

**Joint Budget Task Force Committee
Minutes of October 22, 2015
Harmony Hall**

Present for Board of Selectmen: Alison Hughes, Tony Archinski, Linda Wright, Town Accountant, 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

Mrs. Hughes opened the meeting at 5:39 p.m.

Presentation of Combined Revenue and Expenditure Projections Town Wide

Mrs. Vandal presented the Committee with the Combined Revenue and Expenditures Projection for FY16-21.

Mrs. Vandal stated that she, Jim Duggan, Bill Frangiamore and Superintendent Stone met and reviewed all of the material presented at the previous meetings.

Mrs. Vandal gave a brief history of the presented spreadsheets and stated that both School and Municipal revenues and expenditures are included by Department.

Mrs. Vandal reviewed page 3 of the spreadsheet and stated that the Municipal revenues include all revenues excluding grants while the expenditures do not include education.

Mrs. Vandal reviewed page 2 of the spreadsheet and discussed salaries increasing by .75% for FY16-17 and 2% for FY18-21, instructionally focused expenses at 5% per year, non-instructionally focused expenses at 2% per year, chargebacks at 6% per year, tuitions at 2.16% per year and utilities at an average of 7.8% per year.

Mrs. Vandal discussed excludables appropriation plus \$200K Per year, NSS appropriation plus \$500K per year and the Circuit Breaker reimbursement at 60% each year.

Mrs. Vandal stated that the E-Rate is not included due to no technology projects being planned.

Mrs. Vandal reviewed page 1 of the spreadsheet and discussed the combined revenue and projections for both School and Municipal.

Mrs. Vandal reviewed page 4 of the spreadsheet and discussed the Proposed Municipal Budget Increases for FY16-21.

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Mrs. Vandal reviewed page 5 of the spreadsheet and discussed the Proposed Staffing Increases for both School and Municipal for FY17-21.

Mrs. Vandal discussed slight adjustments in revenue areas for the School Department in FY17-21.

Mrs. Hughes discussed page 1 of the spreadsheet and discussed looking at the bottom line which is a 2.3% increase over each fiscal year.

Dr. McNamara asked if both the Municipal and School Department were in total agreement with this spreadsheet? Mrs. Vandal, Mr. Duggan, Superintendent Stone and Mr. Frangiamore all answered yes.

Mrs. Hughes applauded Mr. Duggan, Mrs. Vandal, Mr. Frangiamore and Superintendent Stone for the amount of collaboration they have shown during this process.

Mrs. Hughes discussed chargebacks being shown going in and coming out.

Mrs. Vandal stated that the Miscellaneous expenditure is personnel costs.

Dr. McNamara questioned the NSS appropriation, Excludables Appropriation and Chargebacks showing a 300% increase. Mrs. Vandal stated that she needed to look at the formula used on the spreadsheet.

Mrs. Hughes discussed the State Assessment showing in red on page 1. Mrs. Vandal discussed the revenues offset versus expenditures. Mrs. Hughes discussed State Assessment new growth being built into tax numbers.

Dr. McNamara asked if the Greater Lowell Technical School's Assessment is paid directly? Mrs. Vandal stated yes, as is Essex Agricultural.

Mrs. Vandal stated that she did not include any debt exclusion in any of these numbers.

Mrs. Hughes discussed the Committee having three more scheduled meetings and asked how the Committee should deal with the delta? Mrs. Hughes discussed providing the full document, once finished, to the Tri-Board for their review.

Mr. Archinski stated that the original charge of the Joint Budget Task Force Committee was to study the financial issues and report back to their Boards.

Mr. Duggan suggested presenting the finished data to the Tri-Board for their review.

Dr. McNamara asked that open discussion be placed on the next agenda.

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Mr. Duggan discussed all of the information provided on the combined revenues and expenditures document already being reviewed by this Committee.

Mrs. Hughes stated that the Committee should be ready to vote on the final document at their November 4, 2015 meeting. Mrs. Hughes stated that any changes to the document could be made at the October 28, 2015 meeting.

Mr. Archinski asked about the budget narrative being included with the final document? Mrs. Vandal stated that she is working on the narrative and it would be ready for the October 28, 2015 meeting for the Committee's review.

Mr. Duggan discussed looking at the delta, the need for Economic Development and the possibility of an override, etc.

Mrs. Hughes stated that all of that information would be discussed at the Tri-Board meeting.

Mr. Duggan discussed narrowing down the need with possible recommendations included in the final document.

Dr. McNamara discussed looking two to three years out and this Committee meeting annually to review where the figures are at.

Mrs. Hughes stated that the document will be presented to the Tri-Board and would always be a working document for future years.

The Committee discussed future quarterly meetings.

Mrs. Vandal stated that the numbers would not change until September/October 2016.

The Committee discussed continuing the Joint Budget Task Force Committee or having the document reviewed by the Tri-Board.

Mrs. Vandal stated that this document is not a budget, it is a working spreadsheet to keep projecting revenues and expenditures.

Public Input

There was no public input.

Old Business

Dr. McNamara asked what was the role of the Finance Committee?

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Dr. McNamara stated that the School Department presents their budget to the Finance Committee for fifteen minutes.

Ms. Tremblay explained how the Finance Committee reviews the School Department's budget and having a budget book like the one presented during these meetings would allow the Finance Committee to go line by line and would have given the Finance Committee more of an opportunity for questions.

Dr. McNamara discussed the information provided to the Finance Committee and stated that it is the same information as past years and it is given to the Finance Committee in advance.

Mrs. Hughes suggested that Dr. McNamara discuss the role of the Finance Committee with that Committee or with the Tri-Board.

Approval of Minutes

Motion made by Mrs. Murphy to approve the Minutes of September 24, 2015. Motion seconded by Mr. Archinski. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Mrs. Murphy to approve the Minutes of September 30, 2015. Motion seconded by Mr. Archinski. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Mrs. Murphy to approve the Minutes of October 5, 2015. Motion seconded by Mr. Archinski. Motion passed unanimously.

Next Meetings

The Committee agreed to meet at 5:30 p.m. instead of 5:00 p.m. on October 28, 2015.

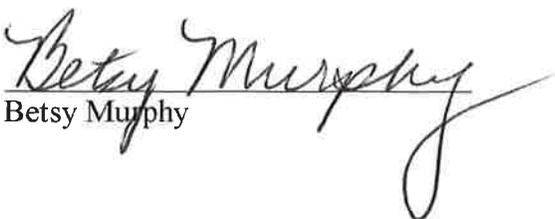
Adjournment

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

The meeting adjourned at 6:22 p.m.


Alison Hughes

Tony Archinski


Betsy Murphy


Dr. Michael McNamara

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Louise Tremblay

Bob Corey