

**Minutes  
Town of Lexington Appropriation Committee  
February 16, 2011**

*Place and time:* Town Office Building, Room G15, 7:30 p.m.

*Members Present:* Glenn Parker, Chair; John Bartenstein, Vice Chair and Secretary; Robert Cohen; Mollie Garberg; Alan Levine; Susan McLeish; Richard Neumeier; Rob Addelson (non-voting, ex officio)

*Other Attendees:* Andrew Friedlich, Town Meeting Member; Pat Goddard, Department of Public Facilities; George Burnell, Selectman

The meeting was called to order at 7:36 p.m.

**1. Announcements.**

The Committee discussed snow removal and will contact Bill Hadley about looking into the City of Quincy's approach to hiring private contractors on a pay-per-inch basis and whether it would be advantageous for Lexington.

Mr. Levine and Ms. Garberg will be meeting with Mary Ellen Dunn on Friday morning regarding school capital projects, school public facilities projects, and the school budget. Mr. Levine inquired whether other Committee members had questions or concerns about the school operating or capital budgets that could be discussed with Mary Ellen. Mr. Bartenstein raised the issue of the recent allocation of \$250,000 in free cash to the schools, over and above the originally agreed split for FY2012, and asked what would happen with these extra funds in the event the Schools receive more than anticipated in circuit breaker funding. The Lexington Public Schools web site was noted to have a number of interesting financial documents, including one that outlines LPS revenues not subject to appropriation such as those from the federal ARRA.

**2. Minutes.** Minutes of February 9, 2011 were approved by a vote of 7-0-0.

**3. Snow and Ice.** Mr. Addelson discussed the status of snow and ice expenditures to date and requested the Committee to approve deficit spending in that account, as required by Mass. General Laws Chapter 44, Section 31D which defines the authority of the Town Manager and Finance Committee in this respect. He provided the Committee with a form captioned "Authorization to Expend in Excess of the FY2011 Budget for the Removal of Snow and Ice." The question was raised whether it is appropriate to approve deficit spending without any limitations, and Mr. Addelson assured Committee members that the deficit will be tracked by the Finance Dept. and communicated appropriately. Mr. Addelson reviewed again the sources of funds that are or may be available to cover FY11 snow removal costs (\$900k in the budget, \$300k of FY12 revenue explicitly set aside to finance a FY11 snow and ice deficit, and \$200k of FY11

free cash set aside for as yet identified needs). The current year's operating budget can be amended at the Annual Town Meeting under Article 24, and the Reserve Fund may also be a source to finance shortfalls. If a deficit still remains after all end-of-year transfers are done, an additional appropriation could be made at a special town meeting in the fall as long as it occurs before the tax rate is set, otherwise the statute provides that the deficit would be "certified to the board of assessors and included in the next annual tax rate." After discussion, the Committee approved the requested authorization by a vote of 7-0-0.

4. **Article 13.** Pat Goddard was in attendance to discuss DPF capital articles and gave a strategy overview. From 1997-2009 (12 year period), an average of \$11m gross was spent a year in authorizations on capital including the amounts spent on major building projects. The DPF is using this amount as a benchmark to move forward with planning for future spending. In order to qualify for MSBA funds, buildings now need to be maintained. State reimbursements are no longer made at a 59% rate. Rather, it is now 31% to 40% for those few projects that receive MSBA approval.

Mr. Goddard handed out a chart entitled "Lexington Public School Facility Capital Spending \$89.4m-\$108.3m for 2010-2019 TM (revised January 18, 2011)" summarizing a preliminary 10-year facilities master planning budget. The draft plan shows considerable expenditures in FY2011 on the Bowman and Bridge projects, in FY2012 mainly on Estabrook, and in fiscal years 2013-2019 spending on smaller projects and for building a stabilization fund for future facilities needs. In FY2017 there is a significant expenditure on Hastings. Mr. Goddard noted that major expenditures on Bridge and Bowman and Estabrook will not occur so early, and that the draft summary will require some modification to account for timing issues. The Committee raised a number of questions about the stabilization fund concept, including how it will be managed and what it will take to utilize the funds. It was noted that the stabilization fund issue could be deferred to a future meeting as it is not being brought up at the upcoming annual town meeting. Mr. Goddard also handed out an Executive Summary from the 1994 Town of Lexington Facility Study of the Lexington Public Schools. The document summarizes a plan to maintain buildings instead of replacing them.

The current focus for this Annual Town Meeting will be on moving the Estabrook and Bridge and Bowman projects toward a debt exclusion as well as transitioning away from funding new buildings and more toward maintaining existing buildings. The Committee discussed planning and longer-term cost savings, roof replacements and mechanical overhaul thresholds; when a debt exclusion might be necessary; and whether maintenance should be an operating or override expense. It was agreed that planning for the debt exclusions is another item that should be addressed after Town Meeting.

Mr. Goddard proceeded to review Article 13 specifics (see the Warrant and the "FY12 Town Manager's Preliminary Budget and Financing Plan" dated January 10, 2011 for more information). A summary follows:

13a: *\$280k to expand scope of Bridge and Bowman School renovation:* Four additional classrooms will be created within the existing footprint of each school - 2 classrooms will replace the existing boiler room which will be relocated externally and 2 classrooms will be created by reconfiguring current space including offices. A higher-end HVAC system than originally contemplated will be recommended based on a total life cycle costing approach; it will cost \$1m up front but save on utility and maintenance costs over the long-term. Upon a successful debt exclusion vote early next year, work would begin in the spring or summer of 2012.

13b: *\$1.25m for the Estabrook School feasibility and related street access improvements:* There will be a feasibility study and a design effort. The intent is to put a new school in the flat area behind the current building, leave PCB contamination in place while the school is built, and demolish the old building when the new building is ready. The plan is to have the new school built by 2014. There will also be work to improve Robinson Road. If the project is approved in a debt exclusion referendum, there would be at least a 31% reimbursement for this project. There was discussion on the timing of the debt exclusion vote and MSBA's approval as well as regarding roadway width and sidewalks.

13c: *\$1.2m for School Building Envelope and Systems:* It is anticipated that the same amount will be requested in each of the next 5 years; \$300k will be set aside to replace systems in the schools, \$250k for typical building envelope projects such as caulking, fixing sagging soffits, removal of broken panels, and \$50k for addressing other needs.

13d: *\$645k in total for School Improvement Projects:* This will be voted as one dollar amount to give flexibility in the implementation.

13e: *Clarke Middle School Paving Improvements:* A map was shown for a design to improve and extend traffic flow.

13f: *Lexington High School Roof Repairs:* Includes completing field house, world language building and 2/3 of math building and is eligible for reimbursement from MSBA at 33.9%.

13g: *\$75k Hastings School Playground Expansion:* For equipment and installation geared toward older children.

13h: *School Paving Program:* For central administration, connection at Diamond and school pick-up and drop-off areas.

13i: *Diamond Middle School Extraordinary Repair*

13j: *Municipal Building Envelope and Systems*

13k: \$700k in total for Repair of Fire Station: Floor (\$450k) to shore up floor using pressure-treated timbers and modular office installation (\$250k). Currently in the design phase for both and working on a better cost estimate prior to Town Meeting.

13l: \$100k for Library Material Handling System Design: Working with architect to design a solution to meet additional needs as a result of increased circulation. There is \$100k in free cash from a library-related insurance settlement which would act as a funding source. Any unused funds would be reallocated. Sorting systems were discussed; they reportedly are costly to install. The Minuteman Library network and interlibrary loans were discussed.

5. **Article 8.** The CPA Project for \$60k to widen the East Lexington Fire Station door was discussed.

6. **Article 12.** There was a brief discussion of other school capital projects. Mr. Burnell indicated that he was pushing for a higher level of funds for on a continuing basis, perhaps drawing from expected increases in revenue that will result from the expansion of our commercial tax base, for building maintenance as well as for street repair.

7. **Miscellaneous.** Rob Addelson circulated an update of the White Book's summary of Revenues and Expenditures and noted that the Selectmen had voted to assign \$81k in hitherto unallocated funds in the FY12 municipal budget to a street repair project in the Hartwell Avenue Corridor (refer to recommended budget section XI, pages 11 and 14). He also briefed the Committee on discussions by the Selectmen concerning alternative models for a proposed new Assistant Fire Chief position (whether it should be at the clerical or assistant fire chief level). John Bartenstein mentioned that he had recently had occasion to visit the new LexMedia facility at Avalon at Lexington, which includes a board room, and suggested that it might be a good idea to schedule one of the Committee's meetings there and briefly tour the facility.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:05 p.m.

A list of documents and exhibits used at the meeting is attached.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Yopez  
Recording Secretary

*Approved March 3, 2011*

**Exhibits  
Appropriation Committee Meeting  
February 16, 2011**

1. Form entitled "Authorization to Expend in Excess of the FY2011 Budget for the Removal of Snow and Ice," presented by Rob Addelson and executed by Glenn Parker, Chair.
2. Draft chart summarizing ten-year master plan entitled "Lexington Public School Facility Capital Spending \$89.4m-\$108.3m for 2010-2019 TM," revised January 18, 2011, distributed by Pat Goddard.
3. 1994 Executive Summary of the Town of Lexington Facility Study of the Lexington Public Schools, distributed by Pat Goddard.
4. Updated version of White Book's Summary of Revenues and Expenditures for the Town of Lexington FY 2009-2012, distributed by Rob Addelson.