

**Wellfleet Finance Committee
& Board of Selectmen
Minutes of Joint Meeting of September 22, 2010
Senior Center Great Pond Room, 7:00 p.m.**

Finance Committee Present: Dennis Murphy, Chairman; Sam Bradford, Robert Kelly, Janet Loewenstein, John T. Morrissey, Sylvia Smith, Robert Wallace

Regrets: Liz Sorrell

Board of Selectmen Present: Jerry Houk, Jacqueline Wildes-Beebe, Dale Donovan, Berta Bruinooge, Ira Wood

Also Attending: Town Administrator Paul Sieloff; Town Accountant Marilyn Crary, COA Director Suzanne Thomas, Fire Chief Daniel Silverman, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Richard J. Hoffmann, Nauset Regional School Committeeman John Porteus, Wellfleet Elementary School Committee Chair Janis Plaue

Chairman Dennis Murphy called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. and introduced the purpose of the meeting: discussion of the Budget.

Jacqueline Wildes-Beebe called the Board of Selectmen's meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

Paul Sieloff had distributed the *Draft Budget Policy for Fiscal Year 2012*¹ to members of the Finance Committee and the Board of Selectmen. He highlighted the changes in the Budget: a 10-year Capital Improvement Plan, the Water System Enterprise Fund, and regional alternatives, an item in the *Fiscal Management Goals* section.

Selectmen Ira Wood added a goal of filling full-time positions with volunteers and part-time staff where possible. Sylvia Smith asked that an annual follow up of the vehicle rollover policy be included as another goal.

Bob Kelly said we should identify the amount of income expected through taxes and plan the Budget according to the anticipated amount of money. Beebe spoke about how the figure is determined with the 2 1/2% added. John Morrissey presented and reviewed three charts on Wellfleet's Operating Budget² which he had originally presented at Town Meeting. Paul Sieloff explained long and short term debt in the Budget and debt exclusion.

There was more discussion of increased property assessments, overrides, using "Free Cash" and cutting staff. Murphy said the cost of municipal government keeps going up, but the revenue stream has not. He suggested preserving Free Cash, holding departments to a Budget line and controlling debt. Murphy said we need to be planning five years ahead. He considered a zero-based

budgeting approach as a change in the Budget process. He advocated more joint meetings of Selectmen and FinCom on Budget.

John Morrissey discussed Group Health Insurance procedure. Dale Donovan asked how Free Cash could be shielded from Town Meeting Articles and put into the Stabilization Fund. COA Director Suzanne Thomas discussed how override Articles at Town Meeting could work. The Selectmen will consider setting policy on overrides.

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Richard J. Hoffmann and John Porteus of the Nauset Regional School Committee gave an overview of how the regional school system does its budgeting. Dr. Hoffmann discussed: cuts, deferring capital budget, using "soft funds" or grants, enrollment at the high school and tuitions from School Choice. This is a negotiations' year for all the unions, he said. The system is looking at regionalization and entrepreneurship for budget saving ideas, Dr. Hoffmann said. He explained the costs for Provincetown students attending Nauset Regional High School.

Jan Plaue, Chair of the Wellfleet Elementary School Committee, said that negotiations would take place in the next Fiscal Year for WES teachers. She spoke briefly about budgeting for Special Needs students. The School Committee does not favor cutting personnel, she said. There was discussion of grant money, wage increases by steps, tenure and health care.

Dennis Murphy asked Fire Chief Silverman about the Massachusetts Relief Act. The Cape already operates under a waiver requiring two paramedics for ambulance runs, Chief Silverman said. Murphy also asked budgeting more for Fire Department Overtime. Beebe said that Fire Department Overtime is always a matter of negotiations. She suggested including a member of the Finance Committee in a negotiations session. There was more discussion of Fire Department Overtime.

Marilyn Crary gave a quick history of Budget overrides. These stopped in Fiscal Year 08, she said. She also reported on Free Cash in past years. There was more discussion of 2 1/2% limits, debt exclusion and overrides.

Jerry Houk said the Town should start budgeting for SEMASS and Wastewater planning. Even if it means overrides, he suggested that the Town start to save for these future needs. Bruinooge said that funding the Stabilization Fund at a greater level was a means of planning ahead for these. Paul Sieloff discussed figures for the Stabilization Fund. He expects to have more Free Cash set aside. Sieloff said the Town has been planning for future SEMASS costs. He discussed recycling education and strategies to help cut back on solid waste tonnage that is transported to SEMASS.

Bob Kelly mentioned additional revenue sources. He commended Paul Sieloff for selling Town-owned lots. He suggested that the Town Administrator investigate selling Wellfleet-by-the-Sea property. Selectmen were not in favor of the idea.

Sam Bradford said he'd like to see benchmarks from the Department of Revenue that Wellfleet should be meeting for Free Cash and the Stabilization Fund. He suggested giving the information as a financial bill of health at Town Meeting. Chief Silverman supplied some figures on overrides that explain them in terms of individual property taxes. Janet Loewenstein suggested changing the term "Free Cash" to "fund balance" or "retained earnings" to more accurately describe the funds.

Bob Wallace asked about the meal tax returns. Marilyn Crary said the figures for the summer are not yet in.

Jan Plaue gave a brief report on the Pre-School program.

Dennis Murphy discussed tracking hot mix for road surfacing. He suggested a procedure in bidding that gives Wellfleet the right to weigh trucks at any time.

There was a discussion of the meetings preparing the Budget for the Town Meeting Warrant. Wood suggested having the joint meetings on Tuesdays when the meetings are televised.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Rogers, Committee Secretary

Dennis Murphy, Chairman

Date

Public Record Materials from the meeting of 9/22/10

- 1.) Budget Policy Fiscal Year 2012 (Amended September 16, 2010)
- 2.) Brief Operating Budget History dated September 22, 2010