

**Minutes  
Town of Lexington Appropriation Committee  
February 1, 2010**

*Place and time:* Town Office Building, Room 207, 7:30 p.m.

*Members present:* Alan Levine (Chair), Glenn Parker (Vice-Chair), John Bartenstein (Vice Chair and Secretary), Susan McLeish, Eric Michelson, Joe Pato

*Also present:* Dr. Edward A. Bouquillon, Superintendent-Director of Minuteman Career and Technical High School (Minuteman); Jim Laverty, Minuteman Assistant Superintendent and Principal; David Horton, Lexington representative to Minuteman School Committee

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 p.m.

**1. Minuteman Budget Issues and Capital Program.** For several years now, Minuteman has been engaged in a regional strategic planning process and facility assessment to determine the school's long-term facility needs. Dr. Bouquillon made a presentation to the Committee on the status of Minuteman's short and long-term plans for capital repairs and improvements. He also discussed briefly the FY 2011 operating budget.

In the short term, Minuteman has recently completed \$5 million of energy savings upgrades to its facilities through the state's Energy Saving Contract (ESCO) program. Partnering with Siemens Building Technologies, it conducted an energy conservation audit and identified energy-saving facility improvements, such as the replacement of boilers, chillers, lighting and electrical switching systems, that could be done without impact on future renovations. These improvements are expected to save \$275,000 in energy costs a year, the investments will be financed exclusively out of the projected savings, and the savings will be guaranteed by Siemens.

With respect to long-term improvements, Minuteman will be seeking approval from Lexington and other member towns at this year's Annual Town Meeting of a Feasibility Study to plan for a major facility renovation that will be submitted to the Massachusetts School Building Authority (SBA). The anticipated cost of the Feasibility Study will be about \$700,000. The SBA, which recently established a \$100 million fund to invest in the improvement of the Commonwealth's vocational-technical schools, has committed to reimburse at least 40% of this amount, and Lexington's 16% share of the approximately \$420,000 balance would be about \$70,000.

The current thinking is that the long-term facility improvement project will involve gutting and restoration of the Minuteman facilities but no rebuilding. Given recent economic conditions, the anticipated cost is now well under \$100 million of which 40% would be reimbursed by the SBA. Consequently, Lexington's share of the capital costs, which would likely require a debt exclusion, would be something under \$10 million.

With respect to the FY 2011 operating budget, Dr. Bouquillon reported that enrollments have been dropping but are stabilizing. Cost-saving measures, including the elimination of two programs and some reductions in force, are being implemented that will result in a reduction in costs below a “level service” budget. Lexington’s assessment is expected to be about \$1,538,000, down 10% from last year.

The following documents relating to Minuteman finances were distributed before or during the meeting:

- January 15, 2010 letter from Minuteman’s Director of Business and Operations to Carl Valente concerning Minuteman Feasibility Study and draft language for Town Meeting vote
- PowerPoint slides for January 19, 2010 public hearing on FY 2011 Minuteman budget
- Handout on Minuteman FY 2011 Proposed Budget and Estimated Member Assessments dated January 19, 2010
- Spreadsheet entitled “FY 2011 Preliminary Assessment Projections” dated 12/30/2009

2. **Open Meeting Law.** John Bartenstein provided a brief summary of changes to the Open Meeting Law that will become effective on July 1, 2010. The major issues are a revision of the definition of the term “deliberation” to expressly include certain email communications; increased minute-keeping requirements; the requirement that minutes of previous executive sessions be periodically reviewed for potential disclosure; transfer of enforcement authority for municipal bodies from the District Attorney to the Attorney General; and a provision for a civil penalty of up to \$1,000 that may be imposed on the “public body” for intentional violation of the law. The Committee will further discuss the implications of these changes in future meetings. Al Levine noted that the FY 2011 proposed Budget includes some funding to assist the finance committees with minute-taking.

3. **Meeting Management.** There was a brief discussion of meeting management issues. Joe Pato will revise further and re-circulate a draft statement on protocol for participation in meetings by non-members.

4. **Future Meeting Schedule and Report to Annual Town Meeting.** In addition to upcoming meetings already posted for 2/8, 2/17, 2/22 and 3/1, meetings will be scheduled for 3/8, 3/15 and 3/18 to work on the Committee’s report to the Annual Town Meeting. The goal will be to have the report on the TMMA table by the start of the Annual Town Meeting on Monday, March 22 although financial articles will not be taken up until Monday, March 29. Tentative assignments were made for preparation of the

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shell (EM), preface and introduction (AL), printing and distribution (GP) and a financial forecast appendix (EM).

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John Bartenstein

*Approved February 8, 2010*