

**MINUTES OF THE  
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING  
May 10, 2004**

PRESENT: TJ Lacey (President), Michael Smart (Vice President), Joe Connolly, Ken DiFazio, Sue Kay, Paul Leary, Arthur Mathews, Colin McPherson, Michael Molisse and Greg Shanahan

OTHERS: Franklin Fryer, Richard Swanson, George Lane, Jim Wilson, Jane Hackett and Mayor David M. Madden.

President Lacey called the Annual Town Meeting to order on May 10, 2004 at 7:30 p.m. at the Abigail Adams Auditorium.

The Weymouth High School Band played the Star Spangled Banner.

Opening Remarks from Mayor David M. Madden. He stated that when the charter was formed it required the Town Council to have a public hearing in the form of a Town Meeting on the Mayor's Budget. The Town meeting is much more than just a public hearing, it is a community event. Weymouth is a community about families.

Lois Desmond, Paul Leary and Mayor David M. Madden presented scholarship awards to more than 41 recipients at the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Scholarship Awards Presentation. Ms. Desmond said the town encourages the desire to further education for people of all ages and career goals. This could not be possible without the support of tax payer's donations.

President Lacey updated everyone on the Town Council Activities for the past year. The town council reorganized all their subcommittees and elected a new vice president. They hired O'Connor & Drew as auditors and reappointed the internal auditor, Richard Swanson for a term of 3 years expiring 12/06. Over the past year they have amended the REO ordinance, set the tax classification, amended the zoning ordinance in the landing area as it related to the Green line restoration. The Town Council has approved appropriations for 4 vehicles at the DPW, turn out gear for the fire department, repairs at stations 1 & 2, hardwiring throughout the town, purchased 2 school transportation vans, 6 police cars and replaced \$500,000 to the stabilization fund. These are all solid investment to a conservative fiscal approach. Thanks to the efforts of Chief Leary they have leased to purchase 2 fire trucks. They extended the tax amnesty program and approved over \$11 million for improvement and repairs to the infrastructure of the water and sewer systems. This has been a long ongoing problem in certain areas of this town.

The town is under major construction with the Greenbush line, MWRA, expanding of route 18, Fore River Bridge construction and numerous water and sewer projects. The town council works closely with the Mayor's office and department heads to respond to constituents needs. He thanked the Mayor's team.

Diana Flemmer, Chairperson for the School committee introduced all the members of the school committee which were present this evening. Mr. Lockhead, Sean Guilfoyle, Diane Oliverio, Mr. Gallagher and Karen Berry who was not present.

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**7:30 p.m.**

**04 081 – Operating #1 Appropriate \$1.25 Million from the Stabilization Fund for the FY05 Budget.**

**04 082 – Operating #2 Appropriate \$710,000 from Sale of Town Owned Land for FY05 Budget**

**04 083 \_ Operating #3 Appropriate \$250,000 from Free Cash for FY05 Worker’s Compensation**

**04 084 – Operating #4 Appropriate \$250,000 from Free Cash to pre-fund FY05 revaluation costs**

**04 085 – Operating #5 Appropriate \$210,000 from Free Cash to pre fund the FY05 Fuel Depot**

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

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

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

Councilor Smart MOTIONED to open the public hearings on measures # 04 082. 04 083, 04 084, 04 085, 04 087, 04 088 and 04 089 at 8:05 p.m. These public hearings were published on April 30, 2004. Councilor Mathews seconded. VOTED UNANIMOUSLY

Mayor David M. Madden and Chief Financial Officer Jim Wilson presented the budget in a power point presentation. This is a year long process. Each January the Mayor meets with department heads. The two main goals are to establish stability and address the school department issues for FY05. The new high school and the establishment of two middle schools by realigning the grades. State assessments have increased \$250,000 and state aid has decreased \$150,000. We are using some of this years funds to address of the FY05 items such as pre-funded \$250,000 for Worker’s Compensation and \$250,000 for revaluations which will now be required every year, \$210,000 for FY05 fuel depot and \$96,044 for the fire truck lease payment. This year we are included the revenues from the recreation programs in the budget instead of using the revolver fund. A universal police grant went from \$50,000 to \$204,000. Rubbish expenses are at \$838,000

and there is no increase in the rubbish fee, it will remain \$50.00 per household. As we are unsure what we will receive from the school building assistant program so we are using \$1.25 million from the stabilization fund.

Mr. Wilson said the revenues for 2004 were \$105,990,337 and 2005 are at \$108,556,047. He reviewed all revenues for fiscal year 2005.

Mayor Madden stated there is a 15% increase in pensions but this will be the last large increase for the next 3 years. Insurance is level funded. State charges to Weymouth will increase from \$3.5 to \$3.7 million. Debt service will increase from \$7.375 to \$7.48 million due to our bonding payment on the high school. Overlay from abatements will drop from \$700k to \$675k. Employer taxes will remain the same. The retirement fund increased dramatically due to an actuarial study. They anticipate this will remain stable over the next 2 years. The health insurance costs are level funded and unemployment compensation will drop from \$438k to \$150k. Property and Casualty insurance will increase slightly and we are pre-funding worker's compensation.

Review of expenses:

Recycling pick up has increased from 12 weeks to 29 weeks. The IT Department is being reorganized to align with the responsibilities they assume.

The school department budget will increase 3.4% from \$47.6M to \$49.432 million. This is a challenging year with the new high school and the realignment of the middle schools. There are 14.5 new positions. The Town Council is being level funded. The Mayor's office is eliminating .5 position, the Town Clerk's office is level funded, the legal department will increase slightly due to FU05 collective bargaining agreements, the IT increased \$27,000 due to a reclassification of 2 individuals, step increases and a position funded for ½ a year is now a full year, the reserve fund will decrease by \$200,000 as the health insurance money was put in that account the previous year, administrative services will increase due to maintenance of town hall, health department will increase due to expenses, municipal finance will increase due to step increases and contractual obligations, parks department will increase by \$84,000 as summer help is now in the budget instead of the revolver account, planning department will decrease due to a greater reliance on the community development block grant, Inspectional services will increase due to step increases and contractual obligations, police department will increase as a result of stipends and contractual obligations, fire department remains stable and DPW will increase by \$200,000 due to yard waste removal from 12 to 29 weeks.

Mayor Madden said the council approved \$150,000 for the study of the water treatment plant. The budget provides for \$500,000 in maintenance of the plant. This money could be going towards bond payments of a new plant. We will be moving forward over the next few years on this.

We have reduced inflow and infiltration into our sewer systems. We have also reduced the number and frequency of over flows. We have identified 5 capital projects and 2 are underway. This process will last 2-3 years.

The water department's personnel costs will go from \$1.878 to \$1.946 million due to overtime and funding a ½ time position. Municipal finance will be taking over some of the financial functions of this department. If this doesn't work out they will need to hire someone for this ½ time position. Expenses will decrease. \$400,000 is going from the capital line item to the reserve fund just in case the water treatment plant requires some major work. Town Council will need to approve this to utilize it. The MWRA will increase substantially over the next few years at approximately 5% each year.

The sewer department's reserve fund will also increase from \$15,000 to \$268,000.

The Mayor stated the following are areas of concern that they will be watching.

1. Timing of the SBA reimbursement
2. Collective Bargaining for FY05
3. Water & Sewer rates
4. SPED

Mayor Madden said this budget provides stability, necessary funding for schools and balances our long term needs with the needs of the operating budget.

Ervin Merstein, 463 Broad Street – said he is concerned about getting the best services out of the budget for the money we spend. Suggested we should have a public hearing on the individual department budgets as some need improvement. He would like silence train horns at rail road crossings and to establish quiet zones.

Ellen Peterson, 237 Broad Street – currently has a 10<sup>th</sup> grader and is worried about the new high school with safety of so many kids and urges the council to continue to support the schools.

Linda McDonald – Questioned the police department budget as there is a 4% increase for HAZMAT. She read several quotes from minutes regarding this and Mr. Swanson's audit of the department. She wishes there were more debate on these types of budgets as we debate the school department budget in public while these are done during budget/management meetings and are not on TV.

President Lacey said the budget/management meetings are posted and have been meeting 2-3 times a week over the last 5 weeks. This council has been extremely proactive in allowing comments from the public. The sub committee reviews all the department budgets. He stated any collective bargaining obligations are also within the budget.

Councilor McPherson said part of the problem is a wrong answer was given. A 4% increase in police pay with a staggering increase in half of a year increases the following year's budget by .5%, in addition there is 1% added on for HAZMAT and step increases.

Councilor Kay said there were additional questions within the budget/management committee that are still being reviewed along with all department budgets. The council by no means undermines the public process.

President Lacey said there is no attempt to hide anything or sweep anything under the rug. At times it is somewhat difficult to get the word out to people.

Robert Casimiro, 617 Broad Street – There has been very little talk about a proposition 2 ½ override and he appreciated the fiscal restraints. He suggested public tours of the Water Treatment Plant. He asked if the FY05 SPED reflects the new state funding at 35% and it was replied yes. He asked about reimbursement at 75%.

Mary Jo Livingston said the legislation as voted 70% reimbursement but it is not in the budget.

Mike Cronin, 27 Edgeworth Street – He complimented the Mayor and Town Council in their efforts for a new water treatment plant. He hopes the town is not going to just study it but will replace it as well. He also stated that they do have tours available you just have to call them.

Harvey Welch, 674 Pond Street – said the Mayor mentioned that the MWRA will be raising the rates by 5% each year for a while and asked if there are any plans for when the Naval Air Station will be coming on line and if it would skyrocket our rates.

Mayor Madden said we cannot control the rates only the amount of flow going through the system. The more improvements we make the less I/I will be wasted. We have not been approached by the Naval Air Station to use our system. They would need to pay for whatever uses they generate, not the residents. They are considering an on site treatment facility.

Councilor Leary clarified that the \$150,000 for a study of the water treatment plant is mandated by the DEP when a town wants to build a new treatment plant. It is part of a process we need to go through.

Micky Cronin, 65 Hinston Road – said the town started in FY04 with a large stabilization fund and asked what the balance in fund now was. Mr. Wilson said it currently is \$3.1 million and after the \$1.25 million is approved it would be \$1.9 million. When the Mayor took office we had \$2 million. The high point was in FY04 at \$3.6 million as we have continued to finance it over the years, that is how we received a bond rating of 1.79%. The Mayor is committed to pay attention to this.

All persons were given the opportunity to speak.

Councilor Smart MOTIONED to close the public hearings on all measures at 9:13 p.m.  
Councilor Leary seconded. VOTED UNANIMOUSLY

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**ADJOURNMENT**

Councilor Smart MOTIONED to adjourn at 9:15 p.m. Councilor Leary seconded.  
VOTED UNANIMOUSLY

Respectfully submitted by,

Lee Hultin, Recording Secretary

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