

Minutes September 3, 2013
Town of Wayland
Audit Committee

Date: September 3, 2013

Time of Meeting: 6:45 PM

Place of Meeting: Wayland Town Building, Small Conference Room

Members Present: Paul Brennan, Ben Downs, Chris Riley and Chris Cullen

Call to order – 6:45

- Ben Downs assigned as minute taker.
- Public comment-
 - Don Bustin presented a hand out that he discussed with the committee.
The committee agreed to discuss the topic he raised at a future meeting
- The committee moved to the school committee meeting room for a presentation on the review of school accounts by Powers and Sullivan
- Motion to adjourn – 9:55 approved. Vote 4-0.

Attachment: Document from Don Bustin

School Committee's Audit Committee Recommendation

I am writing to ask the School Committee to consider me for their recommendation to the Audit Committee. I'm also interested in taking this opportunity to start a discussion with the School Committee – to get its members' ideas and feedback about how the town determines what's good and bad about its financial management and operations, what means exist for promoting improvement, and what role the Audit Committee might play.

The Audit Committee is important. It works with the Auditor to interpret the town's financial performance, set guidelines, identify procedures and areas of financial reporting that need to be addressed, and monitor progress in meeting the Auditor's and the Committee's concerns. Looking forward, I believe the Audit Committee could be instrumental in facilitating a discussion about how the town manages its money, provides its services, and works to improve both.

Over the last two years, I've slowly attempted to gain an understanding of how Wayland does its finances, what financial procedures and oversight the town has, and how it might best continue to improve. I've looked into/talked to a couple of (town side) boards and departments, FinCom, Finance Director, and Town Administrator, and unfortunately, it's easy to identify procedures that could be improved. I've found that it's not always clear where authority lies or what means there are for analyzing existing situations and/or making improvements, and often, the people involved, while cooperative, seem either unwilling or unable to address or implement procedural improvements that are actually simple, straight-forward, and necessary.

It seems the School Committee's experience has been similar. It has utilized outside consultants and the Operational Review Committee to improve procedures and reporting. While this has been beneficial, I currently feel the town needs some official-type "mechanism" (a procedure) for looking into how things are done, both in terms of financial management and operationally. (i.e., the town needs to continue developing the ability to research, analyze, understand, review options, develop recommendations, and make suggestions for implementing improved procedures, hopefully creating a supportive environment where improvement is incremental and continual, with everything open and transparent (but not critical of departments or individuals) and with goals and actions consciously decided.)

This is where I see the Audit Committee come in. It only formed recently and is still determining/refining its function. The current Auditor and the town's annual financial reports are better than they've ever been, but there are some additional areas that would be interesting to address, and the discussion of where to go from here, would be a great discussion to have. (Perhaps starting with what role the Audit Committee might have in promoting improvement to Wayland's financial management, whether a more analytical/investigative approach would be useful, or if an official "mechanism" might help.) I hope the School Committee will promote and support such a discussion through their Audit Committee member.

I cannot pretend that I'm as professional or experienced as others or have participated in this type of discussion before. What I am is committed and enthusiastic about this project and have a willingness to work with any and all informed and involved individuals to craft the means whereby the School Committee (and others) can say, explicitly and with justification, that Wayland is providing its services and managing the town's money in the best possible way.

If the School Committee agrees that the ideas expressed above are worth pursuing and an expanded discussion worthwhile, and determines that it might be useful to have me on the Audit Committee and recommends such, I would be honored to fulfill that committee's responsibilities and work towards ever-evolving improvement. If not, I will continue to promote these ideas with the Audit Committee and hope the School Committee will support that effort.

In the future, and ongoing, I look forward to having a more in-depth discussion about these issues with your Committee and your Department's administrators.

Respectfully,

Don Bustin

Related Work Experience

In past (but not currently) worked as bookkeeper for small businesses, culminating in being "Cost Accountant" for an advertising agency (see attached responsibilities sheet).

Past Wayland Committees

Long ago, the Paine Estate/Greenways Finance and Communication Committees.

More recently, Town Meeting Facilities Committee under Peter Gossels.

[I have included the following because it shows my comprehensive involvement with Kaufman's financial management. While the experience did allow me to become comfortable with all things "assets and liabilities" and "credits and debits", municipal accounting is much more complicated and not always "common-sensical", therefore, I cannot say I fully understand it, but rather, have hopes to.]

Responsibilities as Cost Accountant for Kaufman Associates, Inc.

(an advertising agency employing 25 people)

"Comptroller" responsibilities

Supervise financial department

(reporting directly to President/Owner, department 2.5 people)

Establish/refine bookkeeping procedures

Keep books of original entry and general ledger

Take trial balance and prepare monthly financial reports

Includes comparative balance sheets and operations, revenue analysis and cash flow

Generate income/expense projections as needed

Client funds receipt/disbursement monthly report

Control all moneys

Cash receipts, deposits, monitor bank accounts, reconcile statements

Cash disbursements, write/sign checks (payroll, media, vendor, overhead)

Report and pay tax liabilities

Keep reconciled listings of A/P and A/R; monthly aged reports

Prepare Monday cash and A/R status reports

Purchase orders, petty cash

Billing

Invoice for professional services and production expenses

Monthly billing summary

Maintain job financial histories

Create job cost estimates. Track progress/cost control

Job status/program budget status reports

Invoice for media insertions, monitor publication billing, and reconcile discrepancies

"Data Processing Manager" responsibilities

Purchase and install computer system and software

PC's, UNIX – word processing to database to financial management, etc.

Establish/refine computerized bookkeeping procedures

Coordinate and define criteria for outside database programmer to create:

Job related time billing and vendor expense invoicing

Job/Program Cost Summary (and against Budget)

Public relations editorial calendar and submission database

(by client/by magazine and category)

Production log (job/vendor services cross-reference)

New business mailing list (by category/letter merge)

"Office Manager" responsibilities

Maintain all personnel records

Annual review results, salary changes, vac/sick days, etc.

Weekly employee billable hour report; monthly summary

Oversee equipment purchase/lease arrangements and equipment service