

**TOWN COUNCIL
BUDGET/MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
TOWN HALL-COUNCIL CHAMBERS
November 9, 2009**

Present: Kenneth DiFazio, Chairman
Patrick O'Connor-arrived at 6:50 PM
Arthur Mathews
Michael Molisse
Ed Harrington

Also Present: Councilor Brian McDonald
Councilor Thomas J. Lacey
Councilor Robert Conlon
Council President Michael Smart
Maureen Duffy, Town Auditor
Jim Wilson, Chief Financial Officer
James Clarke, Director of Planning and Community Development
Walter Flynn-Chair Community Preservation Committee

Recording Secretary: Diane T. Hachey

Councilor DiFazio called the Budget/Management Committee Meeting of November 9, 2009 at 6:35 PM.

09 112-Community Preservation Committee-Purchase of Land at 4 Mutton Lane

Mr. Clarke and Mr. Flynn presented to the Budget/Management Committee and distributed an aerial view of the property under discussion.

This land is located at the intersection of Pleasant Street and has frontage on Mutton Lane. It entails a 4 acre parcel inclusive of a home built in the 1770's. This property is adjacent to Brad Hawes Park and the town is looking to purchase the rear 2 acres.

The Community Preservation Committee is proposing a measure totaling \$69,000-- acquiring the land in the amount of approximately \$63,000 which represents outstanding back real estate taxes with the remainder to be applied to attorney fees and associated closing costs. The committee reviewed and voted unanimously this purchase on September 10th and confirmed that this would qualify for recreation set-a-side funding under the CPC regulations. Subsequent to authorization of this measure there will be \$72,000 remaining the Community Preservation Committee's Recreation Fund.

The property has been appraised at \$100,000-which results in a substantial savings in purchase to the town.

Of benefit to this purchase is the possible future expansion of Brad Hawes Park.

Discussion with committee members confirmed the following:

- the front 2 acres could possibly be subdivided
- the CPC has reached a verbal agreement with the owner for purchase of property
- back taxes outstanding in the amount of \$63,000 due the town would be collected at the time of transfer

Councilor Mathews noted that he is in support of this project for the following reasons:

- there will be limited opportunities for subdivision if the town acquires said property
- back of the property abuts Brad Hawes Park and allows for future recreational Expansion

09 111-External Audit Proposals for Fiscal Years 2010-2014

Maureen Duffy presented to the Committee. She confirmed that at the request of Council, she sent out requests for awarding of an outside auditing contract, commencing in fiscal year 2010.

Although we have contracted O'Connor and Drew for the past seven years, and the working relationship has been favorable, it is not uncommon to seek new firms after such a long time.

In light of the current financial situation, Ms. Duffy is recommending the lowest bid which is from Malloy, Lynch and Bienvenue. They are a 25 person local firm. The engagement team would consist of 4 CPA's with combined in excess of 50 years auditing and accounting experience. Their local office is located in Norwell and has extensive experience with the Munis accounting system. Additionally, Ms. Duffy verified references and found them to be favorable.

The second lowest bid was from O'Connor and Drew and Ms. Duffy noted that if the contract were to be awarded to them that they would assign a new managing partner than we have had in the past. She further noted that a down-side to changing firms is the learning curve which is involved. Ms. Duffy requested direction from the Budget/Management Committee as to how long a contract they wish to pursue-either 3 or 5 years.

Councilor Mathews questioned the size of municipalities which Malloy, Lynch and Bienvenue have audited in the past, and noted that they are smaller in size to that of the Town of Weymouth. Ms. Duffy noted that the scope of the audit remains the same, regardless of the size of the municipality.

Councilor Harrington realized that the awarding of an outside auditor contract is mandated by both the Charter and the state, but would like to pursue obtaining cost saving measures/initiatives as part of the cost of the audit.

Councilor O'Connor agrees with Councilor Harrington and feels that due to the economy, the firms may be willing to add this piece to the current price of the contract. He would be looking for management controls so that the town runs more efficiently and effectively.

It was discussed at length that the scope of the audit, as defined by the state, is very specific as to the firm's authority. Both Ms. Duffy and Mr. Wilson agreed that the firm recommends internal controls and includes a management letter as a portion of their review. This additional request would be outside the scope of said audit, goes beyond internal controls, and would result in work being done retrospectively, which is possible, but could potentially add to the price of the contract.

Council President Smart suggested that Budge/Management make a recommendation to administration or the solicitor to effect this suggestion. Mr. Wilson noted that this would be considered dictating delivery of services, which falls under the sole jurisdiction of the Mayor.

Councilor Mathews cautioned that if you change the scope of the RFP process there could be legal ramifications and suggested obtaining an opinion from the Town Solicitor. Mr. Wilson concurred with Councilor Mathews and noted that if one is requesting additional services, then all firms must be solicited in order to be uniform (requests must be made in writing, with an indicated deadline and must follow proper protocol).

Ms. Duffy requested that Councilor O'Connor specify in writing exactly what he is requesting so she is able to develop an addendum to the proposals and forwarded to all five firms.

Chairman DiFazio noted that Councilor O'Connor will contact Ms. Duffy, who in turn will develop the draft language for the addendum and forward to Council President Smart for approval.

Councilor O'Connor motioned to table measure number 09 111 to a future date, pending approval of a letter for forwarding to five auditing firms. Motion seconded by Councilor Molisse and voted unanimously.

At 7:26 PM, there being no further business to conduct, Councilor O'Connor motioned to adjourn, seconded by Councilor Mathews and voted unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by: Diane T. Hachey

Approved by: Chairman Kenneth DiFazio