

TOWN OF BECKET

Minutes
Town Meeting ByLaw Review Committee
4/7/14
(APPROVED 5/5/14)

Members Present: Bruce Garlow (Chair), Ann Krawet, Jeanne Pryor

The meeting began at 1:04 p.m. It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of 2/3/14 and the motion passed unanimously. It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of 3/3/14 and the motion passed unanimously.

The Committee discussed the proposed amended town meeting bylaw and Special Town Meeting results. It was noted that the revised town meeting bylaw would not be in effect until approved by the Attorney General.

The Town Meeting Handbook was discussed. Ann made suggestions for changes to the Glossary that were reviewed and agreed to by the Committee as follows:

Add Assessed Valuation: The value placed upon a particular property by the local Board of Assessors for the purpose of apportioning the town's tax levy among individual property owners equitably and in accordance with the legal requirements that property be assessed at "full and fair cash value," certified periodically by the Commonwealth's Commissioner of Revenue (no less frequently than once every three years). [from Town of Stoughton, RTM]

Add Attorney General

Add Budget: A plan of financial operation embodying an estimate of proposed expenditures for a given period and the proposed means of financing them. A budget may be preliminary (the financial plan presented to the town meeting) or final (the plan approved by that body).

Add Bylaw

Add Capital Budget: include mention of capital improvement program

The term "Debt Exclusion" was discussed but not changed.

Add Department of Revenue

Add Encumbrance: Obligations such as purchase orders, contracts or salary commitments which are chargeable to an appropriation.

Under the term "Free Cash", add a reference to surplus revenue.

Add **General Fund: The fund into which the general (non-earmarked) revenues of the town are deposited and from which money is appropriated to pay expenses.**

Under the term "Local Aid", add **by a town meeting** to the end of the last sentence.

Under the term "Overlay", change to (Overlay **Account** Reserve or Allowance for Abatements and Exemptions)

Under the term "Property Tax Levy", delete the sentence **Municipalities can choose to temporarily levy above their levy limit through a successful debt or capital outlay expenditure exclusion referenda** and the comment **Is this needed?**

Under the term "Stabilization Fund", a sentence change was made as follows: "Annual appropriations to all stabilization funds may not exceed 10 percent of the previous year's levy unless the Director of Accounts **of the Department of Revenue** approves a higher limit."

Add **Tax Rate Recapitulation Sheet (Recap Sheet)**

The term "Town Meeting Time" should be underlined, no italics

Bruce noted that the new public address system will be available for the Annual Town Meeting on May 10.

The next meeting was scheduled for May 5, 2014, at 1:00 p.m. The meeting was adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanne W. Pryor

List of documents discussed and/or distributed at meeting:

1. Town Meeting ByLaw Review Committee Minutes 2/3/14 and 3/3/14
2. Glossary of Town Meeting and Municipal Finance Terms
3. Various financial terms from Stoughton and Brookline