

**TOWN OF DEERFIELD  
MUNICIPAL BUDGET COMMITTEE  
April 17, 2012  
MINUTES**

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**Call to Order:**

6:30pm pm Chairman Don Daley called the meeting to order.

**Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag**

Chairman Daley asked all to rise and pledge allegiance to the Flag.

**Roll Call:**

**Present:** Don Daley, Chairman, Jim Spillane, Vice Chairman; Harriet Cady, Maureen Mann, Fred McGarry, Brendan O'Donnell, Jeff Shute and Kevin Verville, Members; Steve Barry, Board of Selectmen Rep; Maryann Clark, School Board Rep

**Excused:** Dick Pitman (resignation pending), Katie Libby, Recording Secretary

**Approval of Minutes February 13, 2012:**

**Motion:** S. Barry moves to approve the minutes as written

**Second:** M. Clark

**Vote: 6 yea, 0 nay, 4 abstentions – Motion Carries**

**Election of Officers:**

**Motion:** S. Barry moves to accept the resignation of Committee Member Dick Pitman (see Appendix A)

**Second:** Vice Chairman Spillane

**Discussion:** Chairman Daley was present when Mr. Pitman verbally resigned from his role with the MBC in order to take a position with the Board of Selectman. He is in receipt of a written email resignation letter. Vice Chairman Spillane thanked Mr. Pitman for his service noting that it was always a pleasure to work with him.

**Vote: All in Favor – Motion Carries**

**Chairman:**

**Motion:** M. Clark moves to nominate Don Daley as Chairman of the MBC

**Second:** Vice Chairman Spillane

**Vote: All in Favor – Motion Carries**

**Vice Chairman:**

**Motion:** H. Cady moves to nominate Jim Spillane as Vice Chairman of the MBC

**Second:** K. Verville

**Vote: All in Favor – Motion Carries**

**Archivist:**

Chairman Daley explained that the role of the Archivist is to retain any emails sent to all members of the Committee for record keeping purposes. Vice Chairman Spillane volunteered to fill this role.

**Public Relations/Media Representative:**

Chairman Daley expressed an interest in having a Committee Member serve as a liaison with local Media and the public, such as the FORUM publication, to post agendas and meeting summaries. Committee members agreed that it would be a useful position to have. M. Clark felt it would help to get the word out to the community as to what the MBC does and potentially generate interest in the process. M. Mann, through her role working with the FORUM volunteered to get meeting updates and schedules included in the publication.

**Town Budget Update:**

S. Barry provided the Committee with an update of the Town Budget. The Town will be working with the default budget, as the Highway Department's default budget was actually larger than the amount proposed, the Town will be moving monies from that department to offset shortages that were created in other areas. The Highway Department's project list was restructured down due to large increases in the price of liquid asphalt.

The Board of Selectmen has approved the purchase of a used front end loader for the transfer station. The purchase was for a 2011 machine with a 2,000 hour maintenance agreement, a 1,000 hour warranty, extended forks, and a plow.

Vice Chairman Spillane asked how hours typically equated to years of use with this equipment? S. Barry answered 2,000 hours would easily last the Town four, five or six years of use. The final purchase price was \$106,701.

Bids have been awarded on the George B. White Window replacement and front siding. The Board continues to review the bids for purchase of a Fire Engine. H. Cady raised a question presented to her by a local citizen with regards to Nottingham Road not being in the proposed paving projects for 2012. If a project like Meetinghouse Hill was not in the prior year budget, why is it being taken on this year? S. Barry responded that the Board was operating on the recommendations of the Highway Agent as to what would be the best use of the funds available.

### **School Budget Update:**

**2011/2012:** M. Clark provided the MBC with an update on the School's 2011/2012 budget, highlighting some of the key lines of notable for their sizable surplus or deficit from what was estimated. The High School Tuition line was under estimated by the equivalent of one student. Special Education Para Professionals was approximately one less than anticipated. There was a surplus of \$155,373 in the Special Placement line which she estimates could have been the result of a student moving out of the District. The deficit in the Maintenance line was due to an unanticipated repair to the school's heating system. Vice Chairman Spillane asked if the School Board will look to budget for replacement of the system down the road. M. Clark responded that a team has been put in place to look at long range planning needs and she assumes this item would be part of their discussions.

New to the budget is a line for Miscellaneous Revenue. M. Clark pointed out an unanticipated return of impact fees which has caused this line to have a surplus. She is not clear on whether this will be an ongoing inflow of funds. H. Cady commented that impact fees are re-evaluated by the Town yearly. F. McGarry confirmed, noting that they are based on a number of variables, and amounts vary depending on the number of new constructions in town. J. Schute asked if the School Board had considered directing these monies towards a maintenance fund. Vice Chairman Spillane noted that there are specific things the funds can and cannot be designated to. H. Cady noted that the funds must be used within six years from when they are collected. M. Clark confirmed that she will be looking further into how Impact Fees are included in the budget going forward. The bottom line surplus for the 2011-2012 School Budget is currently \$248,813. That number will be changing and M. Clark will keep the MBC apprised of any updates.

**2012/2013:** The default budget was voted in for 2012/2013. The School Board has modified the budget within those restrictions. Of a total proposed budget of \$11,800,000 approximately \$26,702 needed adjusting. Chairman Daley asked if there were any problems with making those adjustments. M. Clark answered no. H. Cady asked if the School Board would have an idea of their final surplus by June 30. M. Clark confirmed yes, that all funds need to be spent or encumbered by June 30. H. Cady noted that in recent years the School has returned large sums of money to the Town, \$500,000 two years ago, \$400,000 last year, and potentially \$200,000 this year. She pointed out that this can lead to an increase in taxes without a change in the budget. Vice Chairman Spillane agrees, but notes that the amounts are getting smaller and that the School appears to be budgeting much better. H. Cady agrees.

**Enrollments:** M. Clark noted that the December estimate of 50 kindergarten students was exactly on. The current enrollment projections show that the School is down a net of 15 students, but that number is highly likely to change as the School is aware of students leaving over the summer, but may not be aware of the new families coming in.

### **2012-2013 Meeting Schedule:**

Chairman Daley noted that the Town Administrator has asked all Committees to post their projected meeting schedules for the year and presented the MBC's 2012-2013 anticipated meeting dates (Appendix B). S. Barry and K. Verville asked if the May 8<sup>th</sup> date could be changed to the 15<sup>th</sup> of May, with no one in disagreement the change was made. Chairman Daley will advertise on the Town Website and around town seeking candidates interested in filling the vacancy created by Mr. Pitman's resignation. H. Cady would like to see the solicitation of applicants posted around town, for example at Store 24 and the Post Office. The deadline for interested applicants will be Friday, May 11<sup>th</sup> and Vice Chairman Spillane would encourage all applicants to attend the meeting on May 15<sup>th</sup> so that they can speak to their interest.

**Motion:** Vice Chairman J. Spillane moves that the MBC request the default budgets for the School and Town be presented to the Committee at the October 30<sup>th</sup> meeting for review

**Second:** K. Verville

**Discussion:** M. Clark and S. Barry questioned whether that request would be able to be met. M. Clark can take the request before the School Board, however she suspects that a lot of the numbers needed for arriving at the final default budget will not be available that early in the season. S. Barry indicated that the Town typically does not begin to look at the default budget until year end, or January of the New Year. Chairman Daley pointed out that the MBC's time should not be spent discussing the default budgets in too much depth as the Committee

has no control over those figures. The deadline to post the default budgets is January 28<sup>th</sup>. Vice Chairman Spillane indicated that the intent of his motion was to get more information sooner, allowing the Committee ample time to review.

**Vote: 4 yea, 6 nay – Motion Fails**

H. Cady would suggest that the MBC take up Departmental Budgets as they are approved by the Board of Selectmen rather than waiting until the entire document is finalized and feeling rushed to review. Chairman Daley noted that in the past the MBC met weekly, but that he found the amount of revisions and changes that occurred to the budgets and the resultant paperwork made the process cumbersome. He finds it helpful to attend the Board of Selectmen and School Board Meetings and would encourage other members to consider doing the same. There was a general concern with the small amount of time between when the final proposed budgets are presented to the Committee and the when they are discussed.

**Motion:** Vice Chairman Spillane moves the proposed MBC meeting schedule as written with the updated next meeting date of Tuesday, May 15<sup>th</sup>

**Second:** S. Barry

**Vote – All in Favor – Motion Carries**

#### **Email Policy:**

Chairman Daley reminded the Committee of the Email Policy, noting that discussion of budget items should be kept to the public meetings. If not, emails sent to all members are required to be printed and retained.

**Motion:** S. Barry moves to approve the email policy as written for the 2012-2013 budget session

**Second:** F. McGarry

**All in Favor – Motion Carries**

#### **Old Business:**

**Audio Recorder Purchase:** Unless there are objections, Chairman Daley will be coordinating the purchase of an Audio Recorder, \$85 was built into the budget approved for 2012. There are no objections.

**Available Training:** Chairman Daley informed the Committee that there is training available to members through the LGC for anyone who is interested in learning about the budgeting process. The Town Administrator may arrange for a local training session if there is interest, and there is one being formed in Plaistow. M. Clark added that there is a document put out by the LGC that is very informative that has been forwarded by the Town Administrator in the past and she would encourage Committee Members to seek it out. K. Verville added that the Town maintains a library of informative publications and makes them available for loan.

**Requests for Information:** S. Barry would like to reaffirm the position of the MBC that all requests for information be made through the Chairman so as to eliminate a duplication of request and/or vet out any requests that may not be items of interest to the majority of the Committee.

**Motion:** S. Barry moves to reaffirm said position

**Second:** M. Clark

**Discussion:** K. Verville asked to clarify the motion with regards to the Chair determining something should be passed on only if a majority of the Committee is interested in the information. Chairman Daley indicated that he would use his best judgment in consolidating and forwarding requests for information in a timely manner and S. Barry withdraws his motion.

**Motion Withdrawn**

J. Shute asked if the Chairman could call for a special meeting if something comes up that would warrant it? Chairman Daley confirmed yes, and reminded everyone that the reconsideration meeting is generally only called if there are items to review, otherwise it may not occur.

#### **New Business:**

H. Cady referenced an article titled “The Practice of Public Service” and would suggest that everyone on the Committee consider reading it. She cited a survey that indicated the trust in local government has declined from 64% to 51% in recent years and she feels that a lack of information could be to blame, noting that in Deerfield the default budget has been supported two years in a row.

**Citizen’s Comments:** None

**Adjournment:**

**Motion:** S. Barry moves to adjourn the meeting of May 15<sup>th</sup>

**Second:** Vice Chairman Spillane

**All in Favor – Motion Carries – Meeting Adjourned @ 8:00pm**

**Next Meeting Wednesday, May 15<sup>th</sup>**

The Minutes were Recorded, Transcribed and Respectfully Submitted by Katie Libby.

Pending Approval by the Municipal Budget Committee

APPENDIX A:

Don,

This letter is to inform you of my resignation from the Municipal Budget Committee, Monday April 9, 2012 at 6:00 P.M.  
Thank you for everything you do, and it's been a pleasure working with you on this committee.

Best Regards

Richard Pitman

APPENDIX B:

**PROPOSAL FOR 2012-2013 DEERFIELD MBC MEETING SCHEDULE**

Tuesday April 17 Organizational Meeting

Wednesday May 15 Appoint Vacant Position

Tuesday October 30 Review of 2012 Town Budget/2012-13 School Budget

Tuesday November 27 Receive 2013 Proposed Town Budget

Tuesday December 4 Discussion 2013 Town Budget

Saturday December 8 Work Session – Town Budget and Warrant Articles

Tuesday December 11 Receive 2013-14 Proposed School Budget / Town Budget Follow up

Tuesday December 18 Discussion 2013-14 School Budget

Saturday January 5 Work Session - School Budget and Warrant Articles

Tuesday January 8 School Budget Follow up

Wednesday Jan 9 MBC Public Hearing for Town and School Budgets and Warrant Articles  
Followed by MBC Regular Meeting for Votes/Recommendations  
(Posting for Public Hearing by Jan 1)  
(Snow Days for Public Hearing: Jan 10 and Jan 15)

Tuesday February 12 Reconsideration of Recommendations (if requested by a majority of members)

*Tuesday meetings start at 6pm. Saturday meetings start at 9am. Public Hearing at 6:30pm*

**SB2 Deadlines**

January 8 Last Date for Petitioned Warrant Articles and Collective Bargaining

January 15 Last Date to hold at least one Budget Hearing

January 28 Last Date to Post Warrant, Budget, and Default Budget

Feb 2/9 First Sessions (Deliberative)

March 12 Second Session (Ballot)