

**Joint Budge Task Force Committee
Minute of June 24, 2015
Selectmen's Chamber, Town Hall**

Present for Board of Selectmen: Alison Hughes, Tony Archinski, Ann Vandal, Assistant Town Manager/Finance, Jim Duggan, Town Manager and Recording Secretary Shannon Rowe Beaulieu

Present for School Committee: Betsy Murphy, Michael McNamara, Steven Stone, Superintendent of Schools and Bill Frangiamore, Business Manager

Present for Finance Committee: Louise Tremblay and Bob Corey

Mr. Archinski opened the meeting at 7:06 a.m.

Welcome Members

Mr. Archinski thanked all of the members for being part of this Committee and discussed how the Committee is set up.

Charge of the Committee

Mr. Archinski stated that his original thoughts is for the Committee to study revenue and expenditures for the next five years. Mr. Archinski stated that this is a six month Task Force Committee and the Committee would make recommendation to the Board of Selectmen regarding their findings.

Mr. Archinski discussed best practices, new revenue, etc.

Dr. McNamara asked what authority does this Committee have? Mr. Archinski stated that this Committee would put together a report of their findings for the Board of Selectmen and School Committee.

Mrs. Hughes discussed the Task Force Committee being an advisory Board to give recommendations to the Board of Selectmen, School Committee and Finance Committee.

Mr. Duggan stated that the Task Force Committee's findings should be presented to the Tri-Board as the Tri-Board is an already established venue.

Mr. Archinski discussed creating a comprehensive report from the Task Force Committee which would include the history of finances, present and future finances at a level that the average taxpayer can understand.

Ms. Tremblay stated the report needs to be made very simple to the Public as the Public needs to understand the finances, etc.

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Mr. Archinski discussed residents not understanding the Town Meeting process.

Mrs. Hughes discussed creating a five-year plan to be updated annually and making a presentation to the Public and receiving annual projection plans from Mr. Frangiamore and Mrs. Vandal.

Mrs. Murphy discussed her vision of the Committee and at the end of the six-months creating a tool to help guide financial decisions.

Mr. Duggan discussed not wanting the hat hung on all future Economic Development in Town.

Structure of the Committee

Mr. Archinski again discussed his original thoughts of the Committee and discussed wanting to bring the Tri-Board to a smaller group. Mr. Archinski discussed having a facilitator and previously thought of having Bernie Lynch, the previous City Manager of Lowell, be the Committee's facilitator.

Ms. Tremblay stated that the facilitator should be kept within the Town unless Mr. Lynch was going to be the facilitator pro-bono. Ms. Tremblay stated that the purpose of the Task Force Committee is to come up with Town revenue not spend it.

Mr. Archinski explained that he just wanted to have everything ready for today's meeting.

Dr. McNamara stated that he agrees with Mr. Archinski in regards to having a facilitator.

Mr. Corey stated that the Committee could see at a later date if a facilitator is needed without a cost.

Dr. McNamara stated that a facilitator could help the Committee with leadership.

Mr. Duggan stated that a facilitator would not guide the Committee, a facilitator would organize the thoughts of the Committee. Mr. Duggan stated that he is willing to complete that task for the Committee.

Mrs. Hughes discussed the technology in the Selectmen's Chamber and stated that documents could be put on screen and shown to the residents watching.

Mr. Archinski stated that he would also like to invite the Town Accountant to the next meeting.

Mr. Archinski discussed having a Chairman or Dual Chair's for the Task Force Committee.

Motion made by Mrs. Murphy to nominate Alison Hughes as Chairperson of the Joint Budget Task Force Committee. Motion seconded by Dr. McNamara. Motion passed unanimously.

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Meeting Schedule

Mrs. Hughes set the next two meeting dates as June 20, 2015 and July 21, 2015 and stated that both meetings will start at 5:00 p.m.

Future Agenda Topics

Mrs. Hughes discussed and read from the agenda the future agenda topics.

Mrs. Hughes stated that the Committee will review financial statements, open liability, health insurance, contractual obligations, etc.

Mr. Duggan discussed personnel investments, etc.

Mrs. Hughes discussed capital planning over the next five years.

Mr. Archinski discussed the current Risk Assessment being completed for the Police Department.

Mr. Duggan explained that the Risk Assessment would provide recommendations regarding policies, investments, etc.

Mr. Duggan stated that he plans to also complete Risk Assessments for the Fire Department, Department of Public Works, Town Hall, Library and Senior Center.

Dr. McNamara discussed setting priorities in order of taking up agenda topics.

Mr. Duggan discussed the possibilities of consolidating and if it would be feasible.

Mrs. Vandal discussed 37% of the budget being State revenues. Mrs. Vandal discussed the perimeters of expectations, discussed revenue projections being all over the place and stated that State revenue is key but the most volatile.

Mrs. Hughes discussed wanting to underestimate State Aide in revenue projections.

Mrs. Vandal stated that the State budget is level funded every year until the final State numbers come in.

Mrs. Vandal discussed the recap sheet, tax rate recap sheet, excess levy, health insurance, retirements, trash fees, etc.

Superintendent Stone discussed being able to predict fixed costs.

Mr. Archinski discussed having a history of financial situations.

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Mrs. Hughes discussed the High School, Vocational School, Library, and Police Station being all debt exclusions.

Mr. Duggan dissed OPEB funding and pension liability being two separate issues.

Superintendent Stone discussed 160 mandates each year being unfunded by the State.

Mr. Duggan stated that he would work with Superintendent Stone regarding consolidation.

Ms. Tremblay left the meeting at 8:21 a.m.

Mrs. Hughes discussed the possibilities of outsourcing.

Mr. Duggan discussed regionalization.

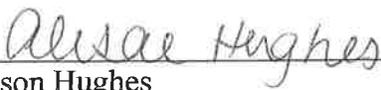
Superintendent Stone stated that he could not discuss consolidation, outsourcing or regionalization without the School Committee's approval as there could be issues with Collective Bargaining.

Public Input – There was no public input.

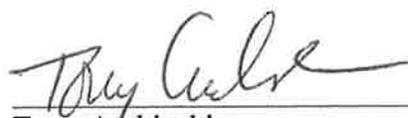
Adjournment

Motion made by Mrs. Murphy to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Mr. Archinski. Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:27 a.m.

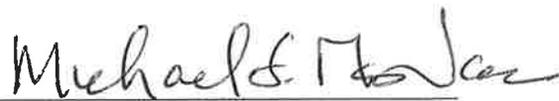


Alison Hughes

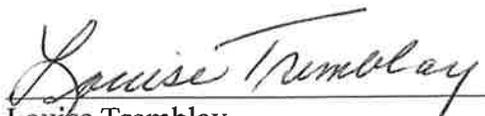


Tony Archinski

Betsy Murphy



Dr. Michael McNamara



Louise Tremblay

Bob Corey