

**Joint Budget Task Force Committee
Minutes of September 3, 2015
Selectmen's Chamber, Town 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: Michael McNamara, Steven Stone, Superintendent of Schools and Bill Frangiamore, School Business Manager

Present for Finance Committee: Louise Tremblay

Mrs. Hughes opened the meeting at 5:06 p.m.

Old Business

Mrs. Hughes discussed the "live" working projection documents being reviewed by the Committee.

Mrs. Hughes stated that she attended an informative meeting with Waste Zero with Dr. McNamara and would like Waste Zero to attend a Tri-Board Meeting.

Mrs. Hughes discussed the Committee trying to look for revenue sources and stated that the numbers being presented to the Committee are all working numbers.

Mr. Archinski stated that he would like to have a Tri-Board meeting sometime in September.

Mr. Duggan discussed the situation with the previous proposed trash fee and discussed looking at new revenue sources and cost savings. Mr. Duggan discussed initiatives for cost savings and discussed the net metering credit with a 20% reduction and they are now looking at a 30% reduction with gaps being closed. Mr. Duggan stated that Dennis Piendak, Former Town Manager, started this process.

Mr. Archinski discussed the Risk Assessment for the Police Department being close to complete and there may be some costs savings there.

Review of "Draft" Town 5 Year Expenditure Projections

Mr. Duggan stated that the "Draft" Town 5 Year Expenditure Projection prepared by Mrs. Vandal shows FY13-16 expenditures and FY17-21 projected expenditures.

Mr. Duggan stated that this is a good template for everyone to use.

Mrs. Vandal stated that she will update the information on the columns and header.

(Joint Budget Task Force Committee Meeting Minutes of September 3, 2015)

Mrs. Vandal reviewed the Moderator Part Time Payroll and the Board of Selectmen's expenditure projections.

Mrs. Vandal stated most projections are up 2% due to inflation.

Mrs. Hughes asked about longevity for employees? Mrs. Vandal stated that longevity is contractual.

Mr. Archinski asked about the supplies projections? Mrs. Vandal stated that most paper, etc. are purchased in bulk.

Ms. Tremblay discussed each Department knowing that they need for supplies.

Mrs. Vandal reviewed the Town Manager's expenditure projection and discussed the increase in Service Contracts. Mr. Duggan stated the Risk Management Assessments are the reason for the projected increase in Service Contracts.

Mrs. Vandal stated that all telephone costs have moved into the Maintenance account to centralize in one area.

Mrs. Vandal discussed the Finance Committee's expenditure projections.

Ms. Tremblay questioned the Property Rental expenditure. Mrs. Vandal stated that the Property Rental expenditure is for if meeting space was moved to another location and custodial costs.

Mrs. Vandal discussed the Accountant's expenditure projections and stated that she needs to add employee longevity to the projections. Mrs. Vandal explained what the Comprehensive Accounting Finance Report (CAFR) is and stated that it looks good for the Bond ratings.

Mrs. Vandal discussed the Assessor's expenditure projections and the appraisers visiting every property starting in FY18 which has to be outsourced, as they do not have the staff or resources to complete that work.

Dr. McNamara asked about buybacks? Mrs. Vandal stated that buybacks are not in the individual budgets it is included in the miscellaneous part of the budget.

Mr. Duggan discussed the personnel buybacks being changed at Town Meeting in 2004 and discussed how buybacks work.

Dr. McNamara stated that there is a \$55.00 a day buyback for all School Department employees.

Mr. Duggan discussed the Town By-Laws, Non-Union Employee's and Union Employee's buybacks. Mr. Duggan discussed unfunded liability.

(Joint Budget Task Force Committee Meeting Minutes of September 3, 2015)

Mrs. Vandal discussed the Treasurer's expenditure projections.

Mrs. Vandal discussed the Tax Foreclosure fee's and stated that they have been more aggressive in collecting these fees. Mrs. Vandal discussed the fee's coming back and the net effect is almost zero. Mrs. Vandal stated that the interest revenue would also come back.

Mrs. Vandal discussed liens/fee's being assessed in January which comes back into the General Fund as revenue then goes to Free Cash.

Mr. Duggan discussed the ticketing process.

Mrs. Vandal stated that these are non-recurring fees and she cannot budget for non-recurring funds. Mrs. Vandal stated that the revenue has to fall to the bottom line then to Free Cash.

Mrs. Vandal discussed the Tax Collector's expenditure projections.

Mrs. Vandal discussed the Tax Collector's Department taking on more and more. Mrs. Vandal discussed the Tax Collector's Department becoming automated and also becoming the centralized payment area at Town Hall.

Mrs. Vandal discussed the Service Contracts expenditure and stated that includes the usage of Kelly & Ryan and the Reclassification.

Mrs. Vandal discussed the Law Department expenditure projection.

Mrs. Vandal discussed the Human Resources expenditure projections.

Mrs. Vandal stated that right now there is a Human Resources Coordinator but there is a need for a Human Resources Director.

Mrs. Vandal stated that the Human Resources Director would be responsible for helping employee's with health insurance, helping with Union bargaining, updating policies and procedures, updating the Town By-Laws and Workers Compensation for all Departments.

Mrs. Vandal discussed a future IT Department expenditure projections.

Mrs. Vandal discussed the projections taking into consideration a full-time IT person for all Departments but not for the School Department. Mrs. Vandal stated that the School Department has their own IT person.

Mrs. Vandal discussed the needs for the Town and School Department to have a full-time IT person to deal with all Department's computers, computer issue, etc.

(Joint Budget Task Force Committee Meeting Minutes of September 3, 2015)

Mr. Duggan stated that Stormwater Management is coming and it is expensive and an IT person would be needed to keep up with the Stormwater Management.

Mrs. Hughes asked about the IT Committee that Mrs. Vandal had requested to be appointed by the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Duggan stated that they have had internal discussions on moving forward and the Board of Selectmen may not need to appoint a Committee.

Mr. Duggan discussed the use of social media and the Town and School Department having two separate reverse 911 systems. Mr. Duggan stated that he is only using the Town's reverse 911 for emergencies.

Superintendent Stone stated that the School Department uses their reverse 911 as a communication system.

Mrs. Vandal discussed the Town Clerk's expenditure projections.

Mrs. Vandal discussed the computer supplies projections and the need for a separate State computer in the Town Clerk's Office.

Mrs. Vandal discussed the increased requirements for census, elections, information packets to all registered voters, etc.

Mrs. Vandal stated that she would take a better look at the printing and binding expenditure for elections and would also look at the election expense as there may be a need for new voting machines.

Mrs. Vandal discussed the Conservation Commission's expenditure projections.

Mrs. Vandal discussed the Planning Board's expenditure projections.

Mrs. Vandal discussed the Zoning Board of Appeals expenditure projections.

Mrs. Vandal discussed the Building Maintenance expenditure projections

Mrs. Vandal discussed the need for a Building Maintenance Supervisor which is the first thing that gets cut with every budget.

Mrs. Vandal discussed the Town Insurance Premiums expenditure projection.

Mrs. Vandal discussed health care and pension obligations. Mrs. Vandal stated that some expenditure areas are tough to judge at this point and she built off the numbers used for FY16.

(Joint Budget Task Force Committee Meeting Minutes of September 3, 2015)

Mrs. Vandal discussed the Liability and Property coverage and the Town Insurance being projected to go up 3% due to new buildings and new vehicles.

Mrs. Vandal discussed the Permanent Building Committee's expenditure projections.

Dr. McNamara stated that they are missing the Vocational School's side and there is a need for transparency.

Ms. Tremblay stated that the Vocational School comes to the Finance Committee to discuss their budget.

Mrs. Vandal discussed the Vocational School's assessment and net school spending.

Mr. Duggan stated that there is still a lot of information to cover during this process and the Tri-Board should be examining the end result of this Committee's findings.

Mrs. Hughes stated that the Town has no control over the Vocational School's assessment.

Dr. McNamara stated that is the problem.

Mrs. Hughes stated that is a Legislative problem not the Town's problem.

Ms. Tremblay discussed the Essex Agricultural School's assessment.

Mrs. Vandal stated that she should finish her expenditure projections at the meeting on September 9th.

Public Input

Mr. Rich Cowan, 12 Greenlawn Avenue, appeared before the Committee to discuss how the Town communicates to the residents. Mr. Cowan stated that even though the Town spends less it is the Public's perception that the Town is spending more. Mr. Cowan stated that the Town cannot be represented as over spenders and feels as though information needs to be prepared for the Media.

Approval of Minutes

Motion made by Dr. McNamara to approve the Minutes of June 24, 2015. Motion seconded by Ms. Tremblay. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Dr. McNamara to approve the Minutes of June 30, 2015. Motion seconded by Ms. Tremblay. Motion passed unanimously.

(Joint Budget Task Force Committee Meeting Minutes of September 3, 2015)

Motion made by Ms. Tremblay to approve the Minutes of July 21, 2015. Motion seconded by Dr. McNamara. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Ms. Tremblay to approve the Minutes of July 28, 2015. Motion seconded by Dr. McNamara. Motion passed 3 to 0. Mr. Archinski abstained from voting.

Adjournment

Motion made by Mr. Archinski to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Ms. Tremblay. Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.



Alison Hughes

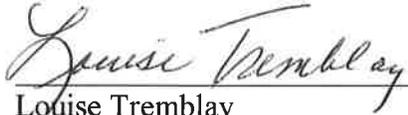


Tony Archinski

ABSENT
Betsy Murphy



Dr. Michael McNamara



Louise Tremblay

ABSENT
Bob Corey