

HULL FINANCIAL PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2010

FINANCIAL PLANNING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Domenico Sestito (Selectman), Chair
Dennis Blackall (Selectman), Vice Chair
Roger Atherton, (Citizen-at-large), Clerk
Richard Kenney (Advisory Board)
Brian McCarthy (Citizen-at-large, Council on Aging)
Stephanie Peters (School Committee)
Kevin Richardson (School Committee)
Charles Ryder (Advisory Board, alternate)
John Silva (Citizen-at-large, former Selectman)
Charleen Tyson (Advisory Board)

STAFF MEMBERS

Marcia Bohinc (Town Accountant)
Philip Lemnios (Town Manager)
Kathleen Tyrell (Superintendent of Schools)

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order by Sestito at 6:07 PM at Town Hall in the Selectmen's Meeting room. He led the pledge of allegiance. He asked for consideration of the 1/26/10 Minutes, previously submitted by Dr. Atherton to FPC members and staff by e-mail. A few typos were corrected by Tyson and Dr. Silva corrected the spelling of Aquarion. Kenney moved approval of the Minutes as corrected, seconded by Dr. Silva, approval unanimous.

Sestito reviewed the Board of Selectmen's meeting that had approved two FPC recommendations - (1) that the FPC study the sustainability of level-services budgets for FY 2012 and beyond and report findings to the BoS, and (2) that the FPC look at the study 21st Century Schools and examine the costs of implementing the objectives of the study in FY 11 and beyond and make recommendations to the BoS. Blackall suggested that the FPC break into sub-committees to look at these, since the work on each one is formidable. Finn disagreed as he hates sub-committees as they tend to subvert open meetings, he likes the way the Chair runs the FPC meetings, and the whole spectrum of the FPC knowledge and experience is needed for discussion of these long-term financial issues. McCarthy stated that these issues need time for research and analysis before

being presented to the full committee. Dr. Silva agreed with both Blackall and McCarthy that the FPC could accomplish more by dividing up the tasks as these are so deep, so many of them, and each will require a lot of work. Also the meetings are open and will require Minutes be taken and a public posting of the times and dates, so there is no subversion of the public involvement. He added that defined missions and timetables will be necessary. Blackall commented that the Sub-committees can only make recommendations to the full FPC and votes can only be taken by the full FPC.

Blackall made a motion to combine the 21st Century Schools and the level-funded budgets for FY 2012 and beyond together for one Sub-Committee (S-C). Dr. Silva asked where the School consolidation priority fit into this. Kenney responded it could fit into this S-C, but be reported out at a different time, as the study being done by the School wouldn't be ready as quickly, nor is the priority as high, although clearly the topics are related.

Finn stated we shouldn't be deviating from the order of the original list of priorities. Lemnios opined that the FPC has the right to revise the priorities as it wishes and the BoS's request adds to the urgency. The BoS created the FPC to look at issues of concern. Dr. Atherton added that when the FPC drew up the list of priorities that it was intended to be brainstorming and each member used his/her own definition of urgency, importance, potential for revenue enhancement, and/or cost reduction, as "brain-storming" intends. Now the BoS is helping set the priorities. Dr. Silva added that the School Committee, in doing its job as it should, had thrust this additional issue upon the BoS and in turn upon the FPC, and we should respond. He volunteered to be on this S-C for School financial planning with his years of experience on the School Committee. Blackall also volunteered, as did Kenney and Richardson. Peters added to Blackall's motion that the three topics be combined. Blackall accepted that as an amendment and that the four volunteers be the members. Second by Kenney. Vote unanimous.

Sestito brought up the issue of who sets the work plan - the FPC or the S-C, which brings the work plan to the full FPC for approval? After discussion, the consensus seemed to be that it was up to the S-Cs to do so, but the full FPC would have final approval. Blackall asked if it would be OK for the S-Cs to proceed on their own on some aspect of their assignment without prior approval from the full committee? There was general agreement that to save time this made sense, as long as the S-C recognized the potential risk involved.

Sestito suggested we set up a S-C to study the Town-owned land. McCarthy, Peters, and Dr. Atherton volunteered. Peters recommended the FPC priority of a strategy for/review of blighted buildings be added to this S-C charge. Dr. Silva made a motion to do so and

the three volunteers be appointed. Blackall seconded the motion. Vote Unanimous. Sestito asked if the S-Cs were ready to move forward? Blackall said the first meeting of the School FPC S-C would meet at 6:00 next Tuesday (2/26). Sestito suggested the Town Asset S-C meet on 2/23 at 6:00 pm. Kenney requested that Lemnios and Bohinc put together a level-services budget for 2012 and beyond if possible. Sestito recommended we have a full FPC meeting on March 9, so there would be time for the S-Cs to meet and meet a second time if needed to prepare for the 3/9/10 date. It was agreed that the S-Cs could list topics and agenda by e-mail, but no substantive discussion could take place without violating open meeting rules.

Sestito indicated we have agreement on these two S-Cs. Finn objected in that there are other items on the list with higher and more important priorities. Dr. Silva asked Lemnios about regionalization, departmental consolidation, and public safety reorganization. He suggested the Town Manager provide his thoughts on these to the FPC, perhaps develop a matrix that a separate sub-committee could consider. Finn stated his concern that the hoped-for School override might fail, and there were more immediate opportunities for savings through regionalization and departmental consolidation resulting from reduction of overhead. Blackall indicated the FPC had to wait for the School Department's study of consolidation. Dr. Tyrell stated that a large part of the study work will be done by June.

Dr. Atherton brought up one last piece of business in that Lemnios and he had met that day regarding fees that are charged by the Town (FPC #3 priority). He had found that the issue is very complex and made more so by the fact that each Town posts their fees in many different ways, under different departments, and some are not posted on the internet at all. So, it was decided that it would be best to have the department heads gather this information. He and Lemnios had agreed on several different categories and the neighboring towns that seemed most realistic to compare. Dr. Atherton agreed to share his spreadsheet and data collected and Lemnios agreed to have Ms. N. Allen coordinate this with Dr. Atherton's help. So, progress is being made and should be available within a "couple of months."

Dr. Silva moved the FPC meeting be adjourned; seconded by Kenney; unanimous in favor. Meeting ended at 7:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted: Dr. Roger Atherton, Clerk