

September 23, 2004

Minutes

Meeting of the Appropriation Committee

Thursday, September 23, 2004, 7:30 PM in Town Office Building Room 111

Members Present: John Bartenstein, Rod Cole, Richard Eurich, Paul Hamburger, David Kanter, Alan Levine, Eric Michelson, Ron Pawliczek; Staff Present: Sheila English

SE presented brief draft minutes for the August 19 meeting. Discussion ensued as to what the Committee desires in terms of detail. Most members agreed that it would be good to have enough detail to help someone, including a Committee member, who was not at the meeting understand the important issues that were discussed.

Minutes of the June 29, 2004 meeting submitted by RE were approved (8-0).

The proposed Health Care study committee was discussed. The consensus was that it would be better to be under the auspices of the Board of Selectmen (BoS) rather than the AC. PH will talk to the BoS about this topic.

The problem of mold in the Central Fire Station was noted.

The presentation of the Final Report of the Public Safety Staffing Review Committee to the BoS was noted. The report may be made available via a web site.

The Town's annual audit was discussed. RP will look at the auditor's report.

DK spoke about the BoS goal setting meeting.

SE stated that the Town needs to exercise discipline in the budget process. She further said that goals should include reaching a budget that helps make a stable future outlook, adequate funding of reserves, equity among programs, and flexibility.

JB reported that the Water/Sewer Rate Study Committee (WSRSC) interim report would be available soon. Significant issues that will be highlighted will be the rate structure, indirect expenses, and PILOTs. The WSRSC will make a presentation to the BoS on Oct. 4. On Oct. 18, the DPW will present proposed W/S rates to the BoS. SE noted that the Revenue Dept. needs help to do its job, which includes managing W/S bills, but that this is not being discussed by the WSRSC.

SE explained some of the aspects of the Town's agreement with Richard White - that he receives his salary for 6 months (\$75K) and for up to 6 additional months less any amount he earns in that time period. He gets a \$2500 bonus as well as COBRA payments. Legal costs for this are expected to be about \$18K plus additional costs in regard to the complaint about violations of the Open Meeting law.

The meeting was adjourned at about 10:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

-- Alan M. Levine

Approved December 16, 2004