

Town of Old Orchard Beach
Finance Committee Workshop Minutes
Date: *Wednesday, August 18 at 6:30 PM*
Held: *Town Hall Council Chambers*

Present: Neal Weinstein, Richard Larochelle, Jerome Plante, Reza Namin, Michael Gray, and two community members

Absent: Gary Salamacha

Workshop was opened at 6:57

Mr. Weinstein opened the meeting by thanking our guests and asked if they had any special reason for being in attendance

- John Bird mentioned that the Charter Commission has been working on the part of the charter pertaining to the budget process and asked for input.
- The biggest piece of advice the committee could provide was that there should be more direction given from the Town Council in preparation of the budget process.
- Whether that direction should be placed in the Charter or not was an open subject. But creating a clearer, more directive and proactive budget process was a goal that everyone felt should be a goal of any budget process

Because of the late start to the meeting, Mr. Weinstein felt our time would be better used by going off agenda and opening up the meeting to whatever discussions the committee felt were important:

The FY '10-'11 Budget Process:

- General consensus was that the process was not well organized
- Members also felt that the process was too reactive rather than proactive
 - The Town Council seemed more willing to pull apart the Town Manager's budget rather than offer their own budget solutions
 - Though there was a lot of talk about the need to cut the budget, very little actually got cut
- Because the Finance Committee is newly re-formed, the members generally felt that this was a "learning year" for the budget process and are looking forward to the FY '11-'12 budget for more input

Budget Process Improvements:

- Much of the meeting was used to look forward to the upcoming budget process
- A goal of the Finance Committee is to encourage the Town Council to create a 3-Year Budget process that is goal and priority driven
 - Because the budget is an ongoing process, even within a budget year, the members felt that we needed to have a longer term approach to the budget
 - Town Councilors were raising concerns during this year's process about promises made in recent budget debates regarding capital expenditures and other items
 - A longer term budget process such as a 3-Year Budget (or even longer) may help the Town Council with remembering priorities from year to year
- A firmer budget timeline was discussed with more input from the Town Council and Finance Committee. This is also an item which the Charter Commission is interested in pursuing
 - Some members felt that Finance Committee members may be able to be involved in the actual creation of the budget in conjunction with the Town Department Heads so that they may be able to help the assist the Town Council when questions arise

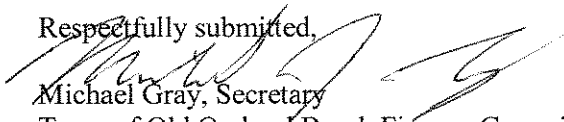
- Generally, the Finance Committee feels that more tools may be needed for the budget process
 - A complete organization chart of every position in the Town of Old Orchard Beach may help when discussing specific department budgets
 - Creatively using the Town website to disseminate budget documents before meetings and workshops could help the residents understand all of the complex information that is provided
 - The use of overhead projection of the actual budget during hearings and workshops may help everyone know the impact of any cut as well as allow us to use accurate information
 - Budget forecasts and projections from the State of Maine, York County Government, and RSU 23 will help us with specific pieces of the budget
- Generally, the Finance Committee would like to help all concerned parties come together during the budget process and create a budget that everyone can get behind
 - The difficult work of the budget will be in creating a destination
 - Where does the Town want to be in 3 years? 5 years? 10 years? 25 years?
 - The budget needs to be a reflection of present fiscal realities, but also of shared communal values and a unifying vision for the future

Concrete Action Steps

- Short term
 - The Finance Committee would like to help create an organizational chart for the Town of Old Orchard Beach
 - The Finance Committee would like to look at our health insurance for the upcoming year and see if some changes could be made that would save money but not impact coverage negatively
 - The Finance Committee would like to become more involved in the budget planning process and work with the Town Manager and the Town Council toward that goal
- Long Term
 - The Finance Committee would like to help create a 3-Year Budget Process
 - The Finance Committee would like to tackle the task of creating a through Capital Project Plan that would coincide with the 3-Year Budget Process

The meeting was adjourned at 8:34. Next meeting is to be determined

Respectfully submitted,



Michael Gray, Secretary
Town of Old Orchard Beach Finance Committee