

October 7, 2004

To: Appropriation Committee (AC)
From: Paul Hamburger, Acting Secretary
Subject: Minutes of AC meeting on Thursday, October 7, 2004

Attendees: A. Levine (Chair), P. Hamburger, R. Pawliczek, D. Brown (Vice Chair),
R. Eurich, J. Bartenstein, D. Kanter, W. Kennedy (Board of Selectmen [BoS] liaison)

Material Distributed:

- #1. Agenda
- #2. Town of Lexington, Massachusetts Management Report for the Year Ended June 30, 2003 from Melanson Heath & Co. (auditors)
- #3. Selectmen's Committee to Investigate the Town's Health Care Insurance and its Costs (proposed charge and committee makeup)

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 PM by Al Levine in Town Office Building Room 105.

1. Meeting Conduct: Al announced that he has established a goal of adjourning by 10 PM for all meetings, at least until "High business time". See other notes in agenda.
2. Minutes: David Kanter will distribute the Capital Expenditures Committee (CEC) minutes of October 6, 2004. Paul Hamburger agreed to take the minutes of this meeting. It was agreed that committee members would volunteer to take meeting minutes of future meetings. The committee agreed that we wanted more detailed minutes and that it was not reasonable to ask Sheila English (Lexington Finance Director/Comptroller) to produce them. It was agreed that minutes should be published within a week of the meetings. It was agreed that we would distribute drafts of our minutes to the CEC.
3. Status of current fiscal year: Discussion postponed till next meeting.
4. Tasks/Assignments
 - a. Ron will be looking at the auditors report. Item #2 above was distributed. This item should be on a future agenda.
 - b. Sheila is presenting the financial info at October 18th Selectmen's meeting (what she can do at the time).
 - c. ATFC reports. No one brought in disks. Everyone at meeting seemed to find a way to get this info from someone outside the meeting.
 - d. June Budget Book: Agreed that there should be one for 2004. Bill and Al to ask about getting it done. Someone thought Michael Young was working on it.
 - e. Al asked that everyone send an email to him listing the tasks they had signed up for.
 - f. A question was asked about detailed bonding information. Page V-4 is a good place to start in the Budget Book.

5. Input re new Town Manager
 - a. Al distributed a schedule of focus group meetings to get input for qualifications for permanent Town Manager.
 - b. Straw-man on AC's idea of Town Manager Requirement: David and Al agreed to work on one.

6. Reports on other meetings (brief)

- a. Budget Process Planning Meeting: Deborah reported.

Sheila inherited projections. She will review and come up with new ones.
Growth projection for 06 delayed until we have 05 numbers (1st week Dec.)
Debt Service
Health Benefits
Salaries: Municipal employees do not have contract. It is to be negotiated by the interim town manager (not Linda).
Current budget planning headed by Linda Vine: 2 budgets: level service and needs based. Patience asked by Linda. It will take 6-8 weeks to get first pass at budget. David asked about efficiencies and definition of "level service" for town versus school. It was suggested, but not voted on, that we need a level employee budget in the town and a level class size budget on the school side to start. Then, efficiencies, and special cases of need (such as the assessor's office) can be considered.

It was voted that Al, Deborah and Paul should cover the Budget Process Meetings as consistently as possible and should report back what happens to the AC.

- b. Capital: David reported.

Lincoln Street Field bathrooms and storage space: CEC says Recreation Comm. should propose building something.
Harrington move is now expected to be in two phases after Christmas and in February.
Maple St/Lowell St. Traffic light: CEC wants an assessment of the traffic hazard. Alternatives are a \$56K controller or \$250K to redo the entire intersection.
School Admin Building: PBC/Schools to give Capital information. CEC wants Architecture/Engineering study money to be appropriated at 2005 regular town meeting.
CEC wants a decision on DPW barn.
CEC expressed concern over lack of co-ordination of maintenance money in the operating budget for capital expenses. The operating expense is now higher at the high school. Paul asked why the operating expense is increased. Was there an error in engineering?
CEC wants to discuss the cash capital policy at a summit.
- c. Water and Sewer: John reported.
- d. Public Safety Report: The public safety report is now down-loadable.

7. Discussions and Status Reports

Health Insurance Committee: Paul reported.

Paul distributed item #3 above.

It was voted 6-0-1 that the AC would prefer a BoS appointed committee, as opposed to an extension of the Appropriation Committee, for the purpose of pursuing analysis and suggestions for improvement on Health Care. It seemed worthwhile to the Committee members that the AC could have an independent opinion on the findings of the Health Care committee if it is appointed by the BoS. A concern was raised that we be careful not to violate labor negotiation rules in any reports the committee might make. It was pointed out that private citizens who are members of the committee would have to have access to town "confidential" information.

Paul will distribute the handout edited slightly to the BoS for consideration at its October 18th meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 PM.

Approved October 21, 2004