

Budget Committee
Minutes
June 12, 2012

Present: R. Barnes, T. Beard, J. Burk, B. Cummings, S. Heinrich, G. Krupp, C. Skarda
and School Board liaisons G. Markwell and A. Schneider

Excused: C. Guagliumi, V. Pellegrino and R. Swonger

Absent: M. Malzone

Vice Chair B. Cummings called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Welcome and Introductions

B. Cummings welcomed new member C. Skarda and welcomed back R. Barnes. B. Cummings confirmed that all newly elected members had been sworn in and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

Reorganization

S. Heinrich made a MOTION to elect B. Cummings Chair. Second: everyone. MOTION PASSED with B. Cummings abstaining.

S. Heinrich made a MOTION to elect T. Beard Vice Chair. Second: J. Burk. MOTION PASSED with T. Beard abstaining.

Resignation

B. Cummings announced that he had received a letter of resignation from Christina Barbera. S. Heinrich made a MOTION to accept her resignation. Second: R. Barnes. MOTION PASSED unanimously.

B. Cummings suggested that the Committee follow past practice for filling resignations: press release asking for letters of interest to be submitted 2 weeks before a meeting at which members would interview interested candidates and then select a replacement. By consensus, members concurred.

Process Moving Forward

B. Cummings called for discussion on how the Committee would like to proceed.

Discussion included the following:

- A desire to streamline the process and eliminate duplication of efforts.
- A suggestion for joint School Board and Budget Committee Department Head presentations:
 - In early January, after which the School Board would conduct its budget work sessions and present their budget to the Committee by the end of January.

Budget Committee Minutes, 6-12-12, continued

- Members of both groups would submit questions to Superintendent before the presentation and receive a copy of all questions and answers before the actual presentations.
- Both groups then ask ad hoc questions after each presentation.
- Hold presentations on two evenings or a Saturday
- When and how should such a change be proposed to the School Board.
- After the joint session, the School Board would have time for at least two meetings and still present the budget to the Committee so that the Committee could hold a work session and schedule the public hearing per statutory requirements.
- This change would mean that the School Board doesn't have to work on the budget during the holiday season, but would not reduce the amount of time that the Committee actually spends working on the budget.
- Liaison Assignments
 - Some members felt liaison assignments and department head meetings with the liaison teams were valuable.
 - Others suggested that liaison assignments continue but that each team would focus on the specific department.
- Shortening the budget meeting schedule might result in longer meetings.
- Will these changes affect presentation of monied warrant articles (proposed by the School Board or petitioned) to the Committee?
- Change should be made slowly.
- The Committee could meet with other town's Budget Committees to see how they function.
- The Committee should request monthly budget reports and/or meet monthly to review current budget status.
- The Committee should look more closely at the Default Budget process and development.
- The Committee should look more closely at the cost per student and find out the formula or criteria the state uses to determine this figure.
- The Committee could suggest a target budget number to Administration or the School Board.
- The Committee could create its own budget.
- The Committee could ask the School Board if it had any suggestions to offer the Committee on how it should proceed.

T. Beard made a MOTION that the School Board liaisons to the Committee tell the School Board that the Budget Committee wishes to

1. Streamline the budget process to realize efficiency and compress the meeting schedule,
2. Participate in joint budget workshop(s) for department budget reviews, possibly moderated by the superintendent,
3. Suggest the following format for the joint workshop: all members submit specific questions to superintendent one month before joint session so department heads can respond and that all questions and responses be sent out to all members ahead of departments reviews at which time new or follow-up questions can be asked,

4. Propose scheduling the joint session(s) on the soonest practical date(s) after January 1st.

Second: R. Barnes. MOTION PASSED unanimously.

A. Schneider and G. Markwell told the Committee that the School Board is meeting on July 16th and August 13th. A. Schneider indicated he would present this idea to the School Board as soon as possible and return with feedback.

Budget Training:

B. Cummings announced that the Local Government Center Training on Municipal Budgeting Issues will be held on September 20th and that more specific information would be available in August.

Upcoming Meetings

Members discussed if and when to hold summer meetings.

By consensus, members agreed to hold the next Committee a meeting on August 28th to interview candidates for the vacancy and to hear feedback from the liaisons about the proposed change to the budget process and timetable. A future meeting schedule will be discussed at that time. B. Cummings said he would schedule the Year-End-Review of the 2011-2012 budget in either October or November.

Members were reminded that, by statute, four (4) unexcused absences in a row constitutes a resignation from the Committee.

Public participation

There was no public participation.

S. Heinrich made a MOTION to adjourn. Second: R. Barnes. MOTION PASSED unanimously.

B. Cummings adjourned the meeting at 8:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Pat Heinrich