

Ben Spragg, Chairman  
Kathy Fetchick, Vice Chair  
Dan Amaral



Jan Andras  
Gary Davis  
Kevin Fitzgerald

## TOWN OF NEWTOWN

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**Minutes of the Legislative Council Finance Administrative Committee  
Held in the Mary Hawley Room in the Edmond Town Hall,  
45 Main Street, Newtown, Connecticut  
Tuesday, August 23, 2011**

*\* These are draft minutes and as such are subject to correction by the committee at the next meeting. All corrections will be determined in minutes of the meeting that they were corrected.*

Chairman Ben Spragg called the meeting to order at 7:08 pm.

**PRESENT:** Dan Amaral, Gary Davis, Kathy Fetchick, and Chairman Ben Spragg

**ABSENT:** Jan Andras, Kevin Fitzgerald

**ALSO PRESENT:** First Selectman Patricia Llodra, Public Works Director Fred Hurley, 1 member of the press.

**VOTER PARTICIPATION:** none

**MINUTES: Committee Meeting of July 20, 2011 –**

Mr. Davis moved to accept the minutes from the regular meeting, July 20, 2011. Mr. Amaral seconded and the motion unanimously carried.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**Discussion and possible action on:** Research what efforts can be made to slow future increases in property taxes (P.W. Fred Hurley, Director)

Mr. Spragg invited both First Selectman Llodra and Public Works Director Fred Hurley to discuss the cost benefits of out-sourcing or not and how these decisions are made.

Mr. Hurley said that the Public Works department has grown two people in almost 20 years. During the last 20 years, 42 miles of roads have been added.

Street sweeping is an example of how it is determined whether or not to out-source a project. Over the years, the task of sweeping the streets has gone from being completed only by Town employees to being completed only by private contractors and finally being completed by a combination of Town and private contractor employees. Factors which play a part in this decision making is a yearly review of private contractor costs, the Town employee costs, how much strain it is on the employees, the time it takes to accomplish a task, and what other tasks can not get accomplished. It's really about the right combination of these factors.

## Legislative Council Finance Administrative Committee

Another example of a private contractor working hand and hand with the public works department personnel is the Sandy Hook water main problem. The public works department took on the risk of the project, so the Town saved \$250,000 on the bid.

To efficiently do the core work of the Town, the Town has been divided into 4 sectors. One group is assigned to each sector. This is so that they become experts in a section of Town. The sectors are based on miles and complexity of roads. Emergencies can cause disruptions in the core work. For example, some public works employees are fire fighters. Also, occasionally there is a need to help the state public works employees – for example in clearing snow from the roads. This work is not reimbursed by the state, but they do aid our public works group occasionally.

Manpower is just barely adequate. What will ultimately create efficiency is a multiplier of equipment and/or technology. As far as equipment goes, Public Works shares equipment with Park and Rec as well as the school district. There is an effort to not duplicate equipment purchases. For example, all departments will share the bulldozer that will be purchased; so only one will be purchased. Also, the departments do an analysis of how many hours a piece of equipment will be used and what that costs versus leasing the equipment. Additionally, bidding to lease equipment is done yearly so that if leasing equipment is required during the year, the price is fixed and the Town cannot be taken advantage of.

Core Work of Public Works is as such:

- Roads – drainage (biggest issue), plowing, sanding, cleaning, resurfacing
- Bridges
- Public Buildings exclusive of School Buildings
- Transfer Station
- Solid Waste

In future meetings, the following will be discussed relative to Public Works:

- Resource Allocation
- Core Services
- Staffing History – how to develop crews
- Listing of Equipment

Mr. Spragg will contact Mrs. Llodra for future meeting dates.

**NEW BUSINESS:** none

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** none

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** none

**ADJOURNMENT:** Ms. Fetchick moved to adjourn at 9:00 pm. Mr. Davis seconded and the motion unanimously carried.

Kathy Fetchick