in the police budget and they need another \$6,000.

Councilor Leary questioned why they used the MMA and it was stated that the MMA offers a variety of little services. This was also a timing issue as it was the second exam. This was on the recommendation of the HR Director.

Councilor Leary MOTIONED to recommend favorable action on measure # 04 128 to the full town council. Councilor Molisse seconded. VOTED UNANIMOUSLY

**04 129 – Yr End, RFT of \$12,000 to Fire Dept. expense vehicle maintenance**

Mr. Wilson said this is a part 2 request. The fire department vehicle maintenance has a deficit of \$7,000; this request will cover that with some remaining. The chief would also like to do front end work on engine five by the end of the fiscal year. Things were getting so bad in the department that in the beginning of 2004 the chief went looking for 2 new engines and they had to keep the old vehicles up and running.

Councilor Molisse MOTIONED to recommend favorable action on measure # 04 129 to the full town council. Councilor Kay seconded. VOTED UNANIMOUSLY

**04 130 – Yr End, RFT of \$38,500 to Town Hall Maintenance expense**

Mr. Wilson said this is basically for McCulloch and Town Hall. There is \$15,000 remaining in this account but there are oil and gas bills that go back to March. They also have telephone service that has not been covered for the remainder of the year.

Councilor McPherson asked if this was attributable to the cold winter and Mr. Wilson said yes and they were repairs needed at Town Hall. There was one point in the winter that the heat was running 12/7 at 80 degrees for 3 weeks because they couldn't repair it without draining the system which could not be done during the very cold weather.

Councilor Leary MOTIONED to recommend favorable action on measure # 04 130 to the full town council. Councilor Molisse seconded. VOTED UNANIMOUSLY

During this meeting they reviewed the answers to Chairman DiFazio's second set of questions.

Question #1 – the answer remains the same.

Question #3 – the answer is in page 1 of the salary detail. Susan DiTullio, Caroline LaCroix and Patty Capuzzo are receiving step raised. Patty is listed 40% Community Services and 60% Mayor. This is consistent with the supplemental budget of FY04.

Question #4 – the answer remains the same.

Question #5 – Mr. Wilson explained the fire department spread sheet to the committee. The total on the last page is \$5.5 vs. \$5.3 million.

Question #7 &8 – attached was a sheet showing all revenues coming in and all expenses going out.

Review with the School Department

Joe Rull, Karen Berry and Mary Jo Livingstone

Mr. Rull explained the answer to question #6. The question was regarding the nurses. There are 14 nurses and 3 are funded by other sources so there are only 11 in the budget. Councilor DiFazio asked what the head count for the watch person was. Mr. Rull said there are three budgeted position but the head count is 4 as two people share 1 position.

Question #11 - the answer is in the FY04-05 budget detail. These are a result of the new high school and middle school configuration. There are 2 housemasters, .5 music teacher, 1 tech, 1 culinary art, 1 allied health teacher, 3 foreign language and 6 custodians. These are all the personnel aspects. The maintenance factors are Fuel increase of \$103,000 and electricity increase of \$142,400 also, \$50,000 moving expense all total \$980,000.

Mary Jo Livingstone answered #16. She said they don't make final changes in the budget until they are ready to roll them. She stated that they consider a range of salaries until the positions are filled.

Councilor Molisse asked if there are any user fees for students. He specifically asked about the photography class. Mr. Rull said the photography class is charging \$50.00 up front which will pay for matting and other supplies needed throughout the year. This is a very popular program. This money goes into a revolving account.

Mr. Collins clarified that she is not retiring and felt the comment was somewhat inappropriate.

Councilor McPherson stated that short of raising taxes they couldn't be any more supportive of the school department. As negotiations begin with the teachers he would like them to keep this in mind that the town has given everything to the schools this year.

Karen Berry agreed they have put education first and it will go a long way.

Councilor Molisse MOTIONED to take a 5 minutes recess. Councilor Kay seconded. VOTED UNANIMOUSLY

### **Discussions of FY05 Budget**

Councilor Molisse MOTIONED to take measure # 04 088 and 04 089 out of order. Councilor Kay seconded. VOTED UNANIMOUSLY

#### **04 088 – Operating #8 Appropriate \$6,665,841 from Water Enterprise**

Councilor Kay felt that the reserve fund was rather large in light of all the projects going on.

Councilor McPherson MOTIONED to recommend favorable action on Measure # 04 088 Appropriate \$6,665,841 to the full town council. Councilor Molisse seconded. VOTED UNANIMOUSLY

#### **04 089 – Operating #9 Appropriate \$11,049,518 from Sewer Enterprise**

Councilor Kay also felt this reserve fund was rather large but realized it was ok due to the large projects going on.

Councilor McPherson asked what the concern was with the reserve fund. Councilor Kay stated that it went from almost nothing to \$288,000.

Councilor Leary MOTIONED to recommend favorable action on Measure # 04 089 Appropriate \$11,049,518 to the full town council. Councilor Kay seconded. VOTED UNANIMOUSLY

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

Councilor Kay stated that she has several issues with the Information Technology Department. She received the responses from the Mayor but has not been able to read and address it.

Councilor Kay MOTIONED to split the question so that she may be able to vote down the IT Department budget only. There was no second. Motion failed.

Councilor DiFazio said he has an issue with the School Department. It is one of the most important departments that serve the constituents. He understands the volatility of trying to finance a new school.

This evening the school department stated that they need new positions for the new high school and middle schools totaling \$571,358.00. Other new items associated with the new school are fuel \$103,000, electricity \$142,400 and moving expenses at \$51,000. The school department has requested an increase of 3.85% of their FY04 budget. The Mayor has asked all departments not to increase more than 2.5%.

In the minutes of 5-16-02 Councilor DiFazio had asked the school department if they will need more staffing for a new high school and the school department replied no, they would be using the existing staff. In the minutes of 5-20-02 he asked if there were enough teachers to staff the new building and they replied yes, they would use the same teachers.

Councilor DiFazio MOTIONED to reduce the operating budget by \$285,685.00 which is half of the increased salary costs and request for those savings to be placed in the stabilization fund. Councilor McPherson seconded for discussion sake.

Discussions:

Mr. Rull concerns with the statements made in the minutes of 5-16-02. It would be wonderful if they had the existing staff of May 2002 to open the high school of September 2004. That would mean they would have 40 additional positions in the school department. Since 5-16-02 they have cut 40 positions in the school system. The statements made in the minutes were entirely accurate as that staff would have been more than sufficient if they were to use that level of staffing.

Councilor McPherson said it is difficult for the council when all the departments are level funded except the schools and they are constantly being told by parents that there is waste and that the schools get everything. Over the last few years no one has done particularly well with the budget. This year we are giving the schools everything. He hopes the teachers realize this when negotiating salaries as there is no money for it. He shares some of Councilor DiFazio's concerns, but will not be supporting this motion as he does not want to stand in the way of this reorganization.



Councilor DiFazio said he also is in support of the reorganization.

Councilor Molisse echoes Councilor McPherson's concerns. He appreciated Councilor DiFazio's comments but they new in the beginning it would cost to reorganize. The Education Committee had a meeting and there was a presentation on 5-8 and new these positions would be needed. He feels the schools need this money at this time.

Councilor Kay appreciates these comments but will not be supporting this motion.

VOTED 1-4 FAILED

DiFazio – Yes, Kay – No, McPherson-No, Molisse-No, Leary-No

Councilor Leary MOTIONED to recommend favorable action on measure # 04 087 FY05 Operating Budget to the full Town Council with the caveat that anyone can speak on any item they wish to. Councilor Molisse seconded.

Discussions:

Councilor Kay stated she will not be supporting this motion. She did not intend not to vote the bottom line of the budget. She was hoping her colleagues would have allowed her to separate it but since they have not she will not supporting it.

Councilor McPherson thanked the chairman for all his hard work. It very difficult when we don't have any money. Weymouth is in a position with no increase in local aide in 3 years and meanwhile the state mandated costs are going up. There is unforeseen pension and health increases in unfunded liabilities. These costs will keep going up with no long term relief. There is a need for the state to fix their finances as we are at the end of the line with hidden money and funds. All the easy cuts have been done and this budget is just hanging on. There aren't even any pay raises in this budget.

Councilor Leary concurs. He believes proposition 2 ½ has seen its days and we can't address it.

Councilor Kay stated Chairman DiFazio has done a great job. She agrees with Councilor Leary on proposition 2 ½. Expenses are starting to show a lot of strain and something will have to give. She would like to try to get our legislature before the town council. She will try to split the question again at the town council level.

Councilor Molisse thanked all members for the great job.

Councilor DiFazio said the administration did an extraordinary job in managing the town and they proved it to him. The constituents should be confident that they reviewed the budget carefully. They have all agreed they like the MUNIS report (c) from the School Department for next year. He is glad his motion failed as he did not take Mr. Rull's responses into account.

VOTED 4-1

DiFazio – Yes, Kay-No, Leary – Yes, McPherson –Yes, Molisse-Yes

Councilor Kay asked the record to show that Councilor McPherson voted on a measure the he recused himself from. Councilor McPherson asked what Councilor Kay is implying. She stated she wasn't implying anything she just wanted that record to reflect what took place.

**ADJOURNMENT**

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

Respectfully submitted by,

Lee Hultin, Recording Secretary

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_